



Rocky Mountain National Park Fire Management

March 2003



FireWorks for Educators

Fireworks are strictly prohibited within National Parks, except when FireWorks refers to the educational curriculum package which promotes the understanding of the ecological role fire plays. National Fire Plan Community Assistance/Education funding was used to purchase a FireWorks trunk filled with laboratory materials, specimens and reference guides to support the curriculum-based program.

In addition, a 16-hour workshop to introduce educators to the FireWorks program, Project Learning Tree fire activities, the Burning Issues interactive CD and other fire education materials was held at the park in March. These interdisciplinary fire education programs meet the established educational curriculum requirements not only for science and environmental education, but also for math, reading, writing, art and social studies. National Park Service and Colorado State Forest Service education specialists along with Project Learning Tree volunteers served as the instructors.

Participants not only learned about the dangers, but also more importantly about the many beneficial aspects of wildland fire. Workshop activities included conducting a variety of fire experiments, learning interactive computer applications and presenting lessons from the various resource guides. A field session provided the opportunity to observe slash pile burning operations, practice fire effects monitoring techniques and a chance for teachers to interact with fire management staff. Free teaching materials were distributed to participants and college credit for teacher certification was made available through the Colorado School of Mines for a small registration fee.

Workshop evaluations indicated that most participants were pleased to learn of the wide variety of fire education materials that have already been developed and can be readily implemented. Perhaps one comment sums it up best, "Instead of just teaching kids about the fear, I will teach them how fire works."

Call 970-586-1264 for more information about the FireWorks trunk located at Rocky Mountain National Park or visit <http://www.firelab.org> for a national list of FireWorks workshops and locations where trunks are available for loan.

