



FRONT RANGE FUELS TREATMENT PARTNERSHIP
2005 Annual Report

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THE FRONT RANGE FUELS TREATMENT PARTNERSHIP

COLORADO STATE FOREST SERVICE • NATIONAL PARK SERVICE • USDA FOREST SERVICE

Colorado's Front Range includes an explosive mix of homes situated within forest areas. These wildland-urban interface zones place people, homes, communities, and natural resources at significant risk from catastrophic wildfires. Impacts to the Front Range from catastrophic wildfires in 2002 were some of the most devastating in the United States.

Increased community sustainability and safety provided through the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership Implementation Strategy benefits local landowners, local governments, the State of Colorado, and the nation.

The Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership is a dynamic partnership comprised of federal, state and local governments, land-management agencies, private landowners, conservation organizations, and other stakeholders. The purpose of the Partnership is to reduce wildland fire risks through sustained fuels treatment along Colorado's Front Range.

The primary goal of the Partnership is to enhance community sustainability and restore fire-adapted ecosystems over a 10-year period. Key to success is extensive participation from local governments; public involvement; collaboration in identifying and supporting specific project areas and types of treatment;

and building on successful projects such as the Upper South Platte Watershed Restoration Project, the Winiger Ridge Project, research at Cheesman Reservoir, and the Polhemus prescribed burn.

Partnership agencies conducted a large-scale rapid assessment of hazardous fuel conditions along the Front Range to identify large areas where treatment needs are of greatest concern. As a result of the assessment, maps were developed that delineate areas of low to very high hazard, risk, and values. The most immediate needs are demonstrated where the ratings for hazard, risk and value are all very high. A similar assessment was completed for non-federal lands in the interface where hazardous fuels place communities at risk. The assessments indicate that approximately 510,000 acres are high priority for treatment—300,000 acres within the Pike National Forest, 140,000 acres within the Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forests, and 70,000 acres of non-federal land.

The following report discusses the progress that has been made in fostering collaboration, working with communities to develop and implement Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and treating hazardous fuels along the Front Range of Colorado.

Top image: Firefighters monitor a prescribed burn in Jefferson County (photo by Jen Chase). Bottom images, from left: Smoke from the 2002 Hayman Fire shrouds the Lost Valley Ranch near Sedalia (photo by Tim Sexton). Fuels treatment on the Pikes Peak Watershed before (right) and after treatment (photo by Andy Schlosberg). A Timbco with a Quadco mulching head cuts trees and scatters the biomass on the forest floor (photo by Kristin Garrison). A landowner discusses the work she has done to mitigate fire risk and restore forest health on her land (photo by Katherine Timm).

Collaboration: The Cornerstone of the Partnership

The Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership is a collaborative program of the Colorado State Forest Service, National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, and local communities to reduce hazardous fuels. This joint effort has resulted in the treatment of 51,886 acres of hazardous fuels on the Front Range during the first two full years the Partnership has been in operation.

Launched in 2003, the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership (FRFTP) has gained a reputation—and recognition—for its collaborative successes. The continuing work of the FRFTP Roundtable, the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans, research, educational outreach, and the successful implementation of fuels reduction projects involving multiple partners defined the Partnership in 2005. Most importantly, though, is the fact that the Partnership has treated 51,886 acres during its first two full years of operation. Partnership agencies also have been extensively involved in the development of 13 Community Wildfire Protection Plans that meet the minimum standards established by the Colorado State Forest Service. In addition, Partnership agencies are assisting nearly 20 other Front Range communities with the development of their plans, which should be completed in 2006.

SHARING THE VISION

FRFTP ROUNDTABLE DEVELOPS FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Building on the expanding interest and commitment of its members, the FRFTP Roundtable, which met for the first time in May 2004, continued to meet quarterly in 2005 to discuss a long-term vision for the future of Colorado's Front Range forests. The Roundtable is comprised of more than 30 representatives from county, state, and federal agencies; local governments; non-governmental environmental and conservation organizations; academic and scientific communities; and industry and user groups—all with a vested interest in forest health and fire risk mitigation. Roundtable working groups also were formed in 2005 to discuss research findings on forest health, fire risk mitigation, natural resource policy, and economic issues. The working groups recruited additional subject-matter experts to participate



Katherine Timm

Representatives from the USDA Forest Service, Colorado State Forest Service, American Red Cross, and Red Feather Lakes Volunteer Fire Department tour a forest management demonstration site near the elementary school in Red Feather Lakes.

in their meetings to ensure that they examined all major aspects of the issues. Meetings were well attended, discussion was lively, and debate was sometimes contentious. In the end, that lively discussion and debate produced carefully considered findings and recommendations that will be shared with a wide variety of stakeholders via a published report scheduled for release in May 2006.

One of the most significant findings in the report pertains to the number of acres on public and private land that requires some type of intervention to restore forest health and reduce fire risk. The Roundtable estimates that approximately 1.5 million acres of forest on the Front Range may need treatment, and more than half of those acres are on private land.

The Roundtable's economic viability scenario, which projects treatments over a 40-year time period, is vastly different than the aggressive FRFTP Strategy of 2002 that identified more than 500,000 acres in need of fire risk mitigation only over a 10-year horizon. The Roundtable scenario identified an average cost of more than \$400 per acre and annual treatment costs that could exceed \$15 million. The expected annual shortfall of \$9 million annually over the 40-year time horizon applies primarily to private land. This is a contrast to the FRFTP Strategy, which identi-





Kalberne Timm

Members of the Platte Canyon Fire Protection District Fuels Crew assess the work they have done in the Forest Ridge subdivision in Park County.

fied a shortfall of \$23 million annually over a period of more than 10 years and applies primarily to federal lands.

The Roundtable has identified several initiatives and recommendations that, if implemented, will provide additional resources for forest treatments, reduce treatment costs, drive local leadership and planning, and establish common priorities for forest treatments.

SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITY

THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS

In 2005, 13 Front Range communities completed Community Wildfire Protection Plans that meet CSFS standards, and many of the plans address hazards and treatment needs in multiple subdivisions. As a result, nearly 30 Front Range subdivisions and/or HOAs are strategically implementing fuels reduction projects to help protect their communities from wildfires and restore forest health.

Following is a list of the CWPPs completed in each county within the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership project area (note that multiple counties were involved in the development of the Harris Park and South Platte CWPPs):

- Boulder County—Lefthand Fire Protection District
- Douglas County—Perry Park, South Platte
- El Paso County—Carroll Lakes
- Gilpin County—Colorado Sierra Fire Protection District
- Grand County—Cordillera
- Larimer County—Crystal Lakes, Little Valley HOA, Poudre Fire Authority (Horsetooth Rock), Windcliff
- Jefferson County—Elk Creek, Harris Park, South Platte
- Park County—Harris Park
- Teller County—Teller County

Partnership agencies assisted communities with the development of their plans by serving as technical experts. They also helped organize and facilitate meetings, and helped identify funding opportunities for communities that lack the financial means to develop and/or implement plans.

CWPP activity promises to be vigorous in 2006, as 20 additional communities started the planning process in 2005 and many others have expressed an interest in beginning the process in 2006.



