



FRONT RANGE FUELS TREATMENT PARTNERSHIP 2010 ANNUAL REPORT

Introduction

In 2010, Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership (FRFTP) agencies treated 40,086 acres, bringing our seven-year total to 227,308 acres.

Agency	Acres Treated
CSFS	16,398
NPS	812
USFS	22,876
Total	40,086

In September 2010, the Fourmile Canyon Fire, approximately six miles west of Boulder, burned more than 6,000 acres over six days. The fire destroyed or damaged 168 homes and cost \$217 million in insured loss, making it the most destructive wildfire in Colorado's recorded history. Days after the fire started, Sen. Mark Udall requested that then Gov. Bill Ritter and U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack conduct a comprehensive assessment of the fire. Gov. Ritter appointed the Colorado State Forest Service as the lead state agency for the assessment, in concert with the U.S. Forest Service. The U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, was chartered to produce an assessment that could be used to inform decision-makers, land-management agencies, homeowners and other interested stakeholders about lessons learned from the fire. The final assessment will be available in early 2012.

Although the Partnership has treated significant acres to reduce hazardous fuels in the wildland-urban interface, the destructive effects of the Fourmile Canyon Fire reinforce the need for considerable fuels mitigation efforts in the coming years.

In 2010, Partnership agencies treated 40,086 acres of hazardous fuels on the Front Range, using a variety of funding mechanisms, including American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants for forestry-related jobs. The grants helped engage more people in fuels treatment projects along the Front Range.





Colorado State Forest Service

STATEWIDE FOREST RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND STRATEGY

In 2010, the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), with input from stakeholders throughout Colorado, completed the Colorado Statewide Forest Resource Assessment and Colorado Statewide Forest Resource Strategy. The assessment is the first geospatial analysis of forest conditions completed by the CSFS and provides an overview of Colorado's important forest landscapes. The strategy, which accompanies and builds on the assessment, provides information on how to address threats to our forests and identifies opportunities to effectively leverage additional resources.

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS

The passage of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act in 2003 expanded benefits for communities that create a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to help reduce wildfire hazards in the wildland-urban interface (WUI). In 2010, Colorado had more than 150 CWPPs in place, half of which apply to communities along the Front Range. In addition to providing technical assistance to communities during the development of CWPPs, the CSFS also reviews each CWPP to ensure that it meets development guidelines and minimum standards before giving it final approval.

2010 FORESTRY-RELATED LEGISLATION

In 2010, the Colorado General Assembly passed eight bills that address forest health, fuels mitigation and public safety. The passage of these bills shows the importance and value Coloradans place on the state's forests. The legislation is aimed at promoting healthier, more diverse forests that are resilient to insect and disease epidemics for the benefit of present and future generations. For more information about the bills, visit www.csfs.colostate.edu.

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT

In addition, projects along the Front Range were implemented with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funding from the U.S. Forest Service. Nearly \$5 million of the total \$10.7 million received was awarded for projects along the Front Range. The following organizations were selected to receive ARRA funds to implement projects on the Front Range: Anchor Point Group, Boulder County, Coalition for the Upper South Platte, Colorado Youth Corps Association, Denver Mountain Parks, El Paso County Sheriff's Office, Perry Park Metropolitan District and the Town of Winter Park.

ARRA funds created and retained forestry-related jobs that helped implement high-priority forest restoration and fuels mitigation projects, as well as jobs affiliated with local wood products industries and CWPP development and planning projects. During the peak of the 2010 field season, ARRA-funded fuels treatment projects on 934 acres, supporting 173 jobs on the Front Range.

CSFS DISTRICT TREATMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2010, the six Colorado State Forest Service districts participating in the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership – Boulder, Fort Collins, Franktown, Golden, Granby and Woodland Park – actively treated a total of 16,398 acres on state and private land along the Front Range. Of the total acres treated to help reduce wildfire hazards, 14,720 were completed with mechanical and non-mechanical methods (including ARRA-funded fuels treatment projects on 934 acres) and 1,678 acres with prescribed burns. Following are highlights of on-the-ground accomplishments for the six Front Range CSFS districts.

<i>CSFS District</i>	<i>Thinning</i>	<i>Prescribed Fire</i>	<i>Total Acres</i>
Boulder	806	0	806
Fort Collins	1,426	81	1,507
Franktown	843	0	843
Golden	4,181	139	4,320
Granby	4,505	825	5,330
Woodland Park	2,959	633	3,592

Boulder District Highlighted Projects

The cities of Boulder and Longmont used funding available through the district to thin vegetation on city-owned properties. Boulder Open Space and Mountain Park (OSMP) completed two projects that reduced the amount of hazardous fuels on 120 acres adjacent to populated forestland. The work was performed by the OSMP fire mitigation crew.

Longmont follows a forest stewardship plan for the Button Rock Preserve west of the city. The preserve surrounds Ralph Price Reservoir, a Longmont water source, and an overabundance of trees has made the forest more susceptible to wildfire, insect outbreaks and diseases. To protect its water source, the city is reducing tree densities. In 2010, private contractors and city employees thinned 146 acres. Four private landowners adjacent to the preserve also have forest stewardship plans and actively manage their land for fire resiliency and overall forest health.



Button Rock Preserve

Fort Collins District Highlighted Project

The Ben Delatour Scout Ranch is located 45 miles northwest of Fort Collins near the community of Red Feather Lakes. The forestry merit badge is one of 30 badges a scout can work toward while staying at the ranch.

In 2010, an 80-acre fuels reduction project was completed. In addition to reducing the amount of burnable material available to a fire, the project improved forest health, met forest management plan and CWPP objectives, and provided training and learning experiences for Boy Scouts, Colorado State University forestry students and citizen volunteers.

