



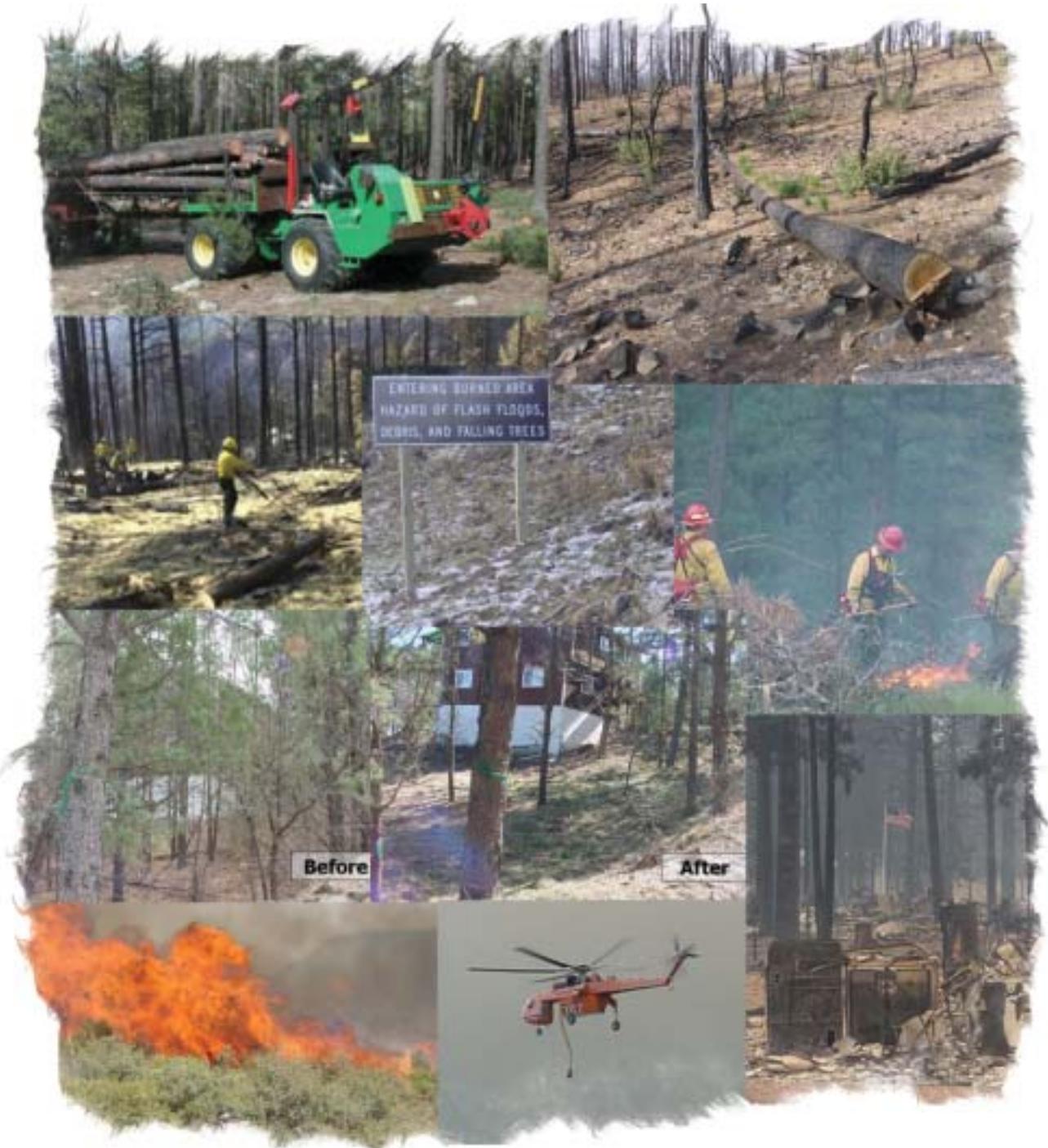
United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Southwestern
Region



National Fire Plan Report for Fiscal Year 2002



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**National Fire
Plan Report**
for
Fiscal Year 2002

Southwestern Region
USDA Forest Service

A Message from Regional Forester Harv Forsgren

In August 2000, the President directed the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to develop a response to severe wildland fire, reduce its impacts on rural communities, and assure sufficient firefighting capabilities in the future.

