

Snapshots

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BLM

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Arizona

Sports, Veterans, and the BLM Merge to Create a Strong Fire Mitigation Partnership

The BLM in Arizona teamed up with the Arizona Cardinals and the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) to spread a conventional message in an unconventional way.

The Cardinal Organization also pitched the idea of incorporating a fire mitigation message on the 5” x 7” player cards produced by the Disabled American Veterans. These cards are autographed by the players when they appear at events around the community. The DAV produces player action cards for all 32 teams in the National Football League. After being asked, the DAV agreed to include a fire education message on the back of the Arizona Cardinal player cards. The layout, design, and printing of the cards were provided by the DAV free of charge.

The BLM Arizona requested 15,000 of these cards on the first order, along with the Arizona Cardinals requesting their own cards for distribution during team functions throughout the year. This agreement

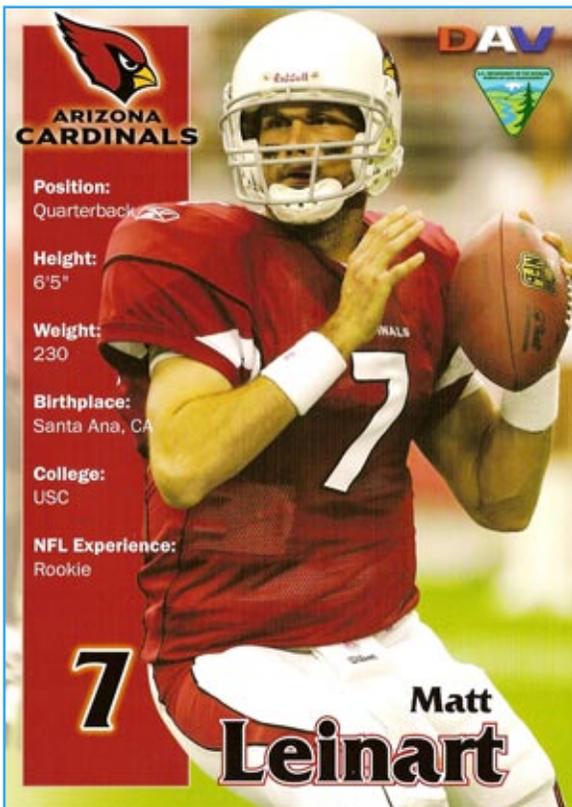
between the Cardinal organization and the BLM means that each time the Cardinals organization requests printed cards from the DAV for new players or to replenish their stock, the fire mitigation message will appear on the back. The BLM will also be able to request cards from the DAV at the same time the Cardinals make their requests. This spreads the message of fire safety in two ways: BLM employees distributing these cards at events as well as the Cardinals distributing these cards at their community functions. Through the DAV, BLM Arizona is currently working to create partnerships with NASCAR and the Arizona Diamondbacks to create cards with a fire prevention/mitigation messages as well.

The DAV is an organization of disabled veterans who are focused on building better lives for disabled veterans and their families. The organization accomplishes this goal by providing free assistance to veterans and their families in obtaining benefits through their military service. It is not a government agency and receives no government funds.

BLM is reaching an unconventional audience in an unconventional way, hopefully with positive results.

Basketball Legend Lute Olson, Donates his Time and Talent to Firewise

Lute Olson, in his 24th season as the head basketball coach of the University of Arizona Wildcats, has become one of the preeminent figures on the national collegiate basketball landscape. He is also a recognizable Arizona celebrity. For these reasons and many others, BLM was thrilled when Lute agreed to donate his name and time to support the Firewise program.



Front (left) and back (above) of the action card.



Starting in April 2006 and concluding in June 2006, the Arizona State Office and the Gila District Fire Management programs began airing thirty-second TV and radio spots with Coach Lute Olson as the Firewise spokesperson. These Public Service Announcements (PSA) were aired through the television and radio throughout the state. More than 3,500 TV and nearly 7,000 radio spots played over the course of three months in Arizona. The TV spots aired on Phoenix and Tucson stations and the radio PSA's played at stations around Arizona.



University of Arizona Men's Basketball Coach Lute Olson.

Funding was made available to pay for production of the TV and radio PSA's in effort to spread the Firewise message across the entire state of Arizona. About one-fourth of the PSA's were inserted for free over the course of several months. Overall, 10,000 PSA's were delivered in the state during the 2006 fire season.

These PSAs raised awareness throughout Arizona about the threat of wildfires as well as explaining what each individual can do to protect themselves against risks posed by wildfires.