SHARING SUCCESSES

RESEARCH AND PROJECT DEMONSTRATION TOURS

Agencies involved with the FRFTP engaged in numerous outreach and technology transfer programs during 2005 to inform and engage decision-makers, landowners, local communities, and others about fire risk reduction and forest health issues on the Front Range. For example, Partnership agency representatives organized and hosted two congressional tours; one in Estes Park that highlighted collaborative fuels reduction projects on public and private land on the northern Front Range, and one at the Manitou Experimental Forest that focused on mastication research, development of the Teller County CWPP, and fuels mitigation projects on adjacent public and private lands.

In the spring of 2005, three forest ecologists with the Rocky Mountain Research Station organized and hosted the first Great Mixed Conifer Tour. The first tour was so well attended that two additional tours were offered in September, which attracted more than 60 participants including federal, state, and local agency personnel, legislative staffers, the media, and the general public. The purpose of the tours was to present data collected by the scientists and discuss implications for management in the complex mixed conifer zone between 7,500 and 9,000 feet in elevation.

Complementing these major tours were several smaller tours that showcased project demonstration sites throughout the Front Range.

The FRFTP also partnered with the Rocky Mountain Research Station to host a Landscape Treatment Optimization Workshop that was attended by more than 50 representatives from land-management agencies and non-governmental conservation organizations. The workshop, which focused on ecological modeling and fire behavior treatment optimization, included a two-hour implementers' session during which participants discussed a 92,000 acre project that incorporated the ecological models presented earlier in the day.

REMEMBERING OUR ROOTS

REDUCING HAZARDOUS FUELS

As a result of successful collaboration among agencies and private landowners, 24,908 acres were treated on the Front Range in 2005. That brings the total number of acres treated under the auspices of the FRFTP to 51,886 in two years. The Colorado State Forest Service treated 9,284 acres on state and private land at a cost of \$3,713,600. This figure represents FRFTP Strategy funding, USDA Forest Service grants, and in-kind or monetary match for treatments implemented by private landowners. The Pike National forest treated 7,900 acres at a cost of \$2,000,000, the Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forests treated 6,729 acres at a cost of \$1,610,958, and the National Park Service treated 995 acres at a cost of \$291,740. Planning was completed on an additional 24,083 acres of federal land, and 14,144 acres of state and private land.

LOOKING AHEAD

PROTECTING COMMUNITIES AND RESTORING FOREST HEALTH

The Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership continues to find success through collaboration that fosters support for fuels reduction projects resulting in fire risk mitigation and forest restoration. With continued funding, support from the Roundtable, successful implementation of CWPPs, and timely research and outreach programs, 2006 promises to be another productive year for the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership.

(To read the FRFTP Roundtable's complete report, visit www.frftp.org and click on Roundtable.)

The Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership has gained a reputation—and recognition—for its collaborative successes.



Roundtable: Broadening Capacity and Expertise

In 2004, the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership assembled the FRFTP Roundtable to broaden its capacity and expertise, and foster greater understanding of the complex issues related to forest management on the Front Range. Since its first meeting in May 2004, this diverse group representing state and federal agencies, local governments, non-governmental environmental and conservation organizations, academic and scientific communities, and industry and user groups have developed a long-term vision and roadmap to achieve comprehensive fire risk reduction and forest restoration on Colorado's Front Range.

Building on the work of the Partnership, the Roundtable brought together leading experts to examine ecological and fire risk mitigation needs, economic constraints, and policy issues that must be addressed to reduce fire risk and restore the health of Front Range forests. The Roundtable's findings and recommendations will be published in a report that will be released in May 2006 and is based on extensive analysis and the Roundtable's shared values, which served as the foundation for its work.

THE ROUNDTABLE'S SHARED VALUES

- **Respect for human safety** and well-being requires that we recognize community protection from fire as a first priority. This means that we not only consider how best to thin overgrown forests where they abut residential areas, but also the best means for protecting future development from wildfire.
- Because a crucial aspect of human well-being rests on the right to reside in and visit healthy ecosystems characterized by resilience, integrity, and biodiversity, an equal and connected priority is the **maintenance of healthy and sustainable landscapes**. In this semi-arid locale, the importance of forests as watersheds serving our population centers confirms that issues of fire management affect every resident, tying the state of the forests to the well-being of urban and suburban communities located well outside of the forest environment.
- The mixture of public and private landownership along the Front Range demands **collaborative strategies** as a way of addressing and reducing the distrust and misunderstanding between and among citizens and governmental entities that has greatly complicated the implementation of comprehensive fire

management. The FRFTP Roundtable's goal is to foster a sense of shared risk, as well as shared responsibility, for developing productive, practical, and sustainable solutions.

- The Roundtable further recognizes that **economic, social, and ecological health are necessarily interdependent**. Therefore, the Roundtable has approached the problem of forest fire with a framework that reflects these three concerns: the ecology of the Front Range forests; economic challenges and opportunities for treatment of the forests; and policy and procedural realities at the federal, state, and local levels.
- The Roundtable understands, too, that the effectiveness of its work depends on its ability to engage with and be informed by local communities and interest groups, and therefore we have accordingly adopted **community engagement** as the fifth element of our work.

ROUNDTABLE FINDINGS

Throughout 2005, the Roundtable analyzed Front Range forests on public and private land to estimate the number of acres in need of treatment in order to mitigate risk to property or restore forest health. The results of that analysis proved daunting due to the number of acres that require treatment—and the funding shortfall that currently exists to implement treatment. In an effort to address these issues, the Roundtable identified 10 initiatives to accelerate progress toward Front Range community protection.

Increase Funding for Forest Treatments

1. Identify new state and local funding sources that can contribute to treatment costs on state and private land.
2. Increase forest treatment incentives for private landowners.
3. Advocate for additional federal funding for Front Range forest treatments.

Reduce the Cost of Forest Treatments

4. Increase the appropriate application of prescribed fire as a management tool.
5. Increase commercial utilization of woody biomass, especially as bioheating fuel for institutional buildings.
6. Increase contract sizes and durations through the use of stewardship contracts on federal lands.



Ensure Local Leadership and Planning

7. Limit the growth of fire risk in the wildland-urban interface.
8. Promote the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans for Front Range Communities at Risk.

Set Clear Priorities and Monitor Progress toward Common Goals

9. Adopt a clear and common framework for prioritizing treatments.

10. Convene follow-up Roundtable of forest stakeholders to ensure implementation of current recommendations and address future challenges.

The Roundtable's report, *Living with Fire: Protecting Communities and Restoring Forests, Findings and Recommendations of the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership Roundtable*, is available on the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership website at www.frftp.org.



