



FACT SHEET



United States Department of Agriculture
Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

United States Department of Interior
Web: <http://www.doi.gov>

Making a Difference Community Wildfire Protection Plan Dawes County - Nebraska

The CWPP was developed for the Pine Ridge Fire Planning Area #1 located in Dawes County, Nebraska. The 106,000-acre area falls under the fire fighting responsibilities of the Chadron and Crawford Volunteer Fire Departments and is a relatively narrow east-west band of buttes and north-south drainages known as the Pine Ridge escarpment. Native ponderosa pine forests grow on most of the area on interspersed national forest, state managed and private lands.

Partners involved in the plan included the Nebraska National Forest, Nebraska Fire Marshall, Nebraska State Forest Service, Chadron Volunteer Fire Department, Crawford Volunteer Fire Department, and Land Stewardship Associates who were contracted to produce the plan.

Collaboration: Over the past 30 years, the Pine Ridge has experienced several relatively large, stand-replacing fires. All entities involved in fire fighting and land management have come to recognize that the need to work together to protect people, property, and resources. The partners listed above worked together to produce the Pine Ridge Planning Area #1 Fire and Fuel Management Plan.

Prioritized Fuel Reduction: The Plan identified two specific treatment priority areas. The Chadron Creek watershed provides domestic water to the city of Chadron and contains the highest number and density of housing subdivisions in the county. The Squaw Creek, West Ash, East Ash and Dead Horse watersheds make up the bulk of the remainder of the planning area. Treatment recommendations are similar for both areas. They include: Thinning to a 40 percent canopy cover, performing hazardous fuels reduction work along primary access roads and removing ladder fuels. Reduce hazardous fuels along long driveways. Coordinate commercial thinning projects among different land management entities to reduce canopy cover and bark beetle susceptibility and increase efficiency.

Treat Structural Ignitability: Each subdivision or structure in the planning area was included in a "triage inventory" database. The data includes GPS coordinates, geographic information, key triage concerns and recommended mitigation measures to reduce those concerns. Firewise recommendations are a key component of all mitigation measures.

Dawes County, Chadron and Crawford Volunteer Fire Departments, and the Nebraska State Forest Service—Western Wildfire Specialist supported the final contents of the plan which was completed in 2003 and is being used today to guide fuels reduction efforts for the Pine Ridge Area.

Key Contact: Jerry Schumacher Public Affairs Officer of Nebraska National Forest at 308-432-0300.

For more information on the Healthy Forests Restoration Act and the Healthy Forests Initiative, visit www.healthyforests.gov