Montana

Defensible Space Message Hits the Highways

For the consecutive fourth year, the defensible space message is hitting the highways of Montana. Now, some of Montana's Mitigation and Education Specialists have expanded their reach from the western zone to include the entire state of Montana.

Thirteen billboards will carry the message this summer along roads leading to and from cities and towns of Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Deer Lodge, Dillon, Glendive, Helena, Lewistown, Livingston, Miles City and Missoula. The billboards will be posted from June through August to inform the driving audience about defensible space.

This year's theme, "The little things can make a big difference...create defensible space" joins those of previous years, including the following: "Got clearance?"; "You make the choice...defensible space makes the difference"; and "How fast can your house run?"

For more information, contact Mitigation and Education Specialists Dena Lang at 406-233-2907 or Terina Mullen at 406-533-7665.



Billboards like this one will be appearing this summer along roads in Montana.



Wyoming

Meeks Cabin Fuel Break Protects Subdivision

The BLM Kemmerer Field Office just completed constructing a fuel break in the Meeks Cabin area around the Tokewanna Estates subdivision.

The Meeks Cabin area comprises intermingled private summer homes including Tokewanna Estates, which lies adjacent to BLM administered forestlands forming a forested urban setting. This area was identified as a Community at Risk for wildland fire. The 1.5 mile fuel break is located along a forest access road just west of Meeks Cabin Reservoir. In November 2006, about 50 acres were treated and over 200 slash piles were burned.

The BLM forestlands were heavily stocked with mature lodgepole pine, subalpine fir and aspen. Mountain pine beetle in the lodgepole pine component had caused considerable mortality. Dead standing trees, downed woody material, and intermediate aged under-story trees forming ladder fuels, created a highly hazardous fuel condition.

The Wyoming State Forestry Division, and Uinta County Fire District are also working on this project by meeting with individual summer home owners to modify and reduce the forested vegetation adjacent to their homes and reduce the risk of wildfire. The fuel break was needed on the south and west side of the summer homes in an effort to help protect this subdivision.

This fuel break will help prevent a fire from spreading into the subdivision by dropping fire onto the forest floor where equipment would be more effective in fighting fires. The fuel break could also provides a point to back burn if a fire approached from the south or west. The



BLM crews worked with the county and state on this firebreak to protect the subdivision.



The removed vegetation was piled by the contractor and BLM fuels crews and then the slash piles were burned by the BLM this past November.



Other projects totaling approximately 300 acres are now planned in the area between the fuel break and the subdivision to reduce hazardous fuels, restore aspen on the landscape, and decrease the threat of fire in the urban interface.



BLM's forestlands were heavily stocked with mature lodgepole pine, subalpine fir and aspen.

forest vegetation along the fuel break was heavily thinned, approximately 100 feet on both sides of the forest access road. This is another option to slow or stop the advance of a fire.



Powder River Properties Wildland Urban Interface

The BLM Buffalo Field Office and an interagency coalition have partnered with the Powder River Properties subdivision to address hazardous fuels in and adjoining the subdivision. Agencies involved include: BLM, Wyoming State Forestry, Johnson County Wildland Fire Mitigation Coordinator office, Johnson County Fire District, and US Forest Service (USFS).

Powder River Properties (PRP) subdivision is located in southwest Johnson County, Wyoming. The scenic subdivision is nestled in Bighorn Mountains at an elevation of 8500 feet and overlooks the North Fork of Powder River valley and Dull knife Reservoir. Subdivision lots and cabin sites and subdivision access roads were carved from dense stands of “doghair” lodgepole pine forest having high volumes of dead and down fuels.

In an effort to maintain the scenic value of the property, the subdivision developer encouraged subdivision property owners to form a property owners association and enact covenants governing development of property within the subdivision. In one of their first association meetings, the group discussed the condition of the forest stands and the need to improve the defensibility of their property from wildfire.

In early 2003, property owners approached District Forester Mike Hoestetler, to inquire about forest



BLM land, densely stocked with lodgepole pine, adjacent to the subdivision.

management and hazardous fuel treatments. Hoestetler worked with individual property owners to conduct a hazardous fuels assessment and prepare a mitigation plan. The hazardous fuels assessment and mitigation plan were completed in the fall of 2004.

An important aspect of the mitigation plan was recognition that hazardous fuels did not stop at the subdivision boundary. Hazardous fuels extended onto land administered by BLM on the west and to the north by both Wyoming State Land Trust and the US Forest Service. Early in 2005, representatives from each of the agencies met with individual property owners to discuss a coordinated approach to addressing the hazardous fuel situation.



