

Final Report

2003 National Fire Plan projects

Grant #7570-048

**Larimer County Wildfire Slash Disposal
and Staffing Assistance**

December 2003

2003 Final Report

Background

In August 2003, Larimer County's Wildfire Safety Program was notified that it has been awarded an \$85,000 grant from the Colorado State Forest Service via National Fire plan to continue and expand Larimer County's fuels reduction program and provide funding for an assistant to the Wildfire Safety Specialist.

This fuels reduction program was designed to provide an economical means of disposal for slash generated during the implementation of FireWise techniques on private property. The additional staffing was to assist the Wildfire Safety Specialist in conducting wildfire inspections, coordinate the County's fuels reduction program, serve as chief of party during the construction demonstration sites, develop and update pre attack plans and conduct subdivision assessments..

2003 Slash Disposal Program

Disposal options were developed to provide landowners with choices that were economical and feasible. Additionally, these options were designed to have the greatest citizen participation and treat the largest number of properties. These options or choices consist of:

- Community Collection Sites—material chipped or ground
- Community Burn Sites—material burned
- 50/50 Cost Share Opportunities—up to \$1000.00

Besides establishing slash disposal sites, demonstration sites were created and expanded in public areas with high visibility. These sites provided excellent education opportunities to the public and serve as before and after examples of FireWise techniques and good forest management.

Accomplishments

In 2003 the Slash Disposal Program collected and estimated 28,500 cubic yards of slash generated from citizens implementing FireWise techniques. All 28,500 cubic yards was collected using one of the options listed above

- 3 Community Collections Sites were established collecting over 6,500 cubic yards of slash in which materials was chipped or ground.
- 4 Community Burning Sites were established collecting over 22,000 cubic yards of slash.
- 13 individuals and organizations utilized the 50/50 cost share option.

- 7 Community Projects -- access improvement, open space management, demonstration sites, and clean up days.
 - Windcliff Estates
 - Horsetooth Mountain Park
 - Thunder Mountain
 - Little Valley
 - Meadowdale Hills
 - Pinewood Springs
 - Lady Moon Ranch

- Larimer County Road and Bridge utilized the Vermeer Chipper in treating over 176.5 lane miles—each side of the road equals one lane mile. This treatment included access improvement and fuel break construction.

Wildfire Safety Specialist--Assistance

A joint position with the Larimer County Sheriffs Department—Emergency Service was created to assist the Wildfire Safety Specialist in conducting wildfire inspections, coordination of the County’s fuels reduction program, serve as chief of party during the construction demonstration sites, develop and update pre attack plans and write and implement burn plans and smoke permits. This position will not only assist the Wildfire Safety Specialist but also will provide the Emergency Services Program with an additional full time specialist.

Wildfire Safety Crew

The crew consisted of 3 to 6 seasonal positions. The primary purpose of this crew was to assist the Wildfire Safety Program and Larimer County, citizens, homeowner associations with:

- Access improvement projects
- Chipping community slash collection sites
- Community thinning projects
- Create defensible spaces
- Create Fire Wise Demonstration Sites
- Assist in the Burning of Slash Piles/

Conclusion

The 2003 Slash Disposal Program again was extremely successful and has had immediate long-term impacts on Larimer County. This is the fifth year that the program has continuously grown and it is anticipated to continue. Citizens, fire departments and

homeowners associations are already inquiring on the possibility of the program continuing in 2004 and the location of future collection sites.

Additional Information

Early in the program when it was identified that volunteer in-kind match from community collection site was needed; it was determined that it would take on average one hour to haul one cubic yard of slash to a collection site. Included in this estimate is the time required to cut the vegetation, load it in a truck, drive to a collection site and then unload the material

In-Kind

The 2003 Wildfire Safety Program recorded in-kind match:

Larimer County Projects	\$132,645.00
Road and Bridge	
Slash Collection Sites	\$75,920.00
50/50 Cost Share Agreements	\$7,395.25
Burn Sites	\$256,960.00
Larimer County Wildfire Safety Program	\$86,999.00
Wildfire Safety Specialist	
Building Inspectors	
Vehicles, Equipment	
Projects:	
Windcliff Estates	\$4,884.78
Horsetooth Mountain Park	\$15,000.00
Thunder Mountain	\$2,000.00
Little Valley HOA	\$20,194.00
Meadowdale Hills	\$1,401.60
Pinewood Springs	\$2,500.00
Lady Moon Ranch	\$2,000.00
Total	\$475,254.63

Key Point

Focusing on the fuels reduction projects only, where Larimer County Citizen time was recorded. In-kind match was determined to be \$255,610.63 yielding 21,884 volunteer hours.

Thanks Larimer County Citizens.