

Snapshots

Successful Bureau of Land Management hazardous fuels projects in the wildland urban interface...

Kids Enjoy Visit to the BLM

“This is the best field trip we’ve ever been on!” This was one of the many comments Safford Christian School first and second grade students had after they visited the Safford Field Office on August 21, 2001. Diane Drobka, public affairs specialist, welcomed the students and then introduced them to the BLM. She explained how public land is used and the resources used to manage the it. She also gave them an overview of the types of jobs within the BLM.



Drobka then took the students out to the Fire Shop to learn about wildland firefighting. Roy Draper’s tour of the fire cache allowed students to see the variety of equipment used by firefighters and he let them try on a hard hat. Firefighter Marco Coronado then demonstrated how an engine can spray foam and how it is used to suppress a fire. The students enjoyed their day at the Safford Field Office and learned a lot about the BLM.

Idaho

The Hulls Gulch Environmental Education/Wildland-Urban Interface Project

In August 1996, more than 15,000 acres across the Boise Front burned. Hundreds of homes in the wildland-urban interface were threatened including an inholding surrounded by Boise City’s Hulls Gulch Preserve, a protected 270-acre property that provides a public gateway to the heavily used Boise Front.



September 18, 2001



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In 1997, the City of Boise acquired the 20-acre property from the McCord family. It includes about two acres of landscaped area around the home. From the outset, the city's vision has been for the McCord site to serve as a community outdoor lab and environmental education center, particularly due to its location in the wildland-urban interface and ease of public access.

After the severe fire season of 2000, the McCord site was used to develop a public model home that emphasized living safely in a wildland fire environment, wildland fuels management, and fire ecology.



When completed the facility will provide indoor and outdoor classroom and meeting space to educate audiences ranging from school children to adult neighborhood associations and other community groups. The site, only minutes from the National Interagency Fire Center and the Capitol building, is a wonderful educational opportunity to showcase wildland-urban interface facility.

The McCord project provides an excellent chance to create interagency, community, and business partnerships. Idaho BLM, the City of Boise, Ada County, Ridge to Rivers Council, Boise Parks and Recreation and the Treasure Valley Fire Prevention Co-op are working together on this project to provide funds, expertise, and labor. Other groups and organizations also have expressed an interest in participating in the project.

The existing house and surrounding buildings will be redesigned. Once complete, the exterior of the facility will appear as a typical urban interface home with appropriate landscaping. Inside, however, will house a large classroom facility, meeting space and offices. Nature trails, interpretive signing, and an orchard with sample fire resistant plants surround the center. The McCord project is expected to be completed sometime in 2003.

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