



Rocky Mountain National Park Fire Management November 2003



Estes Valley Fire Education Partnership Initiated

A \$25,000 National Fire Plan Community Assistance Grant provided cooperative fire education opportunities to residents of the Estes Valley this past summer. An interagency partnership comprised of the Colorado State Forest Service, Larimer County, the United States Forest Service - Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, the Estes Park Volunteer Fire Department and the National Park Service - Rocky Mountain National Park, contributed to the overall success of the program.

The National Park Service provided grant funding to the Colorado State Forest Service to hire, train, support and supervise a seasonal fire education coordinator. The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests provided logistical support, while Larimer County and the Estes Park Volunteer Fire Department provided additional training and support services and also established a community slash collection site.

Tanna Babiak was selected to serve as the fire education coordinator for this six-month assignment. She operated as a centralized point of contact for residents interested in obtaining wildfire safety information. Her duties also included staffing the interagency Firewise booth at various community events, representing the agencies at meetings and training sessions, assisting homeowners with property evaluations and mitigation projects, providing information to park visitors during prescribed burns and even writing Firewise columns for a local newspaper.

This program supplied a much-needed coordinated outreach effort between the fire management agencies. "I'm very pleased with this endeavor and hope it can continue next year," said Mike Babler, Fort Collins District Forester. "I feel like we really made some progress. We are doing a much better job of working together to reach out and present a consistent fire education message across this community." The other agency representatives also expressed satisfaction with this collaborative effort and feedback received from the local residents has been very positive.

