



State & Private Forestry in Central Idaho Forest Health Protection December, 2005

Background

The Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) initiated a Mountain Pine Beetle Prevention and Restoration Project in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (Sawtooth NRA) in 2004 with funding provided by the USDA Forest Service, Forest Health Protection, Regions 1 and 4. A partnership between IDL and the Sawtooth NRA was established to administer the program. Since the project began in 2004, \$1.1 million in grant funds have helped private landowners affected by the current mountain pine beetle infestation to implement recommended prevention and restoration practices.

Private Landowners

Homeowners were concerned about the loss of so many trees and were encouraged to learn about a grant program that would offer financial and educational assistance. Eight homeowner associations and 16 individuals participated in the grant program in 2004 and 2005. To be eligible for assistance through the grant, homeowners provided the required match and agreed to implement the following forest management activities:

1. Remove beetle infested trees.
2. Apply preventative sprays and pheromones similar to treatments in the Sawtooth NRA campgrounds to protect healthy desirable trees.
3. Thin susceptible stands of trees to provide long-term resistance to attack by mountain pine beetles and the Douglas-fir beetle.
4. Restore heavily cutover areas by planting native species appropriate for the site.



Accomplishments/Results

Homeowners have been very grateful for the assistance from the Idaho Department of Lands and the Forest Service in addressing the mountain pine beetle epidemic. Many folks were overwhelmed with the number of dead trees on their properties and were at a loss on what to do. The Sawtooth NRA forester (grant coordinator) and IDL's Entomologist worked with grant recipients to develop proper management strategies. Homeowners contracted with local spray and tree removal contractors to complete the work. They are pleased that the program has helped reduce fire danger around their homes, will help maintain property values, and perhaps most importantly protect the existing desirable trees on their property. Without the aid of the grant, these projects to create healthier stands of trees would not have been accomplished.

	Infested trees removed	Trees sprayed	Pheromones deployed (mch)	Acres Thinned	Acres Planted
2004	14,084	7,418			1
2005	5,493	10,61	1275	17	3
Total	19,577 trees	17,479 trees	43 acres	17	4

Homeowner Comments

Thanks again for all your help and for the IDL support of this program. It has enabled homeowners in our area to do a lot more to protect and improve the health of the forests on our land than we would have been able to do on our own.

Paul Hill - Cow Camp Road Homeowners Association Quarterly report, 10/7/04

Property owners continue to praise the agencies for the funding provided to accomplish this project. Happy holidays to all the many dedicated folks at Idaho Department of Lands and the US Forest Service who helped make this project successful. Sandy Vail – Sawtooth City Homeowners Association Quarterly Report, 12/20/04



We are grateful for the funding and oversight from Idaho Department of Lands and the Forest Service. Michael S. Engl - Landowner, 6/30/05

Thank you very much for successfully shepherding our grant application through the approval process at the Idaho Department of Lands. Amy and I are delighted that our application has been accepted and that we can now put the money to work to complete our forest restoration project on our property south of Smiley Creek. This program is a good example of how government can be extremely helpful to its citizens on a local level.

Phil Duff – Landowner, 5/26/05

What's Ahead for 2006

There are currently 21 new homeowner applications under review for 2006 covering Blaine, Custer and Lemhi counties. In addition to the mountain pine beetle infestation in the Sawtooth NRA, continued funding for the forest health protection grant program will also provide needed assistance for homeowners in Custer and Lemhi counties who are experiencing heavy tree mortality from the Douglas-fir beetle.



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