

SUCCESS

REGIONS 1 & 4, STATE AND PRIVATE FORESTRY

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Shoshone Bannock Tribes
Tribal elders related that in the past the Tribal members would periodically clear vegetation out to accomplish similar goals. In recent years clearing has not taken place, and many areas on the reservation had dense vegetation which poses a fire threat and cut off access to Tribal resources.

Shoshone-Paiute Tribes
About 150 homes on the reservation were protected by clearing noxious weeds, and removing sagebrush, rabbit brush, and cheat grass in a 50 to 100 foot wide buffer zone around homes to create a vegetation-free area to act as a fire barrier.

Ute Indian Tribe
The project is establishing a fuel break and improving wildlife winter range by removing vegetation, aerial seeding, and treating downy brome to reduce competition for grasses and forbs.

Fuels Reduction & Vegetation Management on Tribal Lands

Projects funded through the Recovery Act provide a range of hazardous fuels reduction and vegetation management activities on Tribal lands in Idaho, Nevada, and Utah.



Aspen treatment on Shoshone-Bannock lands

Loren Walker, cooperative fire specialist based in Ogden, Utah serves as the Forest Service administrator for the tribal initiative projects.

Loren notes the objectives for these Recovery Act projects were to create jobs through Tribal forestry and fire programs and conduct ecosystem restoration projects on Tribal lands using authorities under the Forest Service's State and Private Forestry program.

Shoshone Bannock Tribes, Idaho
Located in south-east Idaho, near Pocatello, the Fort Hall Indian Reservation has two different tribal initiative project sites. Both projects address goals of the Tribes' woodland management and fire management plans to reduce fire risk, improve woodland

health, and improve access to reservation resources such as firewood.

Tribal elders related that in the past the Tribal members would periodically clear vegetation out to accomplish similar goals. In recent years clearing has not taken place, and many areas on the reservation had dense vegetation which poses a fire threat and cut off access to Tribal resources.

At the first project site, conifers are being removed from aspen stands to reduce competition and to improve site conditions to encourage aspen regeneration. Following thinning, prescribed burns are conducted to further improve conditions for aspen regeneration. Aspen stands are being encouraged for a number of reasons: they provide a more effective barrier to slow down wildfire and they provide diverse habitat used by many desirable wildlife species.

At the second project site, the goal is to create a fuel break by reducing the basal area of conifers also encroaching on aspen stands, and to support aspen regeneration. An adjacent fuel break on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest also helps reduce fire risk in the area.

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Duck Valley buffer treatment

At the second Shoshone Bannock site, the prescription developed by the Tribal silviculturist calls for retaining Douglas fir, which is used by Tribal members in cultural ceremonies. At that site, the treatments included thinning around Douglas fir to protect them from fire and competition. Trees harvested were cut and piled for use as firewood by Tribal members.

Shoshone-Paiute Tribes, Nevada

The Duck Valley Indian Reservation, located on both sides of the Idaho/Nevada border, about 60 miles north of Elko includes three communities that were the focus of this Tribal Initiative project: Owyhee, New Town, and Thomas Loop.

The project involved fuel reduction and creating a buffer zone around homes in the three communities through biomass removal, thinning, mastication and mowing. The project provided training for Tribal fire crews and allowed crew members to continue working later in the season, beyond the traditional end of the fire season.

The project is treating noxious weeds, which contribute to increased fire risk, and removing sagebrush, rabbit brush, and cheat grass around the community center and hospital in Owyhee, as well as clearing a 50 to 100 foot wide buffer zone around homes to create a vegetation-free area to act as a fire barrier. About 150 homes on the reservation were protected.

Ute Indian Tribe, Utah

This Tribal Initiative project involves hazardous fuels reduction on about 600 acres between communities of Bluebell and Neola on the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation, in northeastern Utah.

The project is designed to develop a fuel break and improve wildlife winter range by mulching or mowing shrubs and woodland vegetation, aerial seeding, and treating downy brome to reduce competition for desirable grasses and forbs. In addition the project aims to reduce pinyon-juniper encroachment into areas that have been predominately sagebrush communities.