



Zion National Park Fire Management

East Boundary Fuel Reduction Treatments

Zion National Park recently completed some fuels reduction treatments along its eastern boundary as part of our ongoing program to reduce the risks of wildland fire to neighboring communities and private landowners. These treatments combined work completed by both Zion Fire Management personnel and a local contract crew and are just part of a series of hazard fuel reduction treatments either completed or planned for Zion National Park.

These treatments were funded under the wildland urban interface (WUI) program, in cooperation with the National Fire Plan, the Healthy Forest Act, and the Interagency Cohesive Strategy. Local land managers within the Color Country Interagency Fire Management Area have identified this area along the eastern boundary of Zion National Park as a high priority for fuels treatments. This region is also known as the “East Zion Focus Area,” and involves a collaborative effort by federal and state land management agencies as well as private landowners and/or stakeholders within the Color Country Interagency Fire Management Area.

Zion and contract crews mechanically treated the fuels immediately adjacent to the eastern park boundary to create up to a 200-foot wide fuel break, thus reducing the risk of a wildland fire escaping onto privately owned properties outside the park. Treatment standards focused on reducing the overall vegetative coverage and fuel loading, while increasing overstory tree crown spacing. This was accomplished by treating live and dead fuels, using a combination of bucking, thinning, limbing, and falling techniques. Periodic follow-up treatments may be necessary to maintain the desired fuels condition. These treatments will also allow for a cleared handline to be installed immediately along the boundary fenceline in strategic locations so that other fire management techniques such as prescribed fire and fire use fires may be utilized in the future.

The east boundary fuels treatments covered nearly five linear miles and encompassed approximately 75 acres. The treatments will tie into the planned Clear Trap and East Mesa Prescribed Burn Units eventually creating a total of 8.2 miles of fuel reduction along the park’s eastern boundary.

By completing these WUI fuels treatments (and others planned for the future) along its eastern boundary, Zion National Park Fire Management is meeting the goals of the National Fire Plan by reducing hazardous fuel and providing for a greater margin of safety from wildland fire.