Federal agencies were asked, in cooperation with states and local communities, to take actions to reduce immediate hazards to communities in the wildland-urban interface, and to assure that fire management planning and firefighter personnel and resources are prepared for extreme fire conditions in the future. The result of this direction is the National Fire Plan (NFP).

The 2002 fire season proved to be one of the most severe in the Southwestern Region's history. Continued severe drought, coupled with the extreme buildup of fuels, resulted in two of the largest wildfires in Arizona and New Mexico. In spite of these conditions, our increased firefighting resources were able to contain 98 percent of the wildfires at initial and extended attack stages. This helped to reduce the costs of large, devastating wildfires. In addition, we were able to accomplish fuels treatment in support of the National Fire Plan.

I am pleased to present the National Fire Plan accomplishments of the USDA Forest Service in Arizona and New Mexico during 2002. The Southwestern Region's National Fire Plan Report focuses on accomplishments in five key areas — firefighting resources, rehabilitation and restoration of burned areas, reduction of hazardous fuels, community assistance, and accountability.

All of us in the Southwestern Region appreciate your support of sound management of our national forests. Your continuing support will result in a natural resource legacy that will bring an enduring bounty to the people of the United States and the Southwest in particular.

As we begin 2003, we look forward to building on the accomplishments of the past 2 years with your partnership and support.



HARV FORSGREN
Regional Forester
Southwestern Region

Summary

In the Southwest, the winter of 2001/2002 produced below normal precipitation and snowpack. As the 2002 fire season drew near, the Southwest found itself in the fourth year of drought with no moisture relief in sight.

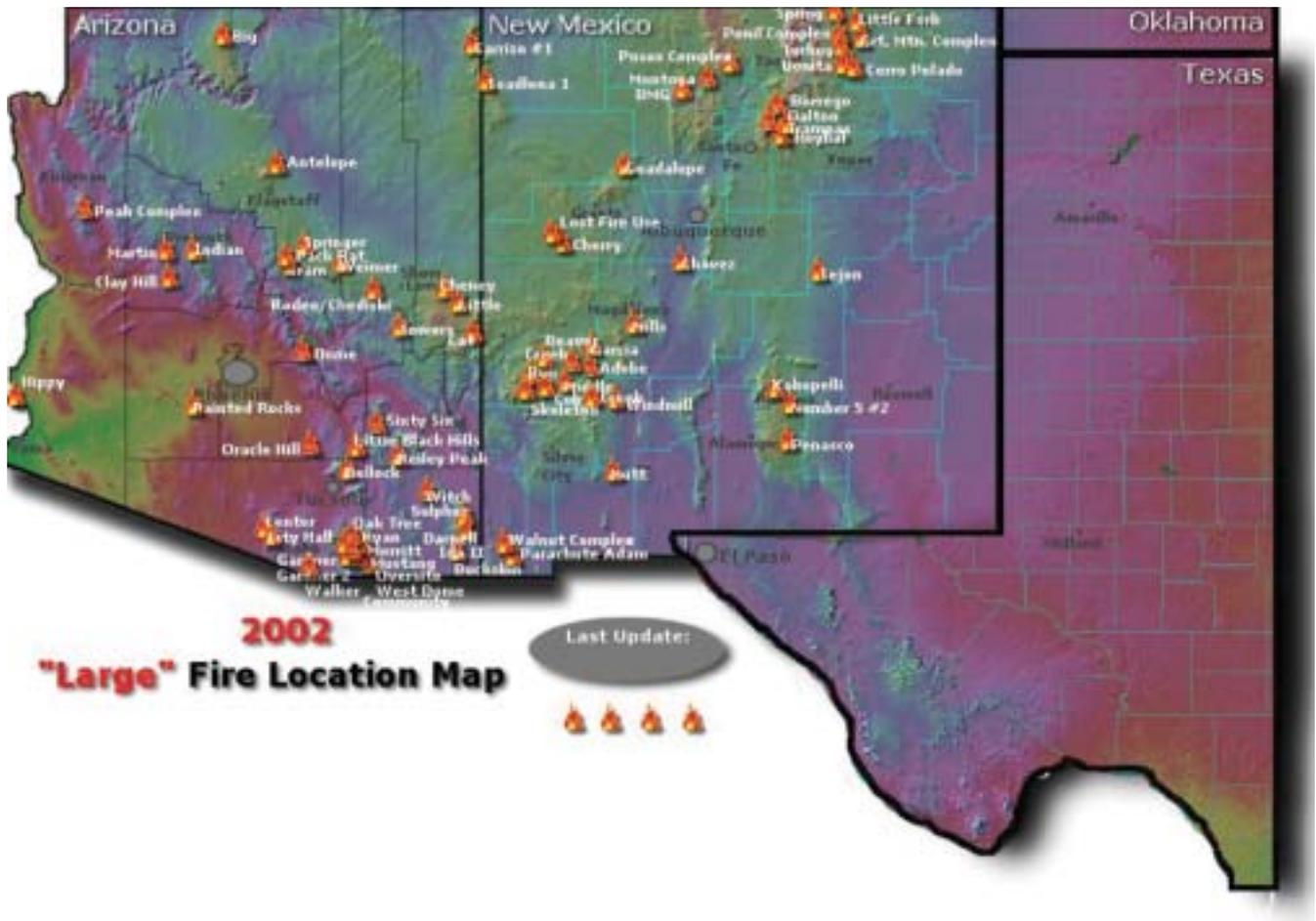
Snow water equivalents through March fell less than 50 percent of normal throughout the Southwest. Very warm weather (temperatures averaging more than 10° F above normal, along with widespread highs in the 70 and 80° range) depleted or melted the meager snowpack in Arizona, New Mexico, southern Utah, and southern Colorado.