After receiving training, CSU students thinned trees with chainsaws and had an opportunity to gain hands-on experience with timber harvesting and wood processing equipment. The Larimer County Wildfire Mitigation crew cut the remainder of the 80 acres. Two local contractors assisted in large tree removal and site cleanup, and CSFS volunteers chipped the branches. Boy Scouts and volunteers removed the firewood, and when weather permitted, Boy Scouts and CSU students safely burned piles.



Treated area at Ben Delatour Scout Ranch



CSU student operates portable saw

Franktown District Highlighted Project

The residents of Deerfield and Pinewood Knolls subdivisions are motivated after completing a 218-acre fuels reduction and forest health improvement project. The adjacent subdivisions are south of State Highway 86 and east of State Highway 83 in the northern reaches of the Black Forest.

Sixty-seven landowners each treated the required two-acre minimum. The goal was to remove all oak thickets and small trees less than eight inches in diameter that have replaced native grasses over the decades, increasing wildfire risks. To complement the work on private land, Douglas County included an 18-acre open space parcel between the subdivisions in the fuels mitigation project.

An Elizabeth contractor masticated vegetation smaller than 8 inches in diameter. Trees larger than 8 inches in diameter were manually or mechanically thinned and utilized by a local furniture and firewood company in Elizabeth.

The interest generated by the project has prompted discussion about implementing a similar project in 2011 that would include additional landowners in the two subdivisions, as well as two neighboring subdivisions.



Before treatment



After treatment

Golden District Highlighted Project

Located north of Conifer, Staunton State Park is not yet open to the public. The planned visitor center and campground are in an area with large ponderosa pine, interspersed with Douglas-fir, aspen and Rocky Mountain juniper. Young Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine trees grow in the understory.

Partnering with Colorado State Parks, the Golden District has implemented several forest improvement projects at Staunton. In 2010, the district completed a 66-acre fuels reduction project in the future visitor center and campground area. The project emphasized removal of vegetation that could potentially help fire move from the ground into the tree tops. Canopy spacing between mature trees was increased, and tree species diversity was improved. A mechanical masticator completed the work.



Staunton State Park project in progress

Granby District Highlighted Projects

The Granby District worked with three landowners near the town of Tabernash to clear 37 acres of dead lodgepole pine and create a fuelbreak for homes in the area. A local contractor cut the trees. The large trees will be milled, while smaller trees will be used as firewood, fencing material, wood pellets and biomass. The tree branches were piled for future burning.



Staunton State Park after treatment



Project near Tabernash

Just below Lake Granby along the Upper Colorado River spillway, several fuels mitigation projects are underway that, together, will help protect water quality below the lake. The district worked with two of the landowners and consulted with the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District to ensure that no work was occurring on the project when spring water released from the lake could inundate part of the project area. In 2010, a Grand County contractor, cut and removed more than 76 acres of dead lodgepole pine on the two properties. Wood was utilized as saw logs, post and pole, and pellet/biomass raw material. The remaining nine acres will be completed in 2011.

Woodland Park Highlighted Project

The Ridgewood subdivision in Teller County was evacuated eight days during the 2002 Hayman Fire. Back in their homes, residents began conversing about how to protect the subdivision from the next wildfire. In 2008, the community's efforts and plans were officially documented in a CWPP, which was revised in 2010.

Twice during 2010, residents gathered to chip slash collected from work conducted on individual properties. Slash was collected on 14 properties, resulting in 205 hours of accrued volunteer labor. In addition, the CWPP committee completed a two-acre fire mitigation project in a day, adding to their volunteer labor.

The Coalition for the Upper South Platte crew joined the effort, initiating a 26-acre project across nine contiguous properties (one property is outside the subdivision). The project, which was scheduled for completion in spring 2011, is in the vicinity of a 1,090-acre U.S. Forest Service mitigation project.

The National Firewise Program recognized the efforts of Ridgewood residents by naming them the first National Firewise Community in Teller County.



Project below Lake Granby



Back side of Ridgewood subdivision



A closer look at work in Ridgewood subdivision

CUSP

Broomfield Office

In 2010, the CSFS Broomfield Office staff of the Colorado State Forest Service continued to provide co-leadership in FRFTP operations, and management of FRFTP grants. Staff also were involved in joint efforts to protect Front Range watersheds from severe wildfires. The staff have an ongoing partnership with Colorado State Parks to provide support for fuels treatment projects on park land. FRFTP funds, primarily provided through State Fire Assistance (SFA) grants, along with a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant and Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) funds, enhance the effectiveness of treatments on state parks along the Front Range.



National Park Service

During 2010, the fire and fuels management crew completed several fuels reduction projects in the wildland-urban interface at Rocky Mountain National Park (ROMO), Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve (GRSA) and Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument (FLFO). A total of 812 acres were treated on all park units, including 23 acres of broadcast burning.

