

Landscape Scale Restoration Project Report



Project Name: Fire Resilient Parks

Funding Year: 2019

Stakeholders

Forest Service Region: USDA Forest Service - R1

Sponsoring Organization: Idaho Dept. of Lands

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Participating Organizations:

Grantee: Idaho Dept. of Lands

Project Funding

Agreement(s): 19-DG-11010000-014

Project Design

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Project Purpose

A changing climate, decades of fire suppression, & building of homes/recreation sites in fire-prone, fuel laden landscapes has

created a potentially catastrophic situation for Idaho's State Parks & neighboring communities at significant risk to loss of

property and life to wildfire. To mitigate/reverse this trend, IDPR & partners, will develop/promote/implement a highly leveraged

Fire Resilient Park Program & protection initiative to increase awareness & reduce risk/loss in Idaho's State Parks.

National Themes & Outcomes

Conserving and Managing Working Forest Landscapes

- High priority forest ecosystems and landscapes are identified and conserved.
- Forests are actively and sustainably managed.

Protect Forests from Threats

- Fire-adapted lands are restored and risk of wildfire impacts is reduced.

Enhance Public Benefits from Private Forests

- Communities plan for and reduce their risks from wildfire.
- People are connected to trees and forests and are engaged in environmental stewardship activities.
- Trees and forests are managed and restored to help mitigate and adapt to changing conditions.

Strategic Issues

There are 30 State Parks in the Idaho system, all in areas identified as moderately high to very high risk for catastrophic loss

due to wildfires. The need/value of a Fire Resilient Parks (FRP) program has never been greater. Parks continue to develop

overnight/day use areas, & homes are increasingly built adjacent to Parks in the wildland urban interface, putting Park visitors,

resources, communities, and structures at risk. Compounding this trend is a rapid increase of fuel loads in Park stands. Past fire

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suppression has created conditions that place an increased number of structures, homes, lives & natural resources at risk from

catastrophic wildland fires. All Parks are in priority landscape areas (PLAs) identified in Idaho's Forest Action Plan (FAP)

Goals

This comprehensive approach to fire resilience joins hazard fuels reduction on the landscape & community protection into a

turnkey program that will be replicable by other agencies & other states. Using the framework of Firewise USA for structure

assessment/prescription/education on park lands & creating an umbrella program, FRP will leverage the states hazard fuels

reduction work, and will promote/educate visitors about responsible proactive fire adapted land management; reducing the threat

to life/property from wildfire on state lands & beyond.

Objectives

Reduce threats by educating park visitors about wildfire risk reduction activities-Firewise principles; while implementing those

same activities in the Parks reinforcing concepts & improving fire resilience creating living classrooms within parks

Enhance public benefit by reducing the risk to the Parks infrastructure and natural resources & surrounding communities through

fuels mitigation work & best forest practices land management

Protect forests by enhancing Park & local community fire resilience leveraging cooperators current and future mitigation work &

interpreting the results to the public and visitors.

Collaboration & Partners

For 2 decades 1 has been working w/ partners to treat hazard fuels and sustainably manage forest resources in Park and

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adjacent lands; however, more work is needed. Past cooperative projects have uniquely positioned 1 to represent the prior

investments of all partners with this education-based project. Thru interpreting fire adaption/resiliency and Firewise principles to

visitors FRP will add value to past work and set the stage for future investments. This partnership understands the nature of this

work is such that one entry or treatment is just the beginning, continued commitment to maintenance & monitoring will be

obligatory to maintain the level of risk reduction FRPs require.

FRP involves collaborative work w/ established relationships & ~3M dollars invested or committed to project work instrumental

to the hazard fuel mitigation portion of the work (1,2,3,4,9,11,13,14,15). This will forge new collaborations with 1,5,6,8,10,12 (

L=\$80,000) using their expertise in Firewise USA, education/interpretation, & marketing adapting it to meet the needs of state

agencies & the public. All partners were instrumental in project development providing guidance & direction. Project deliverables

will be coordinated by 1; however, all partners will be involved in the overall FRP success and project work.

By continuing the projects & collaborations already in place & fostering new cooperation, 1 will play a leadership role in

stewarding a new FRP conscience that all land management agencies and parks can mimic. By creating a broad partnership of

stakeholders with direct interest in preventing catastrophic losses to life & property, these stakeholders will become part of a

louder collective voice, empowered to communicate the messages (d- space, emergency responder access, forest thinning &

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hazard fuel reduction) to community leaders, landowners, homeowners & elected officials, to help distill local solutions &

pressure for their implementation.

Integrated Delivery

G=Grant L=Leverage

1 & partners will create/implement FRP - linking community action and preparedness principles w/ landscape scale fuels/hazard

reduction best management practices.

G funds will:

assess all 1 structural resources & develop prescriptions that not only improve the odds of survivability, but act as

demonstration sites so that visitors can take information home & work to make their property/communities more resistant to

wildfire loss- increasing defensible space.

