

National Fire Plan

Student Conservation Association Assists Homeowners Idaho 2002



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The Student Conservation Association - Fire Education Corps provided three (6) person SCA crews to work in the Eastern Idaho area this summer in and around the communities of Pocatello, Island Park, and Montpelier. Crews were funded by the National Fire Plan (NFP) through grants submitted by the Resource Conservation and Development Councils (RC&Ds). Each RC&D council received approximately \$72,000 through NFP funding to host a crew. The crews coordinated with the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), RC&D councils, and local fire chiefs to present the Firewise and “defensible space” messages. Working with the public in the local communities, the crews promoted fire prevention and defensible space around homes in the urban interface. The crews also provided free home assessments to private homeowners to make them aware of the risk from wildfire and to offer suggestions of actions the homeowner could take to reduce these risks. The Corps participated in local community events and aided in the presentation of Firewise workshops in the local communities.

Fuels project near Pocatello, ID in the Johnny Creek Drainage



**Before
treatment**



**After
treatment**

The local fire departments provided the teams with office space and guided them towards priority problem areas in the urban interface. The BLM and USFS provided crews with fire prevention and defensible space literature

and other materials to assist them in canvassing homeowners and making presentations. Each crew prepared and completed a fuels hazard reduction demonstration project to culminate their time in the area. The projects were completed utilizing a combination of federal, county, city, and volunteer labor. The USFS provided saw crews to do most of the chainsaw work for these projects and labor to assist in the removal of the materials. The city and county governments and local fire departments provided dumpsters, chippers, and additional labor to assist private homeowners, the SCA crews, and other volunteers in the removal of the materials.

The projects were well received by both the public and the local fire departments. Some local homeowners living adjacent to the demonstration projects have since taken action on their own property to mirror the efforts. Glen Blackwell, Division Chief for the Pocatello City Fire Department, had high praise for the SCA crews and said this about the Pocatello project, "This project has been the greatest single public relations event that I have seen since joining the department, and I hope this effort continues".