2010 HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION PROJECTS

Manual Fuels Reduction (Contracted): 166 acres

- Completed 130 acres of manual fuels reduction work along the US Highway 34 corridor near the Kawuneeche Visitor Center (ROMO)
- Completed an additional 36 acres of manual fuels reduction work along the park boundary adjacent to the Columbine subdivision (ROMO)

Manual Fuels Reduction (Park Staff): 8 acres

- Treated eight acres along the Aspen Trail (GRSA)

Broadcast Burning: 23 acres

- Burned 21 acres near South Lateral Moraine adjacent to Bear Lake Road and the YMCA of the Rockies (ROMO)
- Treated two acres of beetle-killed lodgepolepine in a pilot project utilizing prescribed fire to remove red needles from beetle-impacted trees northeast of Deer Ridge Junction (ROMO)

Small Pile Burns: 101 acres

- Completed 60 acres of small pile burning on Deer Mountain (ROMO)
- Completed eight acres of small pile burning along the park boundary near Grand Lake (ROMO)
- Burned 33 acres of small piles at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument during the winter 2010



Piles ready for winter burning in Rocky Mountain National Park

Broadcast Burn Prep: 194 acres

- Park staff treated 25 acres in preparation for broadcast burning on North Lateral Moraine (ROMO)
- Treated 169 acres in and adjacent to the Liberty burn unit south of the community of Crestone (GRSA)

Structure Defense Treatment: 42 acres

- Completed 32 acres of structure defense treatment in Wild Basin (ROMO)
- Completed 10 acres of structure defense treatment in the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve Headquarters area

Chemical Treatment: 278 acres

- Completed 150 acres of chemical spraying for cheatgrass control in Beaver Meadows (ROMO)
- Sprayed 58 acres for cheatgrass control on South Lateral Moraine (ROMO)
- Sprayed 70 acres for cheatgrass control on North Lateral Moraine (ROMO)

RURAL FIRE ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Fiscal Year 2010 – \$27,000 in grant funding was distributed to local volunteer fire departments for basic wildland fire safety equipment, tools, supplies and training

- \$9,000 to the Allenspark Fire Protection District
- \$7,000 to the Estes Park Volunteer Fire Department
- \$3,800 to the Glen Haven Volunteer Fire Department
- \$7,200 to the Grand Lake Fire Protection District

COMMUNITY FIRE ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Fiscal Year 2010 – \$15,000

- \$10,000 to the community of Allenspark for continued development of a CWPP and community education efforts
- \$5,000 to the Estes Park Volunteer Fire Department for implementation of property risk assessments and community education efforts

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

The park conducts an active fire education program that seeks to raise awareness among the general public, and facilitates collaborative efforts with adjoining private landowners and local municipal, county and state governments.



U.S. Forest Service

ARAPAHO AND ROOSEVELT NATIONAL FORESTS

The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests (ARNF) treated a total of 17,232 acres. Of the total, 14,107 acres were accomplished through mechanical thinning and 3,125 through prescribed fire. The Stimulus Bill (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 [ARRA]) authorized funds for a number of purposes, including wildland fire management projects, and was signed by President Obama in 2009. In 2010, the ARNF received more than \$2.7 million in funding related to this bill, which allowed a substantial increase in acreage treated to reduce hazardous fuels. Personnel from the ARNF and the Pike National Forest continued implementation of a 10-year Long-Term Stewardship Contract (LTSC), which was awarded to West Range Reclamation in July 2009. The contract has enhanced efforts to reduce hazardous fuels, especially in facilitating biomass removal. Forest personnel continued to assist local communities and the Colorado State Forest Service in developing Community Wildfire Protection Plans. Planning was completed for nearly 6,000 acres of hazardous fuels reduction treatments.

The ARNF, along with the White River and Routt National Forests and numerous other cooperators, continued efforts associated with the Colorado Bark Beetle Cooperative to address the mountain pine beetle epidemic occurring in north central Colorado. Treatments on the Sulphur Ranger District are being planned in an integrated manner to support the goals and objectives of both the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership and the Northern Front Range Mountain Pine Beetle Working Group. In 2010, mountain pine beetle continued to expand substantially east of the Continental Divide. Through the Northern Front Range Mountain Pine Beetle Working Group, ARNF personnel are collaborating with personnel from Boulder, Clear Creek, Gilpin, Jefferson, and Larimer counties, the Colorado State Forest Service and Rocky Mountain National Park to coordinate treatment efforts.

In August 2010, the ARNF and Pike and San Isabel National Forests, in cooperation with the Front Range Roundtable, developed a successful Collaborative Forested Landscape Restoration (CFLR) Project proposal. The project received \$1 million in funding in 2010. The ARNF received \$428,000 for implementation of the Taylor Restoration and Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project. In addition, the Miller Restoration and Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project was implemented with ARRA funds. The project also accomplishes the objective of the CFLR project. The CFLR also requires a multi-party monitoring effort. The ARNF and Pike and San Isabel National Forests entered into an agreement with the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute to facilitate development of a monitoring program.



More than \$2.7 million in ARRA funds allowed a substantial increase in acreage treated to reduce hazardous fuels.

South Zone Fuels Program (Boulder & Clear Creek Ranger Districts)

In 2010, hazardous fuels reduction treatment was accomplished on 7,012 acres within the wildland-urban interface. Of these acres, 6,203 were accomplished through mechanical thinning and 809 through prescribed fire.

Sugarloaf Fuels Reduction Project –The Sugarloaf Fuels Reduction Project covers approximately 5,000 acres. The project decision notice was signed in January of 2004. Located just west of Boulder, the Peak-to-Peak Scenic Byway defines the western boundary of the project area. In 2010, crews continued operations in the project area and 356 acres were treated or are under contract to be treated. Treatments include forest thinning and piling, and prescribed burning.

James Creek Fuels Reduction Project –The decision notice for this project was signed in September 2004 and includes 6,402 acres of treatment. Treatment on approximately 3,285 acres was accomplished in 2010.

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. In 2010, crews continued operations in the Evergreen project area and approximately 258 acres were treated or are under contract to be treated.

St.Vrain Project –This Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) project decision identified approximately 2,650 acres of proposed treatment. The project gives priority to community and neighborhood protection with some emphasis on wildlife habitat and forest restoration in specific areas. Treatment was accomplished on more than 2,600 acres in 2010.