On 33 days from mid-April through July in all or parts of the Southwest, "red flag warnings" were in effect, a term used by fire weather forecasters to alert forecast users to ongoing or imminent critical fire weather patterns. Records from the National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, North Carolina, which span 108 years, showed that in Arizona and New Mexico, May 2002 was the second driest such month on record, and the 28th warmest.

By year's end, following a summer of extreme burning conditions, over 617,346 acres had burned in Arizona and 285,310 in New Mexico, totaling over 900,000 acres.

Two recent fire seasons—1996 and 2000—are viewed as extreme fire years. The burned acres in 1996 totaled 352,961, and the year 2000 acreage totaled 602,165. The Southwest 10-year average for burned acreage is 390,539. Over 500 structures were lost due to wildfires in the Southwest in 2002.

Despite extreme weather and dry fuel conditions that contributed to intense fire behavior, no serious injuries or deaths occurred and many communities were spared the devastation of wildfire. Due to aggressive planning and the availability of severity and National Fire Plan resources, 98 percent of all fires in the Southwest were successfully contained upon initial attack.



Key Point 1: Fire Preparedness and Facilities

Fire Preparedness Resources

Preparedness funds give the USDA Forest Service the capability to prevent, detect, and perform initial attack on wildland fires. These funds also allow assistance to other Federal agencies, primarily Department of the Interior agencies, and the states of Arizona, New Mexico, southeastern Oklahoma, and western Texas with fire training, planning assistance, sharing of equipment contracts, and support to interagency fire coordination centers. The Southwestern Region has very strong interagency and state wildland firefighting partnerships coordinated through the Southwest Area Coordinating Group.



Fire on the Kiowa National Grassland, Cibola National Forest.



Evacuation of Show Low, Arizona during the Rodeo-Chediski Fire.

In 2001, the National Fire Plan provided funding for the Southwestern Region to meet, for the first time, full firefighting capability; previously, funding had been near 70 percent of full capability. This caused a major shift of fire management personnel in all agencies, moving between agencies and locations to fill new positions and also resulted in many new hires. Great strides were made in labor force diversity in the Southwest, filling over 30 percent of positions with highly qualified women and minorities. Some lack of trust in the dependability of such funds in the future was demonstrated by many managers who were conservative in hiring full-time and career positions with temporary employees. New equipment, such as engines, could not be rapidly procured from the manufacturers in FY 2001 and was acquired in FY 2002.

National Fire Plan Expected Funding Preparedness Targets

	FY 2000 (70% of Capability)	FY 2001 (100% of Capability)	FY 2002 (95% of Capability)
Engines	105	129	120
Helicopters	9	11	12
Dozers	8	13	12
Firefighters*	800	965	917

* These are production equivalents adjusted to tour of duty, etc. For example: in FY 2002, a total of 1,110 firefighters were actually hired over the season in the Southwest by the USDA Forest Service.

