

# National Fire Plan

## Student Conservation Association Aids Fire Managers in the Interface Areas Idaho 2002



The Student Conservation Association (SCA) Fire Education Corps teams stationed in Twin Falls and Sun Valley, Idaho, were very active this summer in educating homeowners living in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) on wildland fire danger and FireWise actions. The SCA Fire Education Corps is a partnership between the SCA, a national non-profit conservation organization, and Federal and State land management agencies. Even though the Sawtooth Forest was designated as the hosting agency, team activities have been coordinated with Shoshone BLM, local government and local fire departments and districts in the Magic and Wood River Valley areas.

The Fire Education teams spread the word about the national FireWise program through courtesy home inspections, defensible space demonstration projects, public events, and literature distribution. The teams were multi-discipline, with many talents represented. Each team had a Geographic Information System (GIS) specialist to assist local fire agencies in mapping WUI areas. Also on each team was a media specialist to increase outreach through public information. Each team's approach is unique and geared to the needs of their local host communities, the hosting agency, and cooperating fire agencies.

The teams continued to work in the Magic and Wood River Valley areas until the end of August. After the team itself was demobilized, the team leaders stayed on for an additional month to document their accomplishments and close out the season.

Team Twin Falls was busy working with the Oakley and Buhl Fire Departments, and the Rock Creek Rural Fire District. By mid-season, the team had conducted 51 courtesy home inspections.

Team Twin Falls had public information booths at the Twin Falls Air Show, Oakley Pioneer Days, and Kimberly Good Neighbor Day. The team was also in attendance at the Buhl Fire Department's open house. Team Leader Amanda Gierhart's major regret was that the team had simply had too little time to do extensive work with more WUI communities.

Team Sun Valley worked closely with the Ketchum and Sun Valley city fire departments to educate WUI residents. At mid-season, the team had conducted 19 courtesy home inspections. Team Sun Valley Leader Sean O'Dowd had his people in attendance at a number of public events in the Wood River Valley area including the Hailey and Ketchum Farmers Markets, and the Ketchum Alive Festival.