

Making a Difference Community Wildfire Protection Plans Boise, Elmore, Gem, and Valley, Counties – Idaho

Signing the Idaho Strategy in the Governor's Office in Boise



In 2003, the Boise National Forest identified a need to provide contacts to further collaboration and begin executing the Idaho Statewide Implementation Strategy for the National Fire Plan, which Governor Kempthorne supported. The Idaho Statewide Strategy strongly emphasizes collaboration at the county level. Within Idaho, each county, assisted by State and Federal agencies and local expert advice, is developing a multi-faceted plan that contains treatments for hazardous fuel reduction, public education, and preventive actions in the wildland urban interface areas. This plan is referred to as the County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (WFMP). Central to the development of a WFMP is the

development of a county Wildland Fire Interagency Group (WFIG), with representatives from numerous agencies including the Forest Service. The WFMPs follow the guidelines of the Community Wildfire Protection Plans under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003.

The Boise National Forest has four counties (Boise, Elmore, Gem, and Valley) whose boundaries overlap lands administered by the Forest. To facilitate lines of communication, the Forest has identified key contacts to work with specific counties in developing their WFMPs. A lead District Ranger is assigned as a “first contact,” and serves as the Forest Service representative and coordinator for a county. This role continues beyond initial development of the WFMP so that appropriate revisions can be coordinated effectively and efficiently. Other key contacts from the Forest are assigned for collaborative efforts such as Resource Conservation and Development Areas (RC&D’s) and the Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group, and for technical support for WFMP development.

To date, Boise and Gem counties have completed WFMPs, with Elmore and Valley counties on track to finalize Plans in fall 2004. Work on identified fuels reduction priorities identified in Boise and Gem County’s WFMPs has begun on the Forest. For example, a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the Forest’s first HFRA project, Star Ranch, is nearly done. Project design for Star Ranch is a direct result of work within the Boise County WFMP collaborative framework.

For more information on Idaho County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plans, visit http://www2.state.id.us/lands/nat_fire_plan/county_wui_plans/.