Dave Steinke

Top row from left to right: Tom Fry, The Wilderness Society; Greg Aplet, The Wilderness Society; Jim Bedwell, USDA Forest Service; Craig Jones, Governor's Office of Energy Management & Conservation; Merrill Kaufmann, Rocky Mountain Research Station; Jonathan Bruno, Coalition for the Upper South Platte; Bob Leaverton, USDA Forest Service; Chuck Dennis, Colorado State Forest Service; Jeff Jahnke, Colorado State Forest Service; Patricia Limerick, Center of the American West; Brian Muller, University of Colorado-Denver; Brian McPeck, The Nature Conservancy

Middle row from left to right: Timothy Brown, Center of the American West; Paige Lewis, Colorado State Forest Service; Leslie Ellwood, US Fish & Wildlife Service; Lisa Dale, Western Forestry Leadership Coalition; Peter Fogg, American Planning Association, Colorado Chapter; Randal Frank, Jefferson County Open Space; Vic Ecklund, Colorado Springs Utilities; Bob Sturtevant, Warner College of Natural Resources, Colorado State University; Liz Lile, United States Geological Survey; Dennis Zachman, Bureau of Land Management

Front row from left to right: Kathie Mattor, Roundtable Coordinator; Gali Beh, Beh Management Consulting, Inc.; Brian Kent, Rocky Mountain Research Station; Don Kennedy, Denver Water; Susan Linner, US Fish & Wildlife Service; Mike Foley, USDA Forest Service; Mary Mitsos, National Forest Foundation; David Hessel, Colorado State Forest Service; John Bustos, USDA Forest Service; Karen Berry, Jefferson Conservation District & Colorado Geological Survey; Marilyn Gally, Colorado Division of Emergency Management

Note: Not all Roundtable participants were present for the photo.

FRONT RANGE FUELS TREATMENT PARTNERSHIP MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland, USDA Forest Service • American Planning Association, Colorado Chapter • Bureau of Land Management • Coalition for the Upper South Platte • Center of the American West, University of Colorado • Colorado Air Pollution and Control Division, Colorado Department of Health & Environment • Colorado Counties, Inc. • Colorado Department of Natural Resources • Colorado Division of Emergency Management • Colorado Geological Survey • County Sheriffs of Colorado, Inc. • Colorado Springs Utilities • Colorado State Forest Service • Colorado State Parks • Warner College of Natural Resources, Colorado State University • Denver Water Department • Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, National Park Service • Grand County Board of Commissioners • Jefferson County Open Space, Jefferson Conservation District • Pike & San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron & Comanche National Grasslands, USDA Forest Service • Rocky Mountain National Park, National Park Service • Rocky Mountain Research Station, USDA Forest Service • Southern Rockies Conservation Alliance • The Nature Conservancy • The Wilderness Society • University of Colorado-Denver • U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Colorado Field Office • United States Geological Survey



Connecting with Communities: Community Wildfire Protection Plans

In 2005, 13 Front Range communities completed Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) that meet CSFS minimum standards. With these plans, communities are strategically implementing fuels reduction projects to help protect their communities from wildfires and restore forest health. Many of the plans address hazards and treatment needs in multiple subdivisions or homeowners associations. In 2005, new plans were created for:

Boulder County—Lefthand Fire Protection District
Douglas County—Perry Park, South Platte
El Paso County—Carroll Lakes
Gilpin County—Colorado Sierra Fire Protection District
Grand County—Cordillera
Larimer County—Crystal Lakes, Little Valley HOA, Poudre Fire Authority (Horsetooth Rock), Windcliff
Jefferson County—Elk Creek, Harris Park, South Platte
Park County—Harris Park
Teller County—Teller County

CWPP activity promises to be vigorous in 2006, as more than 20 additional communities started the planning process in 2005 and many others have expressed interest in beginning the process in 2006.

CWPPs—MORE THAN JUST A PLAN

PEOPLE PRESIDING, PEOPLE PARTICIPATING, AND PEOPLE PUTTING PLANS INTO ACTION

The objective of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) is not to develop plans that sit on the shelf and collect dust; the objective is to treat acres for hazardous fuels. But plans can help address processes and issues, and meeting minimum planning standards can help communities with their funding efforts. In 2005, Partnership agencies assisted communities with the development of their plans by serving as technical experts. They also helped organize and facilitate meetings, and in many cases identified funding opportunities for communities that lacked the financial means to develop and/or implement plans.

With people presiding, people participating, and people putting plans into action, CWPPs will continue to drive community protection and forest health priorities in 2006.



Scott Sticha

Residents of the Windcliff Estates subdivision thin trees and remove slash during one of several community work days that have occurred in the neighborhood in recent years.



PEOPLE PRESIDING

JEFF DAVIS AND THE PLATTE CANYON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

The 2004 FRFTP Annual Report stated that, “Most CWPPs are unique to the political, social, environmental, and jurisdictional settings of communities.” Jeff Davis, fire chief for the Platte Canyon Fire Protection District (FPD), applied this philosophy to guide his work with local communities.

Presiding over the development of the Harris Park CWPP, which covers 22 subdivisions and/or other properties, Davis and the Platte Canyon FPD employed community involvement and community values as they advocated for projects that linked to district-wide pre-suppression planning. They established feedback mechanisms to determine if treatments were socially

acceptable to the community, and they developed communication networks to facilitate continual community outreach, and to coordinate the CWPP development process.

In return, the CWPP provided an opportunity for participating communities to build partnerships with the National Forest Foundation, and to collaborate with the USDA Forest Service, and Colorado State Forest Service.

Finally, the CWPP resulted in greater community education and awareness, and coordinated project implementation. Thanks to the people presiding, the Platte Canyon FPD is implementing projects based on a plan that effectively and efficiently protects people and property over a larger area.

PEOPLE PARTICIPATING

TELLER COUNTY COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN COMMISSION

The Teller County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Commission is a group of citizens that had little or no knowledge of wildfire terminology or fire behavior when they came together. Comprised primarily of local organization and citizen representatives, commission members are participating to reduce risks to values, homes, and communities. And though, as one commission member said, they would be “glad to dump all fire prevention responsibilities at your door,” they have guided Teller County to distinction. Teller was the first Colorado county to develop a Healthy Forests Restoration Act-based Community Wildfire Protection Plan from scratch. In an area where public approval and trust of land management agencies has suffered since the Hayman Fire, this is quite an accomplishment.

Using what they term “pioneer” planning and methods, the group chose to do a countywide plan as a foundation to guide planning in smaller communities. One of their key discoveries was the need to repeatedly explain the planning process and time line. They also learned the need for fire and natural resource professionals to explain their biological and scientific rationale in terms everyone can understand.

Through their participation, commission members helped identify planning obstacles; for example, the “tribal language” used by fire professionals, and the public fear and misunderstanding of fire. Overcoming these obstacles has helped federal and state agencies work more effectively with Teller County communities. The commission has also helped public agencies recognize that although land managers focus on landscape scales, citizens’ focus begins at home. By informing community members about fire risk mitigation and forest health, agencies can help expand citizens’ focus beyond their homes.



Katherine Timm

A member of the Platte Canyon Fire Protection District Fuels Team removes limbs from a recently cut tree on private land in the Forest Ridge subdivision in Park County.



Knowing that “the next forest fire is inevitable and that protecting homes is optional,” the commission has demonstrated that participation can:

- Make a lasting difference in the community
- Inform the public about forest health, fire use, and community safety
- Develop positive working relationships within the community to support future plans on public land

Teller County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Commission members include:

Marti Campbell—Coalition for the Upper South Platte Watershed

Garry Cote—Teller County Property Owners Alliance Association

John Gomes—City of Woodland Park Police Department

Curt Grina—Citizen Representative (Chairman)

Greg Griswold—Office of Emergency Management

Jim Heenan—Northeast Teller Fire Department

Nick Lauria—Cripple Creek Emergency Service

Dave Root—Colorado State Forest Service

Greg Winkler—Teller County Administration

PEOPLE PUTTING PLANS INTO ACTION

THE WINDCLIFF ESTATES SUBDIVISION

Like many Coloradans, they come from cities and towns from coast to coast. They moved to Colorado for the beauty and the climate, and they can't imagine living anywhere else. They also didn't imagine that they'd spend so much time limbing and cutting trees to reduce fuels around their homes and in their neighborhood.

