

Snapshots

Successes of BLM hazardous fuels projects ...

In 2001, the Salt Lake Field Office began planning a project to do maintenance on the existing fuel break, as well as extend it an additional 200-300 feet. Private landowners received an assistance grant from the State of Utah to fund a fuel reduction project on private land. The BLM is collaborating with the State and private landowners to complete the project. A contract will be issued to complete the cutting and piling on BLM land. The edges of the fuel break will be feathered to reduce fuel density and provide a more natural look to the original work. New piles that are created and those piles that had not been burned originally will be burned by BLM fire crews during the late fall or winter when snow can help curtail any spread of fire.

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Idaho

BLM Upper Snake River District

Encroachment of Utah Juniper

The East Jim Sage project lies on the east slope of the Jim Sage mountain range in the Burley Field Office on the BLM Upper Snake River District in Idaho. This project was initiated because of the encroachment of Utah Juniper into a once-productive sagebrush steppe ecosystem. Resource staffs and interested public placed several requirements on it, including visual aesthetics, wildlife cover, wildlife forage, soil protection, native vegetative species reintroduction and archeological protection.

After National Environmental Policy Act reviews and scoping were completed, project implementation began. An anchor chain between two dozers was used to pull the



“These photos show the sagebrush steppe restoration, as well as the pre-treatment juniper domination in the background. Initially, the juniper sites had very little understory or diversity within the stands. After the restoration was completed, you can see the diverse vegetation composition, without juniper competition”

June 12, 2002



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large trees from the ground and reduce the dense canopy of juniper. The trees were then placed in windrows and burned. Finally, sagebrush, forbs and grasses (both native and cultivars) were seeded into the available soils. After the seeding was finished, a protection fence was constructed to keep undesired livestock off of the area. This continued until the vegetation was able to withstand the vigor of grazing.

Saw crews provided the maintenance on this project. Because many trees were too small for the chaining operation, they bent over and were left in the ground after the chain proceeded. The saw crews were used to remove the residual trees. They established grids then cut the available trees. They also removed the remaining green portions on the stems still persisting in the soil.

Many people participated in this project, and as a result, bighorn sheep have now been reintroduced onto the range. The area also now provides a viable firebreak for suppression crews when fighting severe fires. Through multiple treatments and planned maintenance, this project has been deemed a success and will sustain itself, provided use of the area is moderate.

Outreach, Education, Projects Take Many Forms In WUI

Foothills Literature Drop – The Boise Front provides the city a scenic backdrop of foothills and mountains. The area also provides a highly-used recreation area, a home for a variety of wildlife, and is the site of an expanding wildland-urban interface. Unfortunately, the foothills also are often tinder-dry and nearly always at risk from wildfire during the summer months. Every few years a wildfire will take hold and threaten or burn homes built on the hills and in the drainages.

It is that threat, and loss of homes and property, that brought the BLM and local fire departments together in ongoing efforts to educate homeowners about the risks of living in such an area and steps they can take to better protect themselves and their property.

This spring, as they've done in past years, BLM fire staff has joined with the Boise City Fire Department, North Ada County Fire and Rescue, and the Eagle Fire Department to take educational information door to door across the foothills interface area.



The 8th Street Fire in the foothills above Boise in 1996 heightened homeowner awareness which is now reinforced through an annual pamphlet drop, fire station open house and other homeowner education activities.

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