



American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

Poppet Flat, Southern California

Category: Hazardous Fuels Reduction

BLM
California

Fuels Reduction Project Helps Protect California Community

As urban and suburban communities in Southern California have expand into once remote areas, residential communities have become increasingly vulnerable to the explosive wildfires that occur in California's desert ecosystems. Removing or reducing fire-prone vegetation in and around these communities can reduce the threat.

The BLM is using ARRA funding for multiple treatments to reduce hazardous fuels around communities at risk in the wildland-urban interface of Riverside and San Diego counties.

One such project is a \$35,000 ARRA funded program of hazardous fuels reduction that will help protect the community of Poppet Flat in the foothills of the San Jacinto Mountains of Southern California. The job provided temporary employment for a crew of 13 people. During the offseason, the contractor – Firestorm Wildland Fire Suppression, Inc. – was able to hire people from the local reservation of the Cahuilla Band of Indians, where unemployment was high. These job opportunities came at a good time.

In addition, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is now planning to help employees from the reservation form certified fire fighting and fire suppression crews to continue this type of work. The BIA al-



Workers on the project, including those who live on the reservation of the Cahuilla Band of Indians, where jobs are hard to come by.

ready has paid for the safety training classes needed by the recruits while the Department of Labor bought the men boots and gloves for the job.

This project is part of the larger active cooperative program for planning and implementing hazardous fuels reduction projects at a landscape scale across jurisdictional boundaries. Partners include the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, CALFIRE, municipal fire departments, water districts, non-governmental land management organizations, homeowners associations, and a number of Fire Safe councils. This larger \$500,000 ARRA project is employing contractors and contracted youth crews to treat 1,795 acres. The project began in October 2009 with completion expected in December 2010.

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U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

