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Bridger-Teton National Forest

Teton Interagency Fire Management

Fire Information Class Targets Local Community



Training offered through the Teton Interagency Fire Education program this past June shared fire information with local community members and helped develop a pool of resources to utilize on future fire management activities. Comprised of primarily teachers, retired individuals, and current or past federal employees, the class of 17 participants expressed an interest in assisting with fire information on a short-term, interim basis if needed. The class was specifically designed for the general public with limited knowledge of fire management policies or the Incident Command System used in managing wildland fire incidents.

Students began by discussing what happens when a fire is first reported, brainstorming definitions and operations associated with both suppression fires and wildland fire use incidents. The instructors detailed management considerations such as the cause of the fire, location, time of season, and severity. The students used recent local incidents to review past management decisions. Discussions then led to tactics and available resources that may be utilized to manage a fire. Information on complexity levels, national preparedness levels, and the Incident Command System rounded out the morning session and gave participants a general overview of the wildland fire organization.

The afternoon session focused on the information function of a wildland fire. Students were shown key sources for gathering information including ICS- 209 forms, local and national web pages, and news releases. Basic fire information and community outreach duties such as distributing updates, fielding questions, and conducting roving operations were also covered. These are the areas where additional assistance is frequently needed and local personnel with knowledge of the area can be very beneficial. Safety and documentation practices were also emphasized.

Evaluations for the first-time course were very positive:

Great information. It really helped to pull bits and pieces together for me.

All the information seemed very useful - nothing was greater than the whole message.

Good introduction for the uninitiated.

Instructors disseminated a great mass of information in a very comprehensible, comfortable manner.

While not part of the Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS), the class served to peak interest and increase knowledge of fire management activities. It will also allow local residents an opportunity to share their knowledge and become involved in the Teton Interagency Fire Management program.