National Fire Plan

Secesh Community Fuels Reduction
Payette National Forest
2007

Project Description: The central Idaho community of Secesh Meadows exists along a meadow surrounded by sub alpine fir and lodgepole pine. Based on the surrounding environment, immediate fire hazards, and area history, Secesh Meadows was identified "at risk" from wildland fires by the 2002 National Fire Plan and the 2003 Idaho County Fire Mitigation plan.

Prior to the fires of 2007, the community took a proactive approach and began a process of designing and building defensible space around their homes. Local residents worked with the Payette National Forest to thin timber stands, creating more protection for their community and improving the forest ecosystem. Homes were protected and firefighters had a place to safely engage a large wildland fire.

Implementation Plan and Accomplishment to Date: Following the planning process, the Payette National Forest was able to begin work on national forest lands surrounding Secesh, in 2005. A contract was awarded to pre-commercial thin existing timber stands and hand-pile the excess ensuring the removal of hazardous fuel build-up, overgrown trees, brush and grasses. Forest Service crews were responsible for burning the stacked piles.

The community received grant money to do similar work on private land adjacent to what the Forest Service had previously initiated. The creation of defensible space effectively increased the crown, treetop, spacing and reduced the hazardous fuels in the community and surrounding timber stands.

Tested by fire: In the summer of 2007, Secesh Meadows was threatened by the 215,000 acre Loon-Zena fire. It burned around and past the community of Secesh. The fire threatened the community for several days and continued burning in the forest for another month. Ultimately, the work performed by the community and the U.S. Forest Service allowed firefighters to defend the area and save every structure in Secesh.

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Congressional District 1