Yankee Hill Project –The project is an Integrated Landscape Design to Maximize Fuel Treatment Effectiveness Pilot Project. The team formulated areas consisting of 1,000 to 3,000 acres for potential treatment that focused on neighborhood/community protection, with special attention on watershed and recreation resource protection. The planning effort was completed in 2007 and identified nearly 1,500 acres for treatment. Implementation continued in 2010 with treatment of 18 acres.

Lump Gulch Project –The decision to treat 1,642 acres in this project area located just south of Nederland was signed in 2009. Implementation began in 2010 with the treatment of 78 acres.

Canyon Lakes Ranger District

In 2010, hazardous fuels reduction treatment was completed on 7,130 acres, and more than 90 percent occurred within the wildland-urban interface. Of these acres, 5,213 were treated through mechanical thinning and 1,917 acres through prescribed fire. In addition, decisions were made to reduce hazardous fuels on nearly 5,400 acres.

Crystal Lakes Fuels Reduction Project – Located north and west of the community of Red Feather Lakes, the Crystal Lakes subdivision has been recognized as a Firewise Community/USA. The decision document



Taylor Park in Roosevelt National Forest

was signed in 2004, and treatment areas were completely laid out. Treatments include forest thinning, prescribed burning and biomass removal. In 2010, 23 acres were treated to reduce hazardous fuels.

Sheep Creek 1 – The last portion of this project was implemented with the award of the Front Range Long-Term Stewardship Contract. A task order for treatment of 788 acres was issued in 2010.

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 2010, 1,961 acres were treated, including 1,027 acres of mechanical treatment and 934 acres using prescribed fire. The prescribed fire was implemented in cooperation with the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

Stringtown West Fuels Reduction Project – At approximately 4,062 acres, this project was analyzed with a categorical exclusion (CE). The project complements previous projects that were completed in the area on National Forest System 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 made in 2006. A lawsuit in a California District court challenging the use of categorical exclusions on these types of projects required that this project be re-analyzed in 2009. In 2009, a new decision was made and in 2010, 861 acres were treated with the LTSC.

Lone Tree Fuels Reduction Project – The project involves approximately 2,400 acres. A decision on this project was made in 2006. A lawsuit in a California District court challenging the use of categorical exclusions on these types of projects required that this project be re-analyzed in 2009. No additional acres were treated in 2010.

Pingree Hill Fuels Reduction Project – The project involves approximately 2,400 acres and is a wildland-urban interface project that includes numerous acres of private land. A decision on this project was made in 2007. A lawsuit in a California District court challenging the use of categorical exclusions on these types of projects required that this project be re-analyzed in 2009. A new decision was made in 2009 and, in 2010, 87 acres were treated.

Estes Valley Fuels Reduction Project – This project surrounds the community of Estes Park and is a Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) project. A decision was made in 2005 to treat more than 7,500 acres to reduce hazardous fuels. This wildland-urban interface project includes numerous acres of private land. Many private landowners 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 System lands. Implementation continued in 2010 with treatment on approximately 1,051 acres.



Wood awaiting removal from Taylor Park

Browns Park Beetle Salvage Project – The project involves treatment of approximately 249 acres to reduce hazardous fuels and hazard trees resulting from tree mortality associated with the mountain pine beetle epidemic. This project is a result of significant tree mortality caused by mountain pine beetles in the Laramie River Valley. A decision on this project was made in 2008. No additional treatment was implemented in 2010.

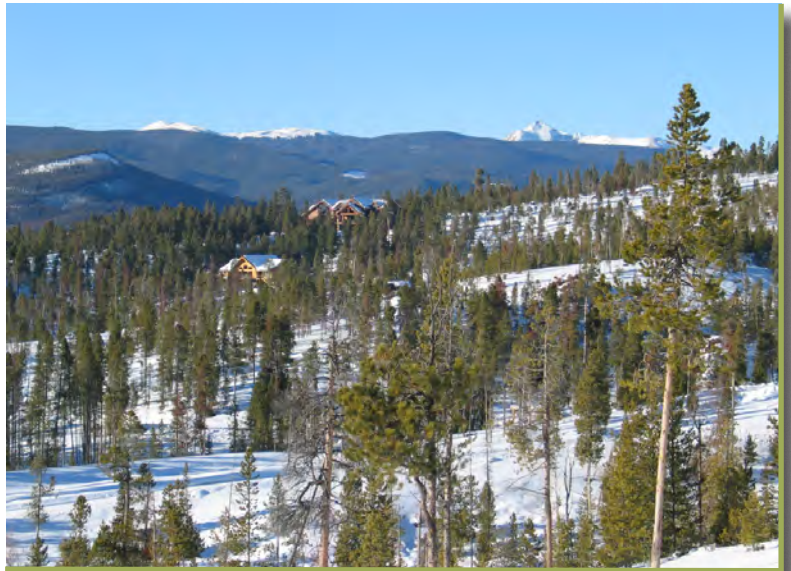
Red Feather Fuels Reduction Project – Planning was completed on this project in 2008. Several CWPPs have been approved in the project area. More than 23,000 acres of National Forest System lands were analyzed for treatment, and hazardous fuels reduction treatments were identified on more than 15,800 acres. Implementation continued in 2010 with 24 acres treated.

Sulfur Ranger District

In 2010, hazardous fuels reduction treatment was accomplished on 3,090 acres to reduce the adverse effects of the mountain pine beetle epidemic. Of these acres, 2,691 were accomplished through mechanical treatments and 399 through prescribed fire. In addition, a decision was made to reduce hazardous fuels on more than 1,500 acres. The ongoing mountain pine beetle epidemic continues to increase the hazardous fuels workload.