Powder River Properties subdivision overlooking Dull Knife Reservoir.





Mechanized logging operations using a forward skidder on fuel breaks within the subdivision.

The interagency group had worked together previously in developing the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for Johnson County and were familiar with the hazardous fuels issues associated with the subdivision. The CWPP identified the PRP subdivision as part of the county's number two priority for hazardous fuels reduction. In late 2005, the interagency group organized themselves as the Johnson County Fire Mitigation Committee. This committee consisted of representatives from the agencies mentioned previously and added representatives from the City of Buffalo and Johnson County Emergency Services.

The Mitigation Committee led by the County Fire Mitigation Coordinator, Jim Shell, focused their efforts on providing education on firewise planning by meeting with individual property owners and sponsoring a one day workshop. The Mitigation Committee also continued to coordinate individual agencies' plans for hazardous fuels mitigation work.

As a result, BLM and Wyoming State Forestry agreed to design fuel breaks on their public lands. The fuel breaks would achieve the agencies' forest health and resource management objectives and reinforce the mitigation work in the subdivision. BLM also moved forward with plans to conduct a broadcast prescribed fire on land adjacent to the subdivision.

USFS initiated planning to design visual resource sensitive fuel mitigation treatments on the National Forest that would enhance the work planned on adjoining off-forest property. The Forest Service also agreed to authorize use of existing roads for removal of forest products from the State and BLM land.



BLM's objectives on public lands adjacent to the subdivision are to use both prescribed fire and mechanical treatments to favor aspen regeneration. Post treatment image shows first order fire effects on sagebrush, conifer, and aspen vegetation.

By the fall of 2005, landowners had started to implement hazardous fuels mitigation treatments recommended in the Mitigation Plan. Property owners contracted with a local sawmill that used mechanical equipment that cut, limbed, and sorted the commercial products harvested to create fuel breaks and defensible space at cabin sites. The logger used a forwarding skidder to move logs to the landing sites where log trucks picked them up. This harvest process maximized the volume of material removed while reducing the time required for completing the logging operation and the amount of surface disturbance to the forest.

In the fall of 2005, BLM initiated the implementation of a prescribed burn on public lands adjacent to the subdivision. Management objectives of the 80 acre prescribed fire were to reduce conifer encroachment in the sagebrush site, stimulate aspen regeneration, improve forage and habitat conditions for wildlife, and reduce hazardous fuels in the urban interface. Initial post treatment monitoring indicates that we are meeting these objectives.

In 2006, BLM scheduled fuel break work on public lands adjacent to the subdivision. Objectives were to design the fuel breaks in a visually sensitive manner that would accomplish both forestry and hazardous fuels management objectives. Fuel breaks were laid out so that they anchored at the edge of natural meadow openings and contoured to tie into the fuel breaks on adjacent state and private properties. The fuel breaks were also designed to stimulate aspen regeneration by removing competing conifer trees from remnant aspen stands.



Cindy Allen, BLM's forester completed an inventory of the proposed fuel break areas to determine the volume of forest products available. The eleven acre fuel breaks were found to have a volume of about 31,000 board feet (31 MBF) of which 21 MBF were post and pole and 10 MBF sawtimber. Given the relatively small volumes involved on BLM, Cindy worked closely with the Wyoming State Forester to coordinate the fuel break work on BLM with work planned on the adjacent state property.

In the summer of 2006, BLM offered the fuels work as a stewardship contract where the value of the forest products was offered to offset the cost of the fuel break construction costs. L & L Sawmill was the successful bidder. Their bid offer was to complete all of the fuel break work as specified in the contract and \$2,850 for the

value of the forest products. BLM issued the notice to proceed for the fuel break work on February 8, 2007 and expect work to be complete by the end of March 2007.

The relationship between the private landowners and the agency representatives that was established through the Johnson County Fire Mitigation Committee played an important role in getting the hazardous fuels mitigation work done. BLM's stewardship contract work would have been much more difficult to implement without the cooperation of the agencies and individual group members. Based on their successful work in the Powder River Properties Wildland Urban Interface, the Mitigation Committee members have agreed to extend this collaborative and cooperative approach to address other hazardous fuels situations in the county.



Fuel Break logging operations on private land within the subdivision showing the removal of conifer trees to stimulate aspen regeneration. BLM's stewardship contract specifies the same low impact logging operations as used on private property within the subdivision.