In 2002, the National Fire Plan provided funding at about 95 percent of full firefighting capability. The shifting of employees among agencies and locations continued through the fall, but settled down by mid-winter. Many new hires found that either location or job did not suit them and vacated positions. The need for increased training programs for entry-level positions became more evident. The 22 Wildland Firefighter Apprenticeship Program employees hired in 2001 dropped to 18. The 10 developmental positions established around the region continue to be successful with many of them ready to be placed in long-term, full-time fire positions. As the 2002 fire season developed into the most serious wildfire conditions since the 1950's, many key forest and regional fire positions were not filled due to the shifting of employees among positions. This created a need for detailing in from outside the region, hiring retirees as temporary employees, and contracting services of many fire positions in the Southwest during the fire season.

In 2002, an emphasis was placed on fire prevention and, specifically, the FIREWISE program. Six new presentations and six previously trained communities were assisted with prescriptions for treatments on private land, enabling them to work toward becoming FIREWISE communities. The City of Santa Fe continues to be a national leader as a demonstration community. The loss of 35 homes outside Ruidoso, New Mexico, in early April caused a renewed interest by communities in the Southwest to become FIREWISE.



Fire in the desert of Arizona.

Throughout the 2002 wildland fire season, there were many firefighting success stories as a direct result of the National Fire Plan. Here are three:

On May 14, 2002, firefighters were able to protect about 150 homes within a mile of the flame front of the Springer Fire near Blue Ridge, Arizona. This fire lessened in intensity after moving into an area that was treated by prescribed burning in the fall of 2001 and the spring of 2002.

On a warm May 15 afternoon, the Indian Fire started southwest of Prescott, Arizona. Erratic fire behavior was characterized by prolific spotting. The fire quickly reached a brush field that had been crushed into fine chips in 2001. Fire behavior and intensity immediately reduced significantly. This drastic change in fire behavior allowed for safe and effective fire suppression efforts to be focused on critical structural protection. Had the brush field not been treated through National Fire Plan funding, the imminent outcome would have been significant structure losses.

On June 22, 2002, the Rodeo-Chediski Fire flame front was approaching the Black Mesa Ranger District near Heber, Arizona, from the south. A thinning project behind the office had resulted in a 60 percent reduction in tree density. In addition, all remaining slash was piled and burned. When the fire approached this thinned area, the fire dropped out of the tree canopies, and became a ground fire. Firefighters were able to backfire from the project boundary toward the fire, and were able to save the ranger station.



Lead plane and air tanker on a fire in the Southwest.

By the middle of the wildfire season, it became evident that costs for large wildfire suppression were putting the agency in a deficit condition so restrictions were enacted that stopped the expenditure of preparedness funds for other than those necessary to maintain present forces. The result was devastating to many forests as purchases of engines, radios, and other equipment were shifted to cover the deficit. The combined effects of increased fixed costs to cover new personnel and the loss of funds due to the fire deficit now have many managers considering not filling vacant positions and holding personnel to short work tours until the budget stabilizes.

Fire Facilities

In fire facilities, the Southwestern Region originally was allocated \$1,250 million of an expected \$4,470 million due to early fire deficit projections. This was allocated to the Southwestern Region's highest priority project on the Lincoln National Forest. Unfortunately, the fire funding deficit eventually recalled all these funds and no projects were completed with FY 2002 dollars.

This was a great disappointment for completing National Fire Plan fire facilities projects. The 3 to 5 years of facility funding under the FY 2000 National Fire Plan was eliminated from the budget in FY 2002. Many planned projects affected directly the newly hired employees as adequate facilities did not exist at many sites to meet full capability staffing. Our emphasis continued to be health and safety of employees as a priority for the funds received and balancing expenditures throughout the region. In many cases, there was a backlog of such work to be completed on the forests due to the lack of emphasis on fire facilities under a normal construction funding schedule. Perhaps the greatest loss in the region was the non-funding of air tanker bases nearing completion due to the FY 2002 deficit. Even though

no projects were completed with 2002 dollars, the engineering staff was exceptional in their ingenuity and, where possible, other funds were leveraged with the available carryover FY 2001 National Fire Plan funds to accomplish some fire facilities work in FY 2002.

We were able to accomplish work on eight facilities and complete design work on one other.

New Mexico Facilities

- Carson NF - \$30,000 to replace natural gas lines
- Cibola NF - \$80,000 for Albuquerque Air Tanker Base upgrades
- Gila NF - \$30,000 for Silver City Air Tanker Base design
- Lincoln NF - \$15,000 for the Queen Water Project
- Santa Fe NF - \$30,000 for the Glorieta Lookout Project

Arizona Facilities

- Apache-Sitgreaves NF's - \$25,000 for the Lookout Tower Project
- Coconino NF - \$15,000 for Buck Mountain vault toilet
- Coronado NF - \$80,000 for Lagoon Change Order Project
- Kaibab NF - \$45,000 for Greenbase Helibase Septic System

Key Point 2: Rehabilitation and Restoration

Restore landscapes and rebuild communities damaged by wildfire.

