



# Recovery Act Puts Americans Back to Work

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**W**ashington Creek, AK; December 12, 2009 - **Hand treatment of Black Spruce fuels on Washington Creek with scattered “leave trees”.** Washington Creek is located about 24 miles northwest of Fairbanks, Alaska. Fires in Black Spruce can occur at higher dead fuel moisture contents due to flammability of live spruce foliage. Fires in this fuel type produce extreme fire behavior including torching, crowning and spotting ahead of the main fire which makes direct fire control efforts difficult. The work was completed using Alaska Emergency Firefighters. These are temporary workers usually hired to help with wild-fire emergencies. In this case the crew was composed of about 50% Alaska Natives and all crew members were unemployed at the time of the project. This work provided extra money for their families immediately and valuable work experience to help compete for permanent wildfire suppression positions in the future.



**S**outh Fork Chena River, AK; February 15, 2010 - **Completed Shear-blading and windrowing of Black Spruce fuels on hill top near the South Fork of the Chena River.** Fires in Black Spruce can occur at higher dead fuel moisture contents due to flammability of live spruce foliage. Fires in this fuel type produce extreme fire behavior including torching, crowning and spotting ahead of the main fire which makes direct fire control efforts difficult. Shear-blading involves the use of a specially designed dozer blade that shears the trees off at ground level during the winter months when the ground is frozen. The blade is designed to float along the ground surface leaving the vegetative mat largely undisturbed. A second pass is made to move sheared trees into a windrow. Sheared trees may be offered to the public for harvest. Remaining windrows dry for a summer and are burned in late fall by emergency fire crews.



*In the Winter 2010 issue of SourDough Notes, these photos of the polebarn and warehouse in Cordova were labeled as new construction. In fact, both of the structures have been around for many years. Each building had leakage issues due to the weather, and received new steel siding using Economic Recovery funds. Thanks to Dana Smyke for setting the record straight.*