Provide direct assistance to Park managers and staff

Create educational kiosks and outreach programs statewide

Assist Park infrastructure in becoming Firewise compliant- ultimately "FRP" certified

Funds will also be used to leverage existing partnerships expanding the reach of current hazard fuels treatment projects in

Parks.

Phase 1: Meet with Park managers/ staff and local partners to identify values at risk in Parks and surrounding areas &

prioritize

Phase 2: Begin conducting risk assessments of the sites, and create defensible space (d-space) action plans.

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Phase 3: Work with 1s development bureau to create policy that builds in Firewise USA principles in new Park developments

and construction as well as having the annual Firewise USA risk assessment included into the annual building maintenance

assessments.

Phase 4: Implement d-space plans, design/ install educational kiosks, and coordinate with partners mitigation work to interpret

and showcase landscape level fuels reduction and land management.

Using the proven science based methods of 6 and Firewise USA framework, develop criteria, methodology, program

parameters defining the FRP and identify values at risk in Idaho State Parks (G-\$15K; L-\$20K 1,5,6 for development/

implementation) Year1

Conduct d-space assessments and write action plans for developed areas as part of the defining criteria needed for FRP

status (G-\$50K; L-\$20K 1) YR1

Develop education outreach strategy, materials, and marketing of FRP including educational kiosks to be installed across all

parks (G-\$140K; L-\$20K 1,5,6,8,10,12) YR 1,2,3

Develop, organize, promote annual Wildfire Awareness Day event as a part of FRP criteria, certify & recognize FRP parks at

public event (G-\$30K; L- \$20K 1,5,6) YR2,3

Create demonstration sites as living classrooms (G-\$5K; L-\$398,000K development/ implementation 1,2,3,4,8 13,14,15)

YR1,2,3

Using leveraged funds and Western Fire Manager/Hazard Fuel Reduction grants:

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begin/continue: treating fuels, create

fuelbreaks, conduct prescribed burns and other restoration management practices to improve timber stands, reduce

uncharacteristic fire behavior, and complete mitigation needs identified through d- space assessments (L-\$ 2,462,000M work

completed in last 3 years or planned for next 2 years at Parks in cooperation with #s 1,2,3,4,8) YR 1,2,3

Idaho Dept. of Lands project management and administration GF= \$32,727

Match is through consolidation as allowed. Indirect approved by USDA FS is \$27,273

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Influence on Positive Change

FRP will be a cost effective way to strengthen community buy-in & public education of the values/principles of hazard fuel

mitigation, fire resilience & sustainable forestry. Project benefits will live far beyond the period of this grant & be replicable by

other agencies & states.

Leveraging 1 & 2 timber improvement/hazard fuel mitigation work, 1 will interpret the work to millions of visitors using the FRP

sites as working classrooms. Idahoans and visitors from out of state that live in fire prone areas will understand how to mitigate

fire risk and will be able to emulated treatments around their homes and in communities. Visitors not living in fire prone areas will

gain knowledge on issues affecting the west. Fire resilient landscapes in action will show effective fuels reduction and protection

of valuable infrastructure

This project capitalizes on the educational function of 1 to maximize access to information allowing 1 to be agents for change &

awareness, and gives 1 staff & visitors the tools to facilitate/convey fire resilience/preparedness skills to others.

Items identified for improvement will be included in 1s Capital Inventory and Maintenance project inventories to become part of

the departments annual budget request

Accomplishments

Deliverables

Deliverables

Develop a turnkey FRP program that will identify individual Parks as Fire Resilient Parks

Educate Park visitors in the broader initiative of Fire Resilient Parks, the benefits of d-space (Firewise), fire planning & active

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forest management to reduce wildfire threats to life and property

Protect recreational access/outdoor opportunities in Idaho State Parks (~6 million visitors annually & the economic impacts to surrounding communities of over \$184M)

Reduce risks to state infrastructure & adjacent WUI communities

Outcomes

Long term positive changes in public perceptions & attitudes toward creating d-space & proactive forest management

Improved wildland fire preparedness & forest/range resiliency

Improved Park staff, firefighter, Parks visitor/community safety, resulting in reduced risk of catastrophic loss of life & property

Greater cooperation & connection of Parks to local emergency responders, neighbors, & land managers

Increased technical knowledge of IDPR Park staff & administrators

Ability of local landowners & millions of visitors to learn from implemented hazard fuels reduction projects & FRP educational

offerings

Improved Park & community wildfire resiliency decision making/creating economic, social & environmental benefits

Improved access for emergency response

Measures

FRP manual: defining criteria, methods, templates for assessment

Site assessments & d-space action plans statewide

Recognized FRPs

Kiosks interpreting the broader initiative of FRP & Firewise principles

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Hazard tree assessment trainings and d-space workshops as part of annual Wildfire Awareness Day event.

Visitors participating in education and outreach opportunities

Acres of Park lands treated

Living classrooms & controlled succession model sites that tangibly illustrates the results of land management & disturbance

impacts on the land

Forest health improvement and fire resilient acres (i.e Rx burns, thinning, native grass plantings)

Accomplishments to Date

2019 grant was awarded to the state.