Willow Creek Salvage / Fuels Reduction Project – The project area, located northwest of Granby and north of Hot Sulphur Springs, will reduce hazardous fuels and treat the effects of an ongoing mountain pine beetle epidemic. The project, initiated in 2007, analyzed the need for treatment on 70,000 acres. A decision was signed in 2009 to treat more than 2,400 acres. In 2010, implementation began with 1,800 acres included in a timber sale contract and 223 acres in the LTSC. A second decision to treat several thousand acres with prescribed fire is pending.


Arapaho National Recreation Area Forest Health Project – Located within the Arapaho National Recreation Area, the project will reduce hazardous fuels and treat the effects 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, a ROD addressing treatment within inventoried roadless areas also was signed. Implementation of this project continued in 2010 with treatment of 369 acres of hazardous fuels.



Arapaho National Forest, Green Ridge



Arapaho National Forest, near Mountain Shadow Reservoir



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. The project will reduce hazardous fuels and treat the effects of an ongoing mountain pine beetle epidemic. A decision was made in fall 2005 to treat nearly 3,700 acres. In 2010, approximately 289 of these acres were treated or under contract to be treated.

Developed Sites Hazard Mitigation – The ongoing mountain pine beetle epidemic has killed numerous trees in high-value recreation sites. The number of dead trees created circumstances that increase windthrow risk of green trees. This resulted in the need for large-scale hazard mitigation in a number of high-value recreation sites. In 2010, more than 103 acres were treated to remove the wildland fire and safety hazards created by the mountain pine beetle.

Winter Park Vegetation Management Project – In 2010, a decision was made to implement hazardous fuels reduction and hazard tree mitigation on more than 1,500 acres in the Winter Park Ski Area, and treatment was completed on 306 acres.

PIKE NATIONAL FOREST

The Pike National Forest collaborates with land managers, fire managers, emergency managers, community groups and private landowners throughout the Front Range to reduce wildfire risk. The administrative unit encourages strategic planning to identify the most appropriate methods for reducing wildfire risk and engaging diverse stakeholders in the planning process.

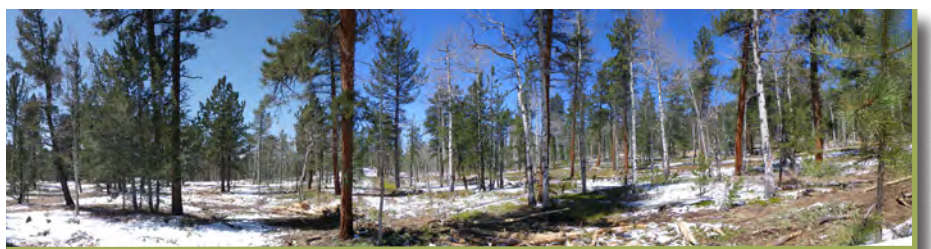
In 2010, 5,644 acres were treated on the forest. Following is the breakdown of accomplishments by ranger district:

Pikes Peak Ranger District

In 2008, the Roundtable launched the Woodland Park Healthy Forest Initiative (WPHFI) in an effort to demonstrate the effectiveness of focusing the attention and resources of multiple organizations on achieving community protection and ecological restoration across boundaries in a high priority landscape. The initiative has become a model for landscape-scale forest management that improves community protection; restores watershed, wildlife and other ecological values; and provides economic opportunities for local residents and businesses. Some notable accomplishments include treating two times the number of acres treated in a one-year period (from about 2,000 across public and private lands in 2008 to more than 5,156 acres on National Forest System lands in 2009).



Pike National Forest, Harris Park before treatment



Pike National Forest, Harris Park after treatment

Following is a summary of the acres treated on projects within the Pikes Peak Ranger District. ARRA funded the Stone Gulch and Ryan Quinland projects; CFLR funded the Phantom 1 Project.

<i>Project</i>	<i>Acres</i>
Trout West	*650
Ryan Quinland	100
Stone Gulch	380
Phantom 1	600
Total Acres	1,730

* includes 400 acres of prescribed fire

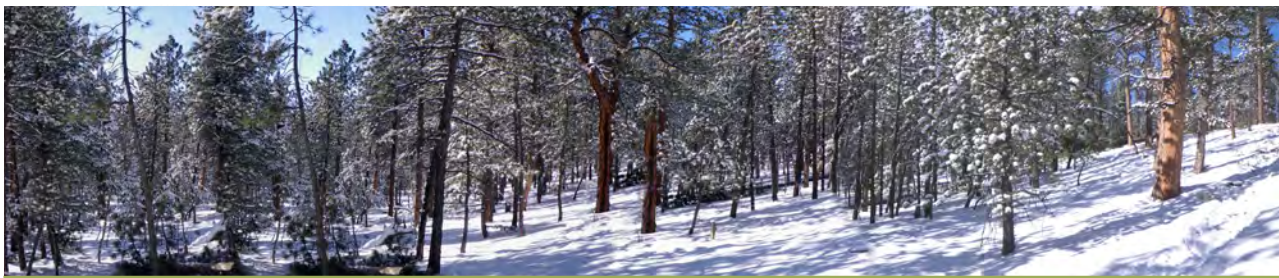
In 2011, the district will work on an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Catamount (approximately 122,000 acres). In addition, an Environmental Assessment (EA) for Trout West Phase II (approximately 4,000 acres) has an estimated completion date of July 2011.

South Park Ranger District

In 2010, the South Park Ranger District treated a total of 2,418 acres. Of the total, 1,333 acres were accomplished through prescribed fire (FS crews) and 1,085 acres through mechanical treatments – 437 acres with FS crews and 648 acres through the Long-Term Stewardship Contract.

All work was completed in wildland-urban interface areas of the Sledgehammer and Rocky Messenger project area southwest of Lake George. The project includes a critical South Platte River watershed, one of only two remaining areas in the montane zone on the South Platte River that has not been burned in a wildfire. The heavily used Eleven Mile Canyon Recreation Area and numerous subdivisions are located throughout the area.

