

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service -- Northern Region



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Forest Service offers reimbursement for fencing damaged in wildfires

Through special funding from Congress, the Forest Service is offering a program designed to reimburse private landowners for their losses of fences and other improvements due to *last summer's wildfires*.

Of particular concern to Congress – and thus the highest priority for program funding – is the *replacement of fencing for ranching operations*. Such fencing could include holding pens, boundary fences and interior fences. The program will reimburse private landowners the full replacement value of the fencing lost.

Once fencing needs are covered, there *will be an* opportunity to use *any* remaining funds to *pay for* other losses on public and tribal lands. *Should remaining funds be available, other improvements on private lands may be reimbursed if landowners can demonstrate a public need or benefit. Examples of these improvements* include culverts, roads, trails, bridges, waterlines and irrigation structures.

The Forest Service utilized data collected by *field* offices and the Farm Service Agency to identify landowners who might qualify for this program. *Jodi, what happened to those landowners?? Did they already get contacted and are they in the program? You should follow up the first sentence with the current status of the list of landowners.* Landowners can contact their local Forest Service office to learn more about the program and get an application. This information can also be obtained via the website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/pgr/afterfires>. The deadline for submitting applications is xxxxxxxx, 2001.

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