

National Fire Plan Inyo National Forest Pacific Southwest Region California



Interagency Project in Conjunction with the National Fire Plan Old Mammoth Fuel Reduction Effort A Huge Success 2004

During the weekend of June 26 and 27, residents in the Old Mammoth area of Mammoth Lakes, California participated in a neighborhood fuels reduction activity. This first project of the Mammoth Lakes Fire Safe Council was declared a huge success by fire agency personnel and homeowners alike. Old Mammoth residents took advantage of this opportunity to have fuels they removed from around their homes disposed of, creating over 90 piles of branches and dead material. Fire agency crews and fire personnel traveled with two chipping machines from home to home chipping the piled material as they went. In the end, it took over five days to mulch all of the piles. Homeowners reclaimed the chipped material for use at their homes, and the leftover material was donated to Mammoth Mountain Ski Area for use in erosion control.

Involved in this effort were crews from the Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Ranger District, Bureau of Land Management, Mammoth Lakes Fire Department, and the many homeowners who worked extensive hours to clear brush and prepare for the weekend. Crucial to this success were volunteer neighborhood coordinators from the Fire Safe Council who invested many hours going door-to-door to educate their neighbors about defensible space and spread the word about this event.



Key agency coordinators for this event were Isabel Kusumoto, Mammoth Ranger District Fire Prevention Officer, Debra Hein, Interagency Fire Mitigation Specialist, and Bob Rooks, Mammoth Lakes Fire Department Battalion Chief. Kusumoto said after closing the operation down on Tuesday June 29th, "this was a lot of work and well worth it because so much material was cleared from around these homes." Efforts from the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Community Water District, and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area also helped to make this project possible.

“This event was so successful because of strong interagency cooperation and the enthusiasm and commitment of the Fire Safe Council members,” said Jeff Power, Mammoth Ranger District Fire Management Officer. Mammoth Lakes Fire Chief Harold Ritter was thrilled at the amount of fuel removed from around homes in Old Mammoth. “If all the homeowners in Mammoth were as committed to creating defensible space around their homes and neighborhoods, our entire community would be safer from wildland fires,” he said.

Building on the momentum of this event future activities are planned in July 2004.

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