In addition, the district laid out more than 2,000 acres for treatment through future stewardship contracts in the Rocky Messenger Project area just outside Lake George and on the South Platte and Pikes Peak Ranger districts. The district dozer completed numerous roller-chopping, crushing and piling projects across the Pike and San Isabel National Forests.



Pike National Forest, Harris Park before treatment



Pike National Forest, Harris Park after treatment

South Platte Ranger District

In 2010, the South Platte Ranger District accomplished 1,496 acres of hazardous fuels reduction treatments, primarily within the wildland-urban interface. The district, along with adjacent administrative units, secured a five-year agreement with Denver Water to expedite treatments within the greater Upper South Platte Watershed.

The Denver Water agreement will facilitate restoration of fire-adapted ecosystems, protect critical watershed attributes and water provider infrastructure, improve community safety, enhance training and education opportunities, and increase overall fire management capacity. To match Denver Water's commitment, the U.S. Forest Service is required to utilize appropriated funds to:

- Complete all applicable agency planning requirements prior to project implementation, including NEPA requirements, burn plan preparations and other planning documents
- Provide expertise, resources and assistance for the purposes of fuels management, per agreements identified in individual task orders and entered into by the parties under this Agreement
- Prepare monitoring plans to include pre- and post-treatment monitoring and evaluation activities as articulated in individual task orders and entered into by the parties under this Agreement
- Complete access and permission agreements with third parties for cooperative projects on non-federal lands
- Complete jointly agreed upon matching projects within the term of the agreement, resulting in a \$2 million investment annually for the next five years

The South Platte Ranger District committed to a substantial effort to define the scope of treatments that will be implemented over the five-year partnership agreement with Denver Water. Within Denver Water's Zones of Concern, 8,600 acres were identified for treatment over the five years of the partnership. During Fiscal Year 2010, layout, pre-treatment monitoring and other preparatory work was completed on 1,700 acres of treatment units that will be part of the FY2011 and FY2012 programs of work. Biological surveys were completed on more than 6,000 acres that are part of the FY2010 through FY2012 programs of work. Cultural resource surveys were contracted on 2,500 acres that are part of the FY2012 and FY2013 programs of work.



After treatment in Harris Park



ROCKY MOUNTAIN RESEARCH STATION

SCIENCE UPDATE

Living with Fire in Colorado

Patricia Champ, USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station

Hannah Brenkert-Smith, University of Colorado, Institute of Behavioral Sciences

In 2011, an article was published in *Fire Management Today* (Volume 71, No. 2) that characterized the residents in the Fourmile evacuation zone based on responses to a 2007 survey of homeowners in the wildland-urban interface; the survey was funded by Larimer and Boulder Counties. Homeowners in the Fourmile evacuation zone were ‘somewhat’ or ‘very aware’ of wildfire risk when they purchased their property. These respondents also reported a high level of concern about their home being damaged in the event of a wildfire. Likewise, most of the respondents had completed some wildfire risk mitigation activities. The full results are described in the *Fire Management Today* article.

Following major wildfires that occurred in Boulder and Larimer counties in 2010, a revised version of the 2007 survey was administered to homeowners living in the wildland-urban interface areas of the two counties who had responded to the original survey. The 2010 data will allow for an assessment of whether and how attitudes, expectations and wildfire risk mitigation behaviors change after major wildfire events. Preliminary results suggest the 2010 survey respondents have been affected by wildfire, as almost 86 percent said that they had a wildfire less than 10 miles from their property (8 percent reported that a wildfire had been on their property). Likewise, 59 percent of the respondents reported smoke and/or fire damage at their current residence.

Homeowners in the Fourmile evacuation zone were ‘somewhat’ or ‘very aware’ of wildfire risk when they purchased their property.

Rehabilitating Slash Pile Burn Scars in Colorado Front Range Forests

Paula Fornwalt and Chuck Rhoades, USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station

Slash pile burning is a widespread fuels reduction treatment because of its practicality and cost-effectiveness, yet it often has undesirable impacts on soils and plants within the burned area. Simple slash pile scar rehabilitation treatments may be sufficient to alter soil properties in favor of native species establishment. Here, we report on two related projects that are examining the impacts of slash pile burning on plants and soils and the effectiveness of rehabilitation treatments at reestablishing plants and restoring soil properties within scars.

The first project was initiated in 2008 to examine the influence of slash pile burning on soils and plants in three lodgepole pine-dominated stands on the Colorado Front Range, and to compare the relative effectiveness of mulching, scarifying and seeding at rehabilitating slash pile burn scars. Sampling occurred near Nederland, Colo., on lands owned and managed by Boulder County Parks and Open Space (BCPOS). Stands were thinned and piled by hand in the summer of 2005 or 2006, and the piles were



Control slash pile burn scar

burned in the winter of 2006-7 or 2007-8. In June 2008, three surface treatments – woodchip mulch, soil scarification and untreated control – were applied to burn scars (Figure 1). Half of each scar also was seeded with a mix of three native perennial grasses. Plants and soils data were collected in late summer 2008 and again in late summer 2009. We found that pile burning diminished native richness and cover, and increased soil nitrogen, particularly in the interior of burn scars where fire severity was greatest. Rehabilitation treatments appear to be useful tools for reversing pile burning impacts on soil and plants. Mulching dampened the post-fire increase in soil N, and scarifying, scarifying plus seeding and mulching plus seeding were effective at encouraging native plant development, while simultaneously minimizing exotic plant colonization. For more information on this project, see our article in *Natural Areas Journal* titled “Rehabilitating slash pile burn scars in upper montane forests of the Colorado Front Range” (Volume 31(2), pages 177-182).