2020: MOU Completed.

2021: Delay of project due to COVID

2022: Partner meetings and education widget drafting

2023: Education signs drafted, sow and grow seedlings for planting

2024: Seedlings planted in Heyburn State Park

Quantities to Date

- Engagement - 20 People reached through outreach, education, and training

Deliverables in Progress

2021 & 2022: Drafting of education/outreach products with partners;

2023: Education Signs, seedling planting

2024: Project is complete - By agreement, the remaining \$236,088 of the original \$300,000 award was transferred to the FY19 Riparian Restoration project.

Challenges

2021: COVID continues to impact the ability of the cooperator to effectively engage with project partners to implement work.

2022: Availability of contractors to complete education work.

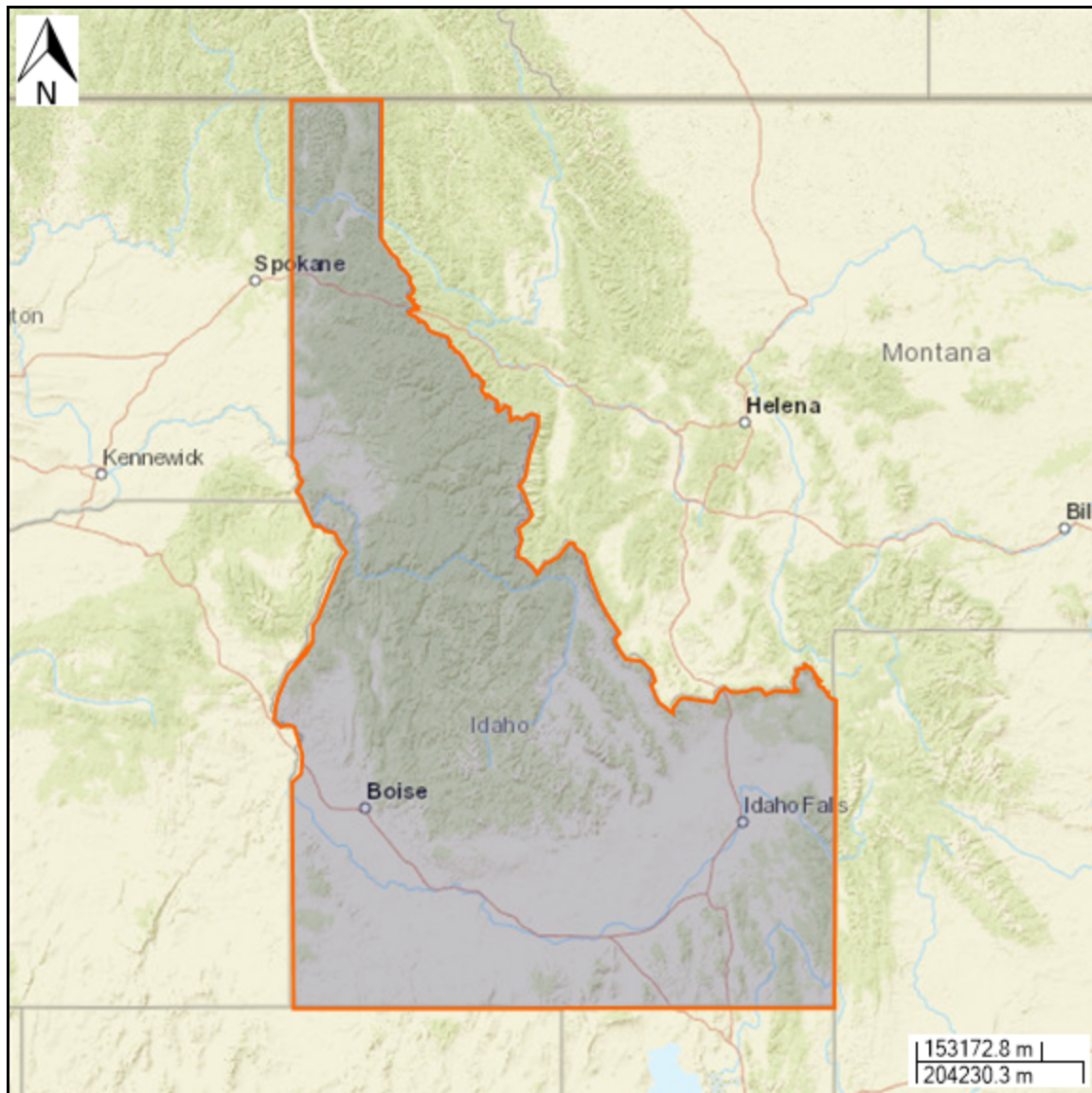
2023: Spending authority has been a real challenge with the partner in the implementation of the project.

2024: Partner was not able to obtain the necessary spending authority from state legislature, so project was closed without completing all deliverables. Only ~\$63,912 of funds were expended on project deliverables (signs/seedlings).

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Impact Area



Information Last Updated
11/14/2024