The fuels reduction efforts of an energetic group of residents in the Windcliff Estates subdivision near Estes Park started over 10 years ago. Since then, they have put into action an ambitious plan to mitigate hazardous fuels on each lot and the common areas within the subdivision. And they're investing their own time, energy, and money. In fact, over the next three years, they will invest thousands of dollars. And because of their efforts, Windcliff was in a good position to apply for and receive an FRFTP cost-share grant in 2005. The grant will be used to treat 25 acres of community property; the project will be completed in 2006. One of Windcliff's next projects is the creation of a second community access/fire escape route near the top of the subdivision.

Windcliff is a great example of the multiplier effect of real on-the-ground action. The subdivision is now part of the East Portal FireWise Coalition, a group that includes the Thunder Mountain HOA, the YMCA of the Rockies, Ramshorn Cabins, J.T. Stonecliff's, and the Estes Park Fire Department. This group has been meeting for two years to work toward achieving designation as a Firewise Communities/USA region. Recently, they turned their energy toward creating a regional CWPP that encompasses all the participating subdivisions and properties.

As these private properties are treated—and treatments are implemented on surrounding public lands in Rocky Mountain National Park and the Roosevelt National Forest—Windcliff can take pride in knowing that they were the catalyst for creating what eventually will be a safer and healthier forest and community landscape.



Scott Sticha

The hard work of Windcliff Estates residents paid off. They are one of only a few communities in the country to receive Firewise Communities/USA designation. The East Portal FireWise Coalition hopes to extend that recognition on a regional basis within the Estes Valley.



Research: Emerging Answers Guide Forest Restoration and Citizen Engagement

NEW INFORMATION LEADS TO NEW APPLICATIONS

EMERGING ANSWERS: FOREST RESTORATION

In 2005, Rocky Mountain Research Station scientists revealed their early conclusions about Front Range ecology to FRFTP implementers. Although the conclusions are generating many more questions, insightful descriptions of pre-settlement Front Range ecosystems are giving on-the-ground managers more, and in many cases, better, options for treating landscapes. While caution must be taken when applying new ideas, the energy generated from research that progresses from study to actual application continues to inspire research and the Partnership.

Following are highlights of studies that focused on Front Range ecological treatments and their effects in restoring landscapes and reducing fuels.

EFFECTIVE SPATIAL FUELS TREATMENTS REDUCE WILDFIRE SPREAD AND INTENSITY

The 1996 Buffalo Creek Fire and 2002 Hayman Fire catalyzed the need for fuels treatment programs on Colorado's Front Range. Conflicts arising from land managers' stewardship responsibilities, people with extractive interests, residents of the wildland-urban interface, and the interests of non-consumptive user groups are difficult to balance. This research project supports a fuels treatment planning process designed to accomplish restoration of historic landscape structures and fire regimes by employing analysis from fire physics and ecological models. Outputs from these tools are integrated through use of an optimization planning tool wherein combined social, economic, and ecological issues can be examined, thus providing information useful for decision support.

MODELING FOREST PLANNING TRADE-OFFS ON THE FRONT RANGE USING MAGIS

This study was conducted on a 92,000-acre site on the Front Range, which includes much of the Upper South Platte River Watershed. The site is characterized by a spectrum of difficult social, political, and ecological issues, most notably those pertaining to the residential/forest intermix and to the watershed's prominence as Denver's chief source of domestic water. The goal of this study was to use the MAGIS model to identify ways to restore the site to historical landscape conditions, while mitigating wildfire risk. Results from this study indicate that great efficiency can be achieved in reducing wildfire risk indices given projected fixed costs.

STAND DYNAMICS AND DISTURBANCE HISTORY IN MIXED CONIFER FORESTS OF THE NORTHERN FRONT RANGE

On September 28–29, 2005, researchers hosted tours of the mixed conifer study area located on the Roosevelt National Forest for more than 60 people including, federal, state, and local agency personnel, federal staffers, the media, and the public.



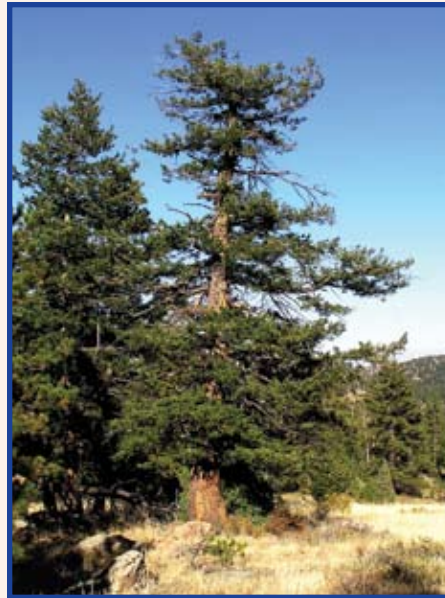
Mitzy Forbes

One of more than 60 people who attended the Great Mixed Conifer Tour in Larimer County studies a fire scar cross-section that indicates when fires occurred in the area.





This fire-scarred ponderosa pine is located in the Crown Point Road study area in Larimer County, and is part of the research being conducted by the Rocky Mountain Research Station on stand dynamics and disturbance history in mixed conifer forests.



This Douglas-fir tree in the Kelly Flats area of the mixed conifer study in Larimer County is over 530 years old.



This 250-year-old ponderosa pine towers over young ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir in the Young's Gulch study area in Larimer County; elevation is approximately 6,800 feet.

Laurie Strob Huckaby

During the summer of 2005, field work was completed for the original mixed conifer study funded by the FRFTP. Tree-ring chronology gathered in the study now extends back to the early 1200s.

Two new study areas, also on the Roosevelt National Forest, and below 7,500 feet in elevation, have been established in the ponderosa pine/Douglas-fir vegetation zone, using methods from the mixed conifer study. Researchers gathered fire history, stand structure, and vegetation data from 10 new plots. Data will be compared to the existing Cheesman Lake fire history and stand structure data from the South Platte basin 150 miles to the south. The comparisons will explore the effects of latitude on the applicability of such data across the Front Range.

REAL TIME FIRE-WEATHER INTELLIGENCE AND SMOKE FORECAST: RMC

The RMRS Rocky Mountain Center (RMC) is one of five regional members of the USFS Fire Consortia for Advanced Modeling of Meteorology and Smoke (FCAMMS). FCAMMS is supported by Forest Service Research and Development under the National Fire Plan and NOAA. The RMC Team is engaged in the continuous development and deployment of science-based computer applica-

tions for real-time delivery of high-resolution fire-weather intelligence and smoke dispersion forecasts over the Western United States. The team's objective is to provide comprehensive weather forecasting support to wildland fire operations, prescribed burns, and air resource management.