In 2009, a second project was initiated to expand the scope of our initial work. This project utilizes 20 sites distributed throughout ponderosa pine-dominated and lodgepole pine-dominated forests of Larimer and Boulder counties. Three sites are located on BCPOS land and 17 are located on U.S. Forest Service land. In October to November 2009, four surface treatments (untreated, scarified, slash mulched by layering woody branches on the scar surface and mulched with wood chips) combined with two seeding treatments (unseeded and seeded with a diverse mix of native grasses and forbs) were installed at all 20 sites. Plants and soils data collection occurred in 2010; sampling also will occur in 2011. As results from this study become available in the next few years, further insight into the effects of slash pile burning and the effectiveness of rehabilitation treatments will be gained.



Scarifying a pile scar



Mulch applied to a pile scar





Front Range Roundtable

In 2004, the Front Range Roundtable formed to “serve as a focal point for diverse stakeholder input into efforts to reduce wildland fire risks and improve forest health through sustained fuels treatment along the Colorado Front Range.”

The Roundtable is a coalition of representatives from state and federal agencies, local governments, environmental and conservation organizations, academic and scientific communities, and industry and user groups, all with a commitment to forest health and wildland fire risk mitigation on the Front Range. The Roundtable’s focus area encompasses 10 Front Range counties – Boulder, Clear Creek, Douglas, El Paso, Gilpin, Grand, Jefferson, Larimer, Park and Teller.

In 2010, the Front Range Roundtable made significant progress in several areas as recommended in its report titled *Living with Fire: Protecting Communities and Restoring Forests* (2006). The Roundtable completed most of the goals set for 2010. Among its successes, the Roundtable:

- helped submit a winning grant to the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program;
- worked with the Northern Front Range Mountain Pine Beetle Working Group and Watershed Wildfire Protection Work Group to define terms and definitions and collaborate on communications;
- held six events for elected officials from local, county, state and federal government to inform and encourage discussion on Front Range forest health and fire risks;
- brought industry and agency biomass utilization experts together to develop communication on the state of biomass utilization on the Front Range, and advocated for policy changes to encourage biomass use;
- updated priority treatment areas and identified three landscape-scale focus areas on the Front Range;
- invited communities in those focus areas to apply for a long-term partnership with the Roundtable to demonstrate forest restoration and wildfire mitigation; and
- considered its organizational structure and partnered with the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest Foundation to act as the Roundtable’s fiscal agent.

To implement these accomplishments, the Roundtable convened four quarterly meetings in 2010. During the year, 100 different people, representing 48 organizations from 13 stakeholder groups, participated in at least one quarterly meeting.

In addition to quarterly Roundtable meetings, the executive team and the four working teams held another 85 meetings and conference calls that focused on the 2010 goals; 80 team members participated in these discussions. Since 2006, the Roundtable has worked or communicated with (via its email distribution list) more than 250 people from at least 90 organizations.

The Roundtable thanks its members, guests, funders and teams for helping us achieve many of our 2010 goals.



Progress Against 2006 Roundtable Recommendations

- Significant progress made
- Some progress made
- Initial progress made
- Needs attention

2006 Roundtable goals

Recommended initiatives

Roundtable consensus

Increase funding for forest treatments

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

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Reduce the cost of forest treatments

4. Increase appropriate application of prescribed fire and wildland fire use as a management tool.
5. Increase utilization of woody biomass for facility heating.
6. Increase contract sizes and durations with stewardship contracts on federal land.

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Ensure local leadership and planning

7. Change local policy to 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.

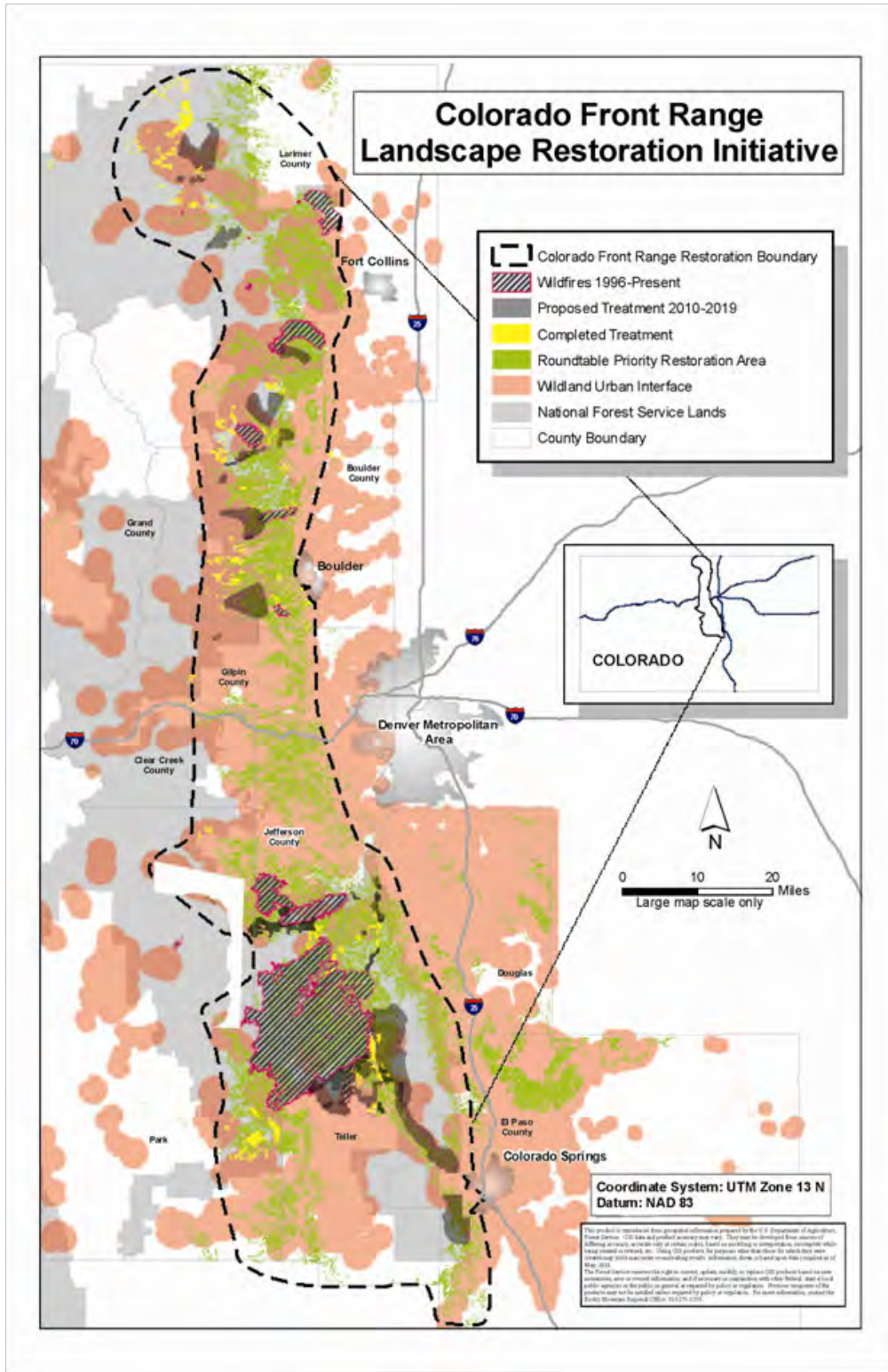
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Set clear priorities and ensure progress against common goals