The Southwestern Region received an additional \$548,800 in FY 2002 to supplement the \$19.2 million received in FY 2001 for implementation of the rehabilitation and restoration component of the National Fire Plan. These funds are targeted directly at restoration of landscapes damaged by the Cerro Grande, Viveash, Scott Able, Cree, Pumpkin, Saliz, Hidden Coon Creek, and Peak wildfires of 2000 and the LeRoux, Hidden/Devil's Den, Homestead, Snow, Bloodgood, and Pinatosa wildfires of 2001. In addition, over \$16,000,000 was authorized this year for emergency rehabilitation and stabilization of areas burned in 2002.

- NFP funds are tied to implementation programs spanning 1 to 3 years.
- NFP activities accomplished in FY 2002 included heritage site restoration, watershed restoration, road and trail rehabilitation, and invasive plant treatment and prevention.
- Of available NFP funding, 13 percent was obligated for FY 2002 activities.
- Emergency stabilization work focused on prevention of catastrophic erosion and flooding.

Rehabilitation, Restoration and Emergency Stabilization Accomplishments FY 2002

Southwestern Region	NFP Funds Obligated	NFP Accomplishments	Emergency Funds	Emergency Accomplishments
Arizona Forests	\$377,544	1,507 acres invasive plant 1,200 acres watershed 40 miles riparian 12 miles road and trail 19 heritage sites 59,000 acres monitoring	\$12,906,826	79,353 acres seeded 7,000 acres mulched 600 acres of erosion barriers 165 miles of road protection 20 miles of trail protection 43 miles of stream protection 11 heritage sites stabilized
New Mexico Forests	\$1,418,524		\$3,352,179	
Totals	\$1,796,068		\$16,259,005	



Aerial application of straw mulch after the Penasco Fire on the Lincoln National Forest in June 2002.

Success Story

Last spring and summer, disastrous fires in Arizona and New Mexico dictated prompt installation of preventative treatments prior to onset of the thunderstorm season. In a matter of only a few weeks, almost 80,000 burned acres were seeded with quick-growing, erosion-control grasses and 7,000 acres were mulched with straw. These treatments were focused on areas with high values at risk, such as communities (Heber/Overgaard, Prescott, Santa Cruz/Cordova, and subdivisions in Curtis & James Canyons) or property (Mt. Lemmon Highway, Philmont Scout Ranch) and critical natural or cultural resources. These treatments proved extremely successful, averting further disaster to the people and resources still reeling from the direct effects of the fires.



Channel structures like this one (above) after the Indian Fire on the Prescott National Forest are designed to trap sediment and minimize concentrated flows.

After the Indian Fire on the Prescott National Forest, more than 80 acres were treated with log erosion barriers in June 2002. This picture (left) taken in October shows their effectiveness in holding soil on the hillside and providing favorable site for grass re-establishment.



A total of 150 acres on the Indian Fire were hydromulched to prevent flooding of residences immediately downstream from the burned area (above).



This series of photos shows the effectiveness of straw mulch and seeding done on the Rodeo/Chediski Fire in early July.

Top left: An untreated area shortly after the fire in late June 2002. Note the bare ground in the foreground.



Middle: An aerielly seeded and mulched area viewed in early August 2002. The newly seeded grasses are just starting to grow under the protective cover of the straw mulch.

Lower right: The same aerielly seeded and mulched area viewed in late October 2002. Seeded grass is vigorously established and the mulch is barely seen below the grass.



Key Point 3: Hazardous Fuel Reduction

Invest in projects to reduce fire risk.

The strategies of the region's hazardous fuels projects are to protect communities, watersheds, and species at risk, and to restore and maintain fire-adapted ecosystems. Fire-adapted ecosystems are inherently safer for firefighters and the public. In order to restore and maintain fire-adapted ecosystems, the overaccumulation of surface fuels and dense vegetation must be reduced. In some cases, using fire at appropriate intensities can reduce this fuel loading. In other cases, mechanical treatments are required before burning to reduce fuel loading to sufficient levels so that fire can safely be re-introduced.