EMERGING ANSWERS: CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Like other creatures, humans are unique in how they react to changes in their environment. And just like other species, humans are unpredictable. Before making changes to our forests, we must know how to help people understand the changes and, further, accept and embrace them as both valuable and inevitable. Just as with the ecological studies, new conclusions provided by Rocky Mountain Research Station scientists are helping FRFTP implementers better understand public attitudes and opinions, which will help them work more effectively with landowners.

The following studies will help guide deliberations as decisions are made about treatments to reduce fire risk and restore forest health in Front Range forests.

MITIGATING WILDFIRE RISKS: FINALIZING REPORTS AND MANUSCRIPTS

In-depth interviews conducted with homeowners in five Larimer County wildland-urban interface communities reveal that homeowners face difficult decisions regarding fire risk reduction. Homeowners often don't view fire risk reduction as a straightforward issue; instead, they appear to be involved in a complex decision-making process that includes social considerations. The interviews shed light on the social context in which homeowners make wildfire mitigation decisions, their perceptions of how the biophysical landscape near their residences affects mitigation, and their perceptions of wildfire mitigation options.

MITIGATING WILDFIRE RISKS: THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Researchers developed a survey instrument that will be administered to a random sample of wildland-urban interface residents in Larimer, Boulder, and El Paso counties in 2006. The survey will explore the role of informal social networks on homeowners' mitigation decisions, link wildfire risk perceptions with mitigation actions, and examine the role of manage-

ment of nearby public and private land on homeowners' wildfire mitigation decisions.

COLLABORATIVE CAPACITY, PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING, AND COMMUNICATION FOR FUELS MANAGEMENT IN THE WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE

This report reviews, organizes, and compiles results from a sample of recent social science studies published in natural resource journals to provide insight about communication regarding wildland fire and fuels management. The report focuses on three topic areas critical for understanding collective action that addresses the wildland fire and fuels social challenge. These topics are referred to as collaborative capacity, problem framing, and mutual trust. The interaction of mutual trust and collaborative capacity allow for partnerships; the interaction of problem framing and collaborative capacity allow for the development of a common language. Understanding the relationships between these concepts is important for forest and wildland fire managers working with communities.



Katherine Timm

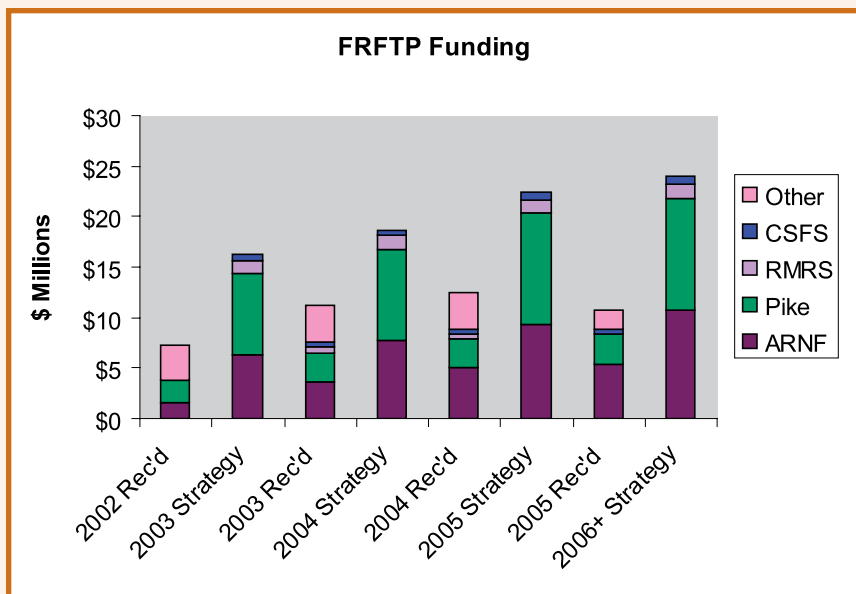
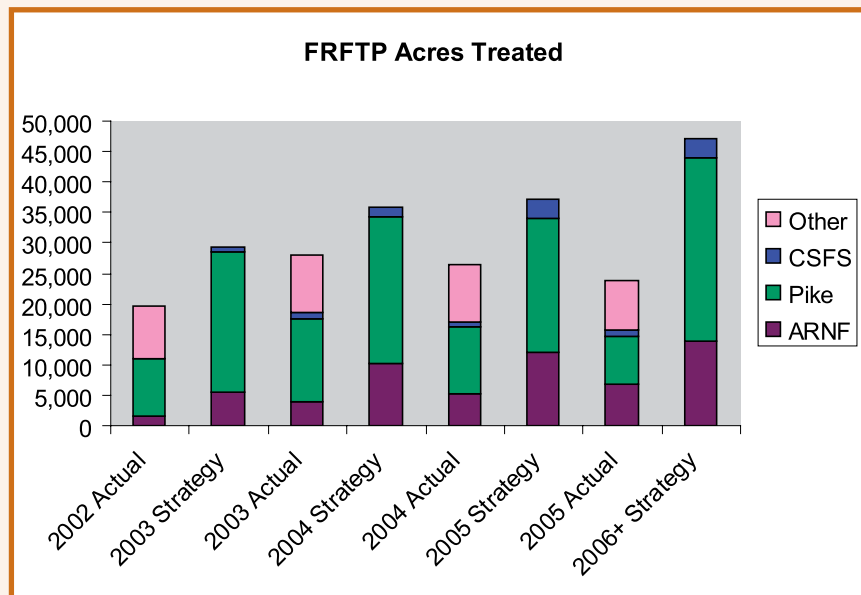
Jean Rodeck discusses the work she has done on her land in the Ridgewood subdivision in Teller County to mitigate fire risk and restore forest health.

Rocky Mountain Research Station scientists are helping FRFTP implementers better understand public attitudes and opinions, which is essential in working effectively with landowners.



Project Accomplishments: Two-Year Fuels Treatment Total Reaches 51,886 Acres

Partnership agencies treated a total of 51,886 acres in 2004 and 2005; 24,908 acres were treated in 2005, and 26,978 acres were treated in 2004. Planning has been completed on an additional 23,325 acres of USDA Forest Service land, 758 acres on National Park Service land, and 14,144 acres on state and private land. Following are highlights of some of the accomplishments achieved in 2005.



The figures in these graphs differ from the graphs on page 12 of the 2004 FRFTP Annual Report, as they represent a change in reporting standards and an adjustment in treatment costs. (Note that strategic needs exceed funding received.) The "other" category on this graph denotes acres of fuels treatment accomplished on state and private land that were not funded by the FRFTP Strategy. Acres treated on National Park Service land are reported on page 15.

COLORADO STATE FOREST SERVICE

In 2005, the Colorado State Forest Service treated a total of 9,284 acres on state and private land. In addition, management plans were prepared for 14,144 acres. The Partnership provided funding for 20 high-priority projects on the five CSFS Front Range districts, the Granby District, and the Broomfield Office. Districts also participated in the completion of 13 Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs). Following is a brief summary of district activity.

BOULDER DISTRICT

The district treated a total of 1,309 acres in 2005; 1,301 acres were treated mechanically, and eight acres were treated using a combination of mechanical treatment and prescribed fire. Management plans were completed on 3,582 acres. The Partnership funded one thinning project in 2005. District personnel also participated in the development of the Lefthand Fire Protection District CWPP.