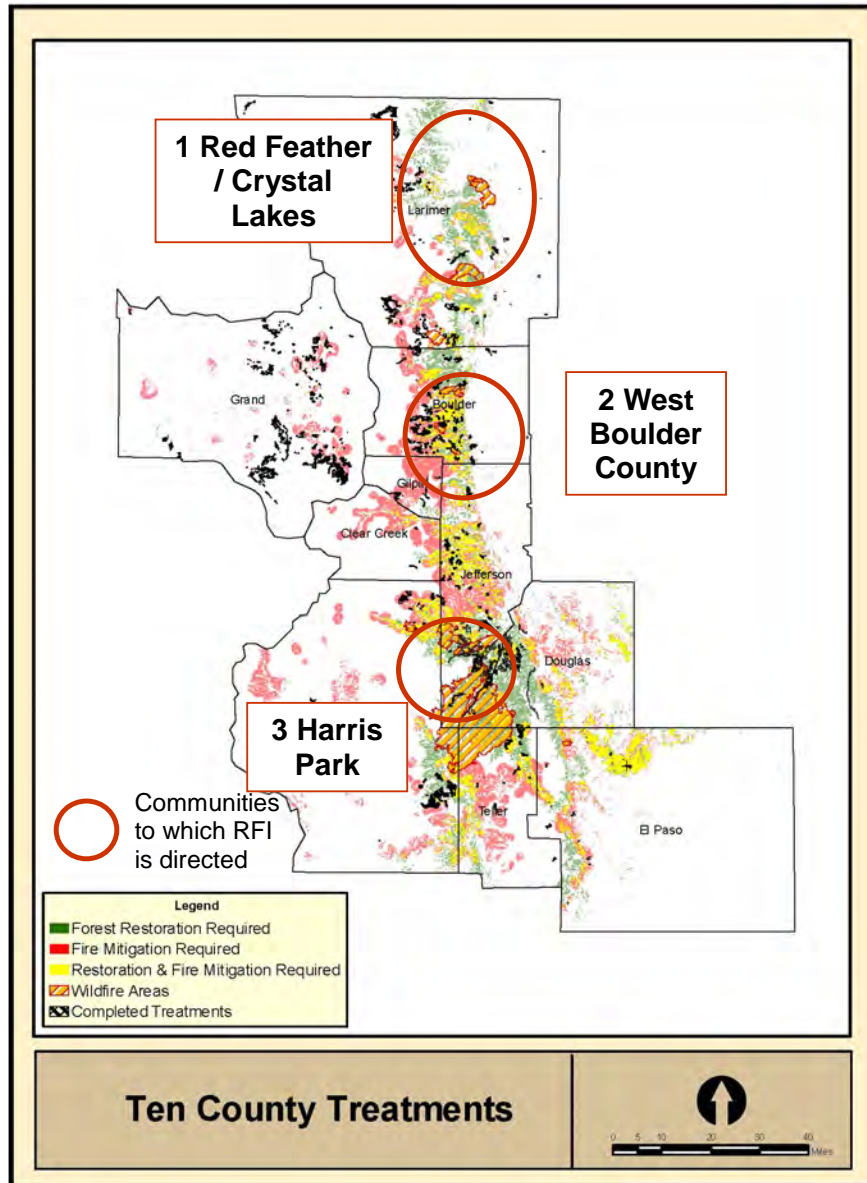
9. Adopt a clear and common framework for prioritizing treatments.
10. Convene follow-on Roundtable to ensure implementation of recommended initiatives.

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Source: Results of straw poll from September 18, 2009 Quarterly Roundtable meeting of 37 attendees from 24 organizations representing 11 stakeholder groups.



The Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program map of national forests on the Front Range



Map of overlapping priorities of three Front Range groups – the Roundtable’s Request for Information (RFI) targeted communities in the three red circles



Acknowledgements

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