Emphasis for the region's projects has been to treat hazardous fuels around wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas. Projects with biomass utilization were encouraged to reduce the cost per acre of treatment.

Despite the predicted severe fire season, we were able to accomplish many projects in 2002. Program highlights include the following:

- The fall of 2001 was productive with excellent burning conditions. We were able to accomplish a significant number of acres of hazardous fuels reduction in WUI areas. Media and public support was excellent, without which fewer acres would have been accomplished.
- Free use permits were given to community members to remove fuels within



Fuels reduction in the Santa Fe Watershed.



May 15, 2002, the Indian Fire southwest of Prescott, Arizona. A brush crushing project reduced fire behavior and fire intensity on the left side of the photo which allowed for a successful suppression effort.



Pile burning in the winter.

a WUI area during the fall fire season.

- A WUI thinning project allowed salvage rights to the contractor to haul small-diameter material to a small local sawmill.
- Local communities were assisted with prescriptions for treatments on private land, enabling them to work toward becoming a FIREWISE community.
- A cooperative project was developed between a community and local sawmill operator to thin national forest land and adjacent private property, while protecting a major recreation area. Some of the small-diameter material from the project was salvaged to be shredded into animal bedding.
- Free use permits were issued to landowners who have private land adjacent to national forest land, allowing landowners to thin a small strip of national forest land adjacent to their property. In conjunction with the Forest Service, the remaining slash was removed or burned.
- The Pilot Stewardship Project allowed fuels reduction projects around communities to be divided into firewood blocks to be cut, and then sold for local community use.

FY 2002 Forest Goals and Accomplishments

		Funds Allocated	WUI Acres Planned	Total Acres Planned ¹	WUI Acres Accomplished	Total Acres Accomplished
Arizona	Apache-Sitgreaves	\$1,804,000	4,629	7,341	4,354	8,360
	Coconino	3,078,000	9,974	11,902	12,514	14,654
	Coronado	775,000	1,079	1,738	1,023	1,023
	Kaibab	1,174,000	1,820	7,620	1,640	8,408
	Prescott	1,346,000	6,185	10,185	1,088	1,388
	Tonto	1,327,000	466	9,727	1,760	7,735
	Totals	\$9,504,000	24,153	48,513	22,379	41,568
New Mexico	Carson	946,000	1,606	3,402	3,287	3,809
	Cibola	2,361,000	3,178	4,765	2,059	5,387
	Gila	2,331,000	640	22,815	495	17,413
	Lincoln	2,723,000	5,350	12,950	4,299	8,974
	Santa Fe	2,760,000	4,216	9,106	1,850	4,804
	Totals	\$11,121,000	14,990	53,038	11,990	40,387
Regional Totals		\$20,625,000	39,143	101,551	34,369	81,955

¹ Total target acres include both WUI acres and other national forest areas to be treated.

- A summary of National Fire Plan accomplishments and success stories is posted on the Internet for public information.



Coordination with all partners on a prescribed burn.

- Early in the spring when it became evident that prescribed burning projects would have to be curtailed due to the dry conditions, some projects were shifted from prescribed burning treatments to mechanical treatments. Mid-fire season, the costs of wildfire suppression exceeded the budgeted funding. Expenditures for fuels treatment projects were restricted, curtailing numerous

projects (mainly mechanical treatments) that had not been contracted at that point. Most of these projects were put on hold until the fall of 2002.



Thinning project on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests that reduced fire behavior on the Rodeo-Chediski Fire.

Key Point 4: Community Assistance

Work directly with communities to ensure adequate protection.

Rural Community Assistance (Economic Action Program)

The National Fire Plan included funding for community assistance and for a program to explore economic use of small-diameter forest products (titled “Economic Action”). Specifically, the Economic Action Program was to develop proposals for the economic use of small-diameter and underutilized tree species derived from forest restoration, wildland-urban interface, fuel reduction, and pilot projects within Arizona and New Mexico. These funds are to encourage grassroots ideas and solutions best suited to local communities for reducing wildfire risk. They are to assist in restoration of forest resiliency and to protect watersheds and the environment. The goals of the grants are to:

- Encourage local enterprises to expand and develop ways to utilize materials removed during hazardous fuels management activities and, in so doing, reduce the risk to communities from catastrophic wildfires;
- Provide incentives and economic opportunities for rural communities to expand markets for small-diameter products using the local workforce; and



New Mexico Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department Capitan District Forester Barbara Luna explains the State Fire Assistance cost-share program to Ruidoso property owners.