BROOMFIELD OFFICE

Prescribed fire was used on 290 of the 1,678 acres treated on special projects lands. Management plans have been completed for 589 acres. The Partnership funded eight projects involving thinning, cutting, CWPP development, and a demonstration area. Special projects foresters also participated in the development of the Harris Park and South Platte CWPPs, which were completed in 2005.



Mitzy Forbes

Front Range Community College students are briefed in preparation for a community work day at a demonstration site at Red Feather Lakes. The Red Feather Lakes Volunteer Fire Department will use the site to help landowners understand the benefits of thinning trees in the area as part of their overall forest management plan.

FORT COLLINS DISTRICT

The district completed management plans on 455 acres, and treated 647 acres. The Partnership provided funding for seven projects on the district in 2005. The district also has been involved in the development and completion of CWPPs for the Little Valley Homeowners Association, Poudre Fire Authority (Horsetooth Rock), Crystal Lakes, and Windcliff.

FRANKTOWN DISTRICT

The district treated 600 acres and completed management plans on 564 acres. The Partnership funded one project. District personnel also were involved in the development of the Perry Park and South Platte CWPPs, which were completed in 2005.

GOLDEN DISTRICT

Prescribed fire was used to treat 673 of the 1,987 acres treated on the district in 2005, and management plans were completed on 1,758 acres. The Partnership funded one prescribed burning project on the district in 2005. In addition, the district worked with communities on development of the Elk Creek, Harris Park, and South Platte CWPPs.

GRANBY DISTRICT

The district completed management plans on 6,206 acres, and treated 1,803 acres including prescribed burning on 144 acres. District personnel also assisted with the development of the Cordillera CWPP, which was completed in 2005.

WOODLAND PARK DISTRICT

The district treated a total of 1,260 acres, and prepared management plans for an additional 990 acres. The Partnership funded two fuels reduction projects on the district in 2005. The district also participated in the development of the Teller County and Carroll Lakes CWPPs.



Katherine Timm

Slash piles left over from a thinning project in Red Feather Lakes await removal by volunteers. Some of the trees were cut into firewood and distributed to residents with special needs.



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

During 2005, the fire and fuels management crew completed several fuels reduction projects in the wildland-urban interface along the park boundary including 995 acres on the projects described below. Crews will complete an additional 758 acres of fuels reduction treatments in 2006.

Hazardous Fuels Reduction Projects—During 2005, the fire and fuels management crew completed 800 acres of fuels reduction in the wildland-urban interface along the park boundary on the following projects:

- Deer Mountain—Park staff and a contract crew thinned vegetation and burned or removed slash from 534 acres in the High Drive and Fall River Estates areas.
- Emerald Mountain—The park crew thinned vegetation and burned slash piles on 80 acres near Mill Creek Ranger Station and Glacier Basin Campground.
- Leiffer Cabin—Park crews thinned vegetation and removed slash from 12 acres surrounding the historic Leiffer Cabin and outbuildings.
- Eagle Cliff—Crews burned slash piles from an 18-acre thinning project.
- Grand Lake—Contractors thinned and cut trees on 124 acres of park lands near the community of Grand Lake. The park fire crew also burned slash piles from a 20-acre thinning project completed the previous year.

Rural Fire Assistance Grants—The park provided \$30,000 in Rural Fire Assistance grant funding to the volunteer fire departments in Allenspark, Estes Park, Glen Haven, and Grand Lake. Funding was utilized to purchase personal protective equipment and wildland fire suppression equipment.

Community Assistance Grants and Community Wildfire Protection Plans—The park provided \$32,000 in Community Fire Assistance grant funding for the following projects:

- \$12,000 Community Assistance grant was provided to continue an interagency fire education program for the Estes Valley.
- \$16,000 Community Assistance grant provided to the Grand Lake Fire Protection District for preplanning, education, and mitigation.
- \$4,000 Community Assistance grant provided to Allenspark Fire Protection District to begin developing their Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Park representatives also continued to participate in the East Portal FireWise Coalition, which is comprised of private citizens from several local homeowners associations, as well as officials from the YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park Volunteer Fire Department, Larimer County, Colorado State Forest Service, and USDA Forest Service to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Legislative Tour—The park hosted a legislative and media field tour in May to highlight FRFTP projects on the northern Front Range.



Scott Sticha

Crews burn slash piles that were generated from thinning projects in Rocky Mountain National Park.

2006 PROJECT PLANS

Hazardous Fuels Reduction Projects—Crews will complete an additional 648 acres of fuels reduction treatments during 2006. Projects will continue on Deer Mountain, Emerald Mountain/Glacier Basin, Grand Lake, and Eagle Cliff. Projects also are being proposed for treatments near park structures and road corridors. In addition, a 40-acre prescribed fire is planned near Horseshoe Park.

Community Assistance Grants and Community Wildfire Protection Plans—\$38,000 in Community Fire Assistance grant funding will be provided to the volunteer fire departments in Allenspark, Estes Park, and Grand Lake to complete Community Wildfire Protection Plans.



FLORISSANT FOSSIL BEDS NATIONAL MONUMENT

Hazardous Fuels Reduction Projects—Manual fuels reduction projects were completed on 195 acres in the wildland-urban interface along the park boundary.

Rural Fire Assistance Grants—The park provided \$9,000 in Rural Fire Assistance grant funding to the Florissant Fire and Rescue District for wildland fire equipment.

Community Assistance Grants and Community Wildfire Protection Plans—The park provided \$17,000 in Rural Fire Assistance funding to the Teller County Office of Emergency Services for Community Wildfire Protection Plan and wildfire mitigation assistance.

2006 PROJECT PLANS

Hazardous Fuels Reduction Projects—Crews are planning to complete an additional 110 acres of manual fuels treatments on the Northeast and Northwest Boundary projects.



Kristin Garrison

Equipment such as the Hydro-ax with a rotary ax mower and Timbco with a Quadco mulching head are two tools that are commonly used for forest restoration and hazardous fuels reduction work along the Front Range. Trees are cut and the biomass is scattered on the forest floor. This method of treatment is often more cost-effective when treating larger units of land.

USDA FOREST SERVICE

The USDA Forest Service treated a total of 14,629 acres on the Front Range in 2005, much of it within the wildland-urban interface. Planning also was completed on more than 23,300 acres. In addition, USDA Forest Service employees were involved in the development of numerous CWPPs.

ARAPAHO AND ROOSEVELT NATIONAL FORESTS

In 2005, the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests treated a total of 6,729 acres; 4,964 acres were treated mechanically and 1,765 acres were treated with prescribed fire. More than 13,000 acres are planned for future treatment.



A prescribed broadcast burn in a mixed conifer forest in Larimer County has reduced surface and ladder fuels.

SOUTH ZONE FUELS PROGRAM (BOULDER & CLEAR CREEK RANGER DISTRICTS)

In 2005, hazardous fuels reduction treatment was accomplished on 1,520 acres within the wildland-urban interface. Of these acres, 1,196 were accomplished through mechanical thinning, and 324 through prescribed fire. In addition, decisions were made to reduce hazardous fuels on more than 3,000 acres. Slash clean-up work also continued in the Winiger Project area.