- Develop innovative pilot projects that demonstrate the use of small-diameter and underutilized materials. (Examples include, but are not limited to, bioenergy applications, ethanol production, compost, landscape mulch, round timber construction applications, etc.).

Funding has been allocated for technical assistance, training and education, equipment, marketing, and costs associated with making these services available to tribal nations, state and Federal agencies, state foresters, local governments, not-for-profit organizations, and others who extend services to rural communities. However, land and business purchase, and hazardous fuels treatment are not valid expenditures.



Different views of a home that survived the Kokopelli Fire in March 2002 in Ruidoso, New Mexico. Local officials believe that the house survived when neighboring houses did not because the homeowners created survivable space around the house prior to the fire.

In FY 2002, the Southwestern Region received approximately \$1.2 million for the Economic Action Program. There were over 80 grant requests, with funding requests over \$13 million. A total of 17 projects were selected: 7 in New Mexico and 10 in Arizona. Total amount to be awarded was \$1,162,000 (\$650,000 in New Mexico and \$512,000 in Arizona). Projects were selected for funding but, due to internal transfer of funds for wildland fire suppression, no proposals were funded for 2002.

Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (New Mexico Only)

Working together for New Mexico's Forests and Communities

The Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP) is a new approach to building agreement among people and organizations who care about New Mexico's public forest land. The CFRP program was established by the Community Forest Restoration Act of 2000 (Title VI, Public Law 106-393), authorizing \$5 million per year for 5 years (2001-2005).

The program provides grants for projects that restore forests on public or tribal land and improve the use of small trees thinned from those lands. Organizations that have often been in conflict are encouraged to collaborate on the design, implementation, and monitoring of projects that value local and traditional knowledge, create healthy and productive forests and watersheds, and build ownership and civic pride.



Before and after fuels reduction project in the Albuquerque bosque by the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District.

The CFRP provides an alternative to appeals and litigation over the management of our public forest lands. By working together, small business owners, conservation and environmental organizations, community groups, tribes, colleges, universities, and other organizations can qualify for CFRP grants for forest restoration projects that reduce the threat of wildfire, improve watershed conditions, and provide jobs and training to local communities.

State, local and tribal governments, educational institutions, landowners, conservation organizations, and other interested public and private entities can apply. Restoration projects must be entirely on or on any combination of Federal, tribal, state, county, or municipal forest lands. The program does not provide grants for the treatment of private land, but CFRP grants can be used for processing facilities on private land that use small trees from thinning projects on public land.

The purpose of the program is to:

- Promote healthy watersheds and reduce the threat of large, high-intensity wildfires, insect infestation, and disease;
- Improve the functioning of forest ecosystems and enhance plant and wildlife biodiversity by reducing the unnaturally high number and density of small-diameter trees on Federal, tribal, state, county, and municipal forest lands in New Mexico;
- Improve communication and joint problem solving among individuals and groups who are interested in restoring the diversity and productivity of forested watersheds in New Mexico;



- Improve the use of, or add value to, small-diameter trees;
- Encourage sustainable communities and sustainable forests through collaborative partnerships whose objectives are forest restoration; and
- Develop, demonstrate, and evaluate ecologically sound forest restoration techniques.

The objectives of the program are to:

- Reduce the threat of large, intense wildfires and the negative effects of excessive competition among trees by restoring ecosystem functions, structures, and species composition, including the reduction of non-native species populations;
- Re-establish fire regimes approximating those that shaped forest ecosystems prior to fire suppression;
- Replant trees in deforested areas if they exist in the proposed project area; and
- Create local employment or training opportunities (including summer youth job programs) within the context of accomplishing forest restoration objectives.

Cooperative Fire and Cooperative Forestry National Fire Plan Program Grants

Grant Description	New Mexico Funding	Arizona Funding
Wildland-Urban Interface Grants (Hazardous Fuel Treatment)	\$3,056,500	\$2,221,500
All Other Types of Grants	\$300,000	\$364,000
Totals	\$3,356,500	\$2,585,500

**Includes Cooperative Fire Protection - Volunteer Fire Assistance and Cooperative Lands Forest Health Management.*

In 2002 there were 27 grant requests, with funding requests over \$15 million. Fifteen projects were selected for funding for approximately \$4,575,000, but due to internal transfer of funds for wildland fire suppression, grants were not funded in FY 2002.

Cooperative Fire and Cooperative Forestry National Fire Plan Program Grants

The Southwestern Region received approximately \$5.9 million for National Fire Plan program grants to expand efforts aimed at restoring areas destroyed and damaged by FY 2000 wildland fires and to protect communities in the high-risk wildland-urban interface from future damage. These grants were aimed at:

- Wildland-Urban Interface Grants for high priority fuel treatments, FIREWISE, and other education and community hazard mitigation projects.
- Volunteer Fire Assistance is for training, equipment, organization, and prevention projects that are targeted at local volunteer fire departments.
 - Cooperative Lands Forest Health Management is for aerial surveys for forest health monitoring.
 - Hazard Mitigation funds are to provide high priority mitigation projects in areas most affected by wildland fires in 2000.

Success Stories

Volunteer Fire Assistance

In Arizona, approximately 3,000 firefighters were trained, 350 pieces of safety equipment and 75 pieces of communication equipment were purchased, one new fire district was formed, and 170 communities were assisted.

In New Mexico, approximately 4 counties were able to fund wildland coordinators, and 245 communities were assisted.

State Fire Assistance

In Arizona, 31 applications were funded for programs ranging from homeowners brochure development, public education, and FIREWISE presentations to thinning and prescribed burning. One of the projects around Prescott,

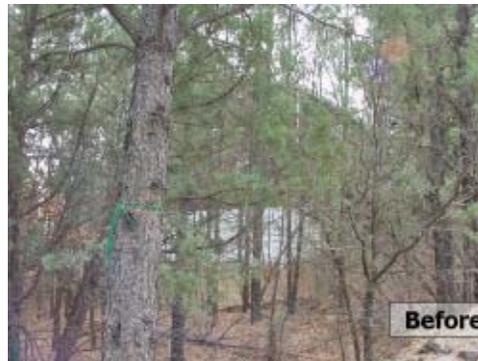
Arizona, thinned approximately 200 acres surrounding the community. This thinning protected the community when a fire threatened the community.

In New Mexico, 10 of the listed 20 most vulnerable wildland-urban interface communities in New Mexico received funding for landowner fuels reduction and defensible space treatments.



Unloading dock for small-diameter materials entering SBS Wood Shavings chipping facility in Ruidoso (above).

State fire assistance wildland-urban interface cost-share grant helped this homeowner in northern New Mexico create defensible space around their home (center 2 photos).



USDA Forest Service land manager working with contract thinners and El Molina Sawmill in Ruidoso, New Mexico, to maximize the economic efficiency of treatment and getting as much material out of the woods as possible (left).

Key Point 5: Accountability

Be accountable and establish adequate oversight and monitoring for results.

A significant key to the region's success in implementing the National Fire Plan was the Regional Forester's involvement in and emphasis on making the National Fire Plan a top regional priority from its inception.

- The National Fire Plan Regional Team has met monthly to discuss accomplishments, success stories, and issues.
- Each forest has a designated NFP coordinator to liaison with the Regional Team.
- State Interagency Coordination Teams met monthly to ensure interagency communication and collaboration among all National Fire Plan partners.

All of these entities were developed under the umbrella of the Southwest Strategy, so that there is a common tie among all organizations. The Southwest Strategy is a community development and natural resources conservation and management effort by Federal, state, tribal and local governments. Forests have worked with partners to develop interagency and community interaction at the ground level, which promotes continuity in project development,

grant proposals, and entrepreneurship in biomass utilization.

- The National Fire Plan team was "front and center" at each Regional Leadership Team meeting.

The region has maintained the NFPinfo national database with monthly updates to insure that accomplishments can be monitored. Additional database training has been provided to forests to further their ability to monitor accomplishments.

Standardized protocols were created for collection of inventory and monitoring data for future use with the Geographic Information System (GIS) and Natural Resource Information System (NRIS). Regional personnel have spent considerable time teaching forest personnel how to use various programs to predict fire behavior for use in fuels analysis and preparation of their fire management plans.

- Regional crews were hired to collect data for use in fuels analysis and to monitor projects.

Need More Information?

Visit one of these websites:

www.fs.fed.us/r3/

Provides access to regional updates on progress in implementing the National Fire Plan, and other regional fire information.

www.fireplan.gov

Provides information on planning and analysis at the national level of the USDA Forest Service and Department of the Interior agencies for implementing the National Fire Plan.