Vaughn, Jones

A prescribed burn at the Mt. Evans State Wildlife Area removed debris and encouraged the growth of desirable plants.

Sugarloaf Fuels Reduction Project—Initiated in 2002, the Sugarloaf Fuels Reduction Project covers approximately 5,000 acres. The project decision notice was signed in January 2004. Located just west of Boulder, the Peak-to-Peak Scenic Byway defines the western boundary of the project area. The entire treatment area includes nearly 15,200 National Forest System acres and nearly 11,600 of non-Forest System acres. Under the direction of South Zone implementation foresters, crews began thinning operations in the Sugarloaf Project area in March 2005, and about 1,180 acres were treated or are under contract to be treated. Treatments under consideration include forest thinning, tree pruning, prescribed burning, and tree removal.

James Creek Fuels Reduction Project—The decision notice for this project was signed in September 2004 and includes 6,402 acres of treatment. Crews have marked and laid out the units for treatment in 2006. All areas being prepared surround the Overland Fire area near Jamestown.

Laurie Stroh Huckaby

St. Vrain Project—This project decision was signed identifying approximately 2,650 acres of proposed treatment. Boulder County and the Colorado State Forest Service are completing development of a CWPP in Allenspark. This project gives priority to community/neighborhood protection with some emphasis on wildlife habitat and forest restoration in specific areas. Treatments are scheduled to begin in 2007.

Yankee Hill Project—This project is an Integrated Landscape Design to Maximize Fuel Treatment Effectiveness Pilot project. The team has formulated broad areas consisting of 1,000-3,000 acres of potential treatment based on Forest Plan constraints. It will be a neighborhood/community protection project, with special attention given to watershed and recreation resource protection. Project implementation is expected to begin in 2006.

Evergreen Fuels Project—The project decision notice was signed on this 1,000-acre project in 2004. The project is located in the Yankee Creek area within the Elk Creek Fire Protection District near Evergreen. Project implementation will begin in 2006.

CANYON LAKES RANGER DISTRICT

In FY 2005, hazardous fuels reduction treatment was completed on 3,728 acres, all within the wildland-urban interface. Of these acres, 3,082 were treated through mechanical thinning and 841 through prescribed fire. In addition, decisions were made to reduce hazardous fuels on more than 7,000 acres.

Crystal Lakes Fuels Reduction Project—Located north and west of the community of Red Feather Lakes, the planned treatment area is 3,332 acres in size. The Crystal Lakes subdivision has been recognized as a Firewise Community/USA. The decision document was signed in 2004, and treatment areas were completely laid out. In 2005, 2,164 acres were treated or under contract for treatment.

Sheep Creek 2—The project area plan decision notice was signed in 2004. The project includes mechanical treatment and prescribed fire on 4,200 acres. In 2005, treatment occurred on 679 acres, and 636 of those acres were treated with prescribed fire.

Stringtown West Fuels Reduction Project—Approximately 4,062 acres, this project was analyzed with a categorical exclusion (CE). This project complements previous projects completed in the area on national forest land and extends work being done by the Colorado State Forest Service in conjunction with homeowners in the area. A decision on this project was relaxed until 2006 due to litigation over the CE process in California.

Lone Tree Fuels Reduction Project—This project involves approximately 2,400 acres. The NEPA process has been started and a categorical exclusion is being used. The first public meeting for this project was on September 30, 2004. This decision was also delayed due to litigation.

Estes Valley Fuels Reduction Project—This project, which surrounds the community of Estes Park, is a Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) project and a decision was made in 2005 to treat more than 7,500 acres to reduce hazardous fuels. This is a wildland-urban interface project that includes numerous acres of private land. Many private landowners currently are engaged in fuels reduction activities guided by the Colorado State Forest Service. Treatment on private land is being integrated into the planning of this project on national forest lands.

SULPHUR RANGER DISTRICT

In 2005, hazardous fuels reduction treatment was accomplished on 1,286 acres; 63 percent within the wildland-urban interface. Of these acres, 686 were accomplished through mechanical thinning, and 600 through prescribed fire. Decisions were also made to reduce hazardous fuels on nearly 3,700 acres.

Arapaho National Recreation Area Forest Health Project—Located within the Arapaho National Recreation Area, the 2,515-acre planned treatment area will reduce hazardous fuels and the threat of an ongoing mountain pine beetle epidemic. A record of decision (ROD) addressing areas outside of inventoried roadless areas was signed in 2004. In 2005, an ROD addressing treatment within inventoried roadless areas was signed. A Stewardship Contract to treat more than 1,600 acres was awarded in the fall of 2005.

Upper Fraser Valley Forest Health Project—The project area is located west of the Winter Park Ski area and includes portions of the Fraser Experimental Forest. This project was completed under HFRA authorities. A decision was made in fall 2005 to treat almost 3,700 acres.





Kristin Garrison

These before and after treatment photos of an area on the Upper South Platte Watershed show the benefit of creating openings that resemble pre-settlement conditions. Such openings reduce fire risk, create desirable habitat for area wildlife, and help protect the Upper South Platte Watershed, which supplies much of the domestic water to metro-Denver residents from catastrophic fire.

PIKE NATIONAL FOREST

The Pike National Forest treated 7,900 acres in 2005 employing a variety of treatment methods, including 347 acres of prescribed fire. The Pike also completed planning on an additional 10,235 acres, and participated extensively in the development of the Carroll Lakes, Crystal Park Subdivision, Harris Park, South Platte, and Teller County Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

PIKES PEAK RANGER DISTRICT

The Pikes Peak Ranger District treated 1,251 acres in 2005 employing a variety of treatment techniques. The district also completed the 1,000-acre Plum Creek Timber Sale, and planning for treatment of 700 acres of USDA Forest Service land at Carroll Lakes. In addition, the district participated in the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans for Teller County, Carroll Lakes, and the Crystal Park Subdivision.

Ridgewood/Trout Creek—Acres treated in these high-profile project areas employed a combination of treatments including mastication, piling, pile burning, and chipping. The 7,000 cords of fuelwood generated as a result of treatment efforts were sold. The implementation of prescribed burning on the district has fostered more public acceptance of this treatment technique. Treatments will help protect the communities of Ridgewood and Woodland Park.

Long John—This project involved implementation layout, thinning, and beetle treatments that will help protect the communities of Ridgewood and Woodland Park.

SOUTH PARK RANGER DISTRICT

The South Park Ranger District treated 1,563 acres in 2005. In addition, district personnel provided assistance in the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans for Teller and Park counties. They're also working with the Rocky Mountain Research Station to implement a study on the effects of burning and other treatments on birds in the Rocky Messenger Project area.

11-Mile Ranch Subdivision/Sledgehammer Project—This project area protects a critical portion of the South Platte River drainage on the south side of 11-Mile Canyon. This section of the South Platte above the Hayman burn area and Lake George is one of only two remaining sections of the South Platte River, where it traverses through montane forests, that has not been burned-over by fires in the past 10 years. The Sledgehammer Project also protects or partially protects the extensive recreation developments in 11-Mile Canyon, as well as the following subdivisions: Wagon Tongue, Echo Valley Estates, Beaver Valley Estates, Blue Mountain Ranches, Sanborne Western Camps, and numerous isolated homes, structures, and other property.

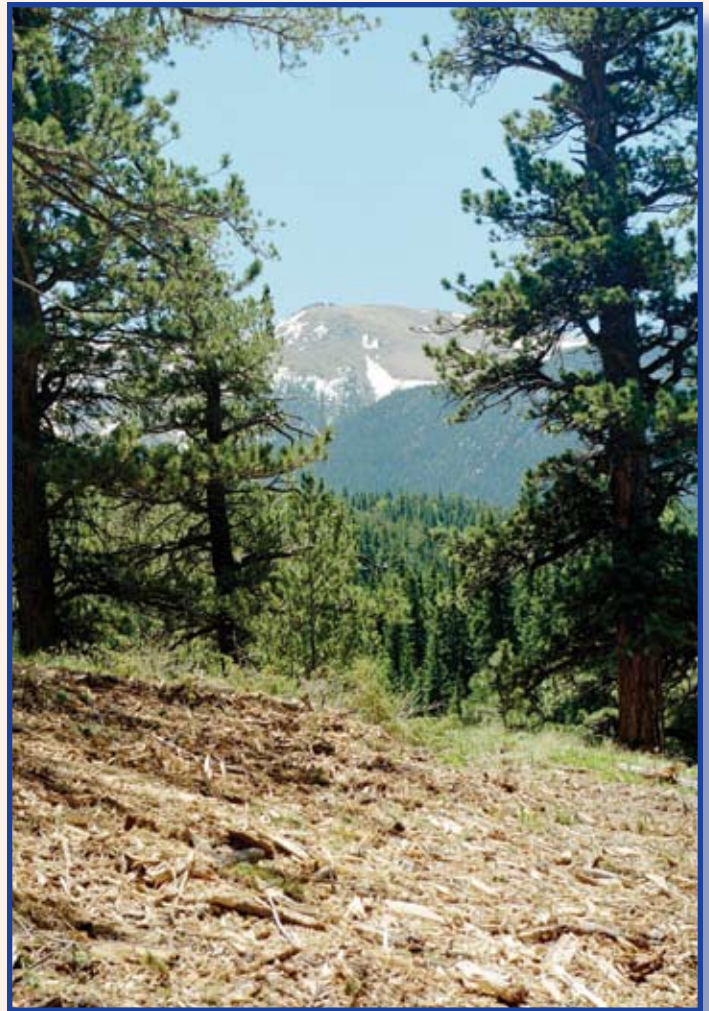
In 2005, the South Park Ranger District burned 310 acres of piles in the 11-Mile Ranch Subdivision; let the 395-acre Sledgehammer 3B service contract, which included 395 acres of product removal; conducted prescribed burning on 30 acres in the Sledgehammer East Project area; completed 367 acres of mechanical treatment in the 11-Mile Ranch Subdivision; and completed 461 acres of understory thinning in the Sledgehammer Project area.

SOUTH PLATTE RANGER DISTRICT

In 2005, the South Platte Ranger District completed 5,125 acres of hazardous fuels treatment. These efforts occurred mainly within the wildland-urban interface. The 30,000-acre Harris Park Fuels Management Environmental Assessment initiated in February 2004 was completed in 2005. Further, planning proceeded for projects in and around three summer home groups, two work centers and Devil's Head Lookout, and all of the district campgrounds.

The underpinning for the hazardous fuels achievements on the South Platte District is the Upper South Platte Watershed Protection and Restoration Project, chartered in May 1999. This collaborative project includes the USDA Forest Service, Colorado State Forest Service, Denver Water, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other interested agencies.

Part of the South Platte Ranger District's success can be attributed to the use of the Bureau of Land Management Indefinite Delivery and Indefinite Quantities (IDIQ) contract, which allows task orders to be issued for such actions as mechanical treatment. One task order was issued in fiscal year 2005 for mastication



Katherine Timm

Trees were thinned in an area on the Pikes Peak Watershed in El Paso County to reduce fire risk; the biomass was treated using the "lop and scatter" treatment method during which the slash is spread on the forest floor.

tion of undesirable vegetation and thinning to an average basal area of 50 square feet. This treatment reduces crown closure to 30 percent, thereby reducing the probability of a large catastrophic fire in the area. Throughout 2005, contract administration continued for six units held open from the 2003 and 2004 contracts; five of these units were completed in 2005 and one unit was held open to reduce the basal areas through further logging. U.S. Forest Service employees and cooperators including the Colorado State Forest Service, West Metro Fire Department, Platte Canyon Fire Department, and North Fork Volunteer Fire Department also accomplished 347 acres of prescribed fire.

Harris Park Fuels Environmental Assessment—In early 2004, under the auspices of the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership, nine federal, state, county, local, and private agencies and organizations established the 285 Conifer–Bailey Fuels Management Initiative, a collaborative hazardous fuels management program to address hazardous fuels and treatment priorities across jurisdictional boundaries in and around the Pike National Forest southwest of Denver. The partners focused their joint efforts on protecting several foothills communities at risk, irrespective of jurisdictional borders, within a 94 square mile assessment area along a 13-mile populated corridor. Most of these communities have either been impacted or immediately threatened by numerous major wildfires since 1996.

The 285 Fuels Initiative partners include the South Platte Ranger District of the USDA Forest Service, Colorado State Forest Service, Park and Jefferson counties, and the Platte Canyon and Elk Creek Fire Protection Districts. Greystone, Inc., Anchor Point, RedZone Software, and Land Stewardship Associates also are active, supporting members of the partnership. The environmental assessment was completed in 2005 and the proposed treatments cover 9,535 acres. Project implementation is expected to begin in 2006.

Nighthawk Contract—During 2005, a contractor mechanically thinned 774 acres in the Bennett Mountain area. The contractor decked material and then purchased it after the USDA Forest Service measured the decks.

Lower Saloon Gulch Project Area—This project entailed the mechanical thinning of 1,051 acres in Saloon Gulch north of Trumbull and Deckers. The contract was issued in 2004 and was completed in 2005. The project was managed as two units. The Colorado State Forest Service treated four acres within this unit through a Good Neighbor Agreement in 2005.



Jen Chase

A prescribed broadcast burn in Jefferson county removes ground juniper and other fuels.

Upper South Platte Watershed Protection & Restoration Project Treatment Units—In 2005, 3,300 acres were treated as part of the overall Upper South Platte Watershed Project. Treatments included 1,497 acres of thinning; 1,039 acres from the Spring Creek Timber Sale, and 394 acres through the Jenny Gulch Good Neighbor Agreement. Crushing—or roller chopping—accounted for 739 acres, 467 acres were masticated, 347 acres were treated with prescribed burning, and mechanical piling accounted for 250 acres.

In addition to treating nearly 25,000 acres in 2005, Partnership agencies participated in the development of 13 Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and organized and hosted several research, demonstration, and congressional tours.



FRONT RANGE FUELS TREATMENT PARTNERSHIP

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Vaughn Baker, Park Superintendent
Rocky Mountain National Park

Jim Bedwell, Forest Supervisor
Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland

Dave Cleaves, Station Director
Rocky Mountain Research Station

Jeff Jahnke, Colorado State Forester
Colorado State Forest Service

Bob Leaverton, Forest Supervisor
Pike & San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron & Comanche National Grasslands

Reggie Piller, Park Superintendent
Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
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