

## Forest Service 2006 Success Stories—

### Fuel For Schools and Beyond: Nevada Project Heats Up With Trash Slash

The David E. Norman Elementary School in Ely, Nevada, has several buildings on its campus that were constructed between 1957 and 1990. The oil-fired boiler heating system was expensive to maintain and operate. The Nevada State Division of Forestry pursued the idea of converting the out-dated system with a state-of-the-art system that uses wood chips or pellets in an efficient, clean-burning system.

Their idea seemed like a perfect fit for the Fuels For Schools and Beyond Initiative, a partnership program between the Forest Service regional foresters in the Northern and Intermountain regions and the state foresters in six Western States. Each State has been working on bringing a demonstration project on line.

Funded by a \$340,000 Forest Service State & Private Forestry Program grant, Ely became Nevada's first Fuels For Schools demonstration project when they purchased and installed their new wood-pellet system in 2006—quickly solving a wood waste problem and reducing the school's heating expenses by about 40 percent.

Finding a source of the chips was easy. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Ely Field Office had previously conducted a hazardous fuels reduction project that produced 7,000 tons of wood chips. The school was promised 1,000 tons of these chips if they could provide the transportation from the woods to the school. That task accomplished, the 1,000 tons will feed the system for 6 years.

An additional portion of the fuel will come from the local county landfill, where clean unprocessed woody debris is being chipped and delivered to the school system.

"Here's a wonderful example where, in pursuit of reducing heavy fuel loads and protecting a community from the threat of wildfire, we've been able to provide a fuel source to heat a local school," said BLM Ely Field Manager Gene Kolkman. "It's a win-win situation. We look forward to expanding this highly successful program to other school districts as we continue efforts to restore ecological health to the Great Basin."



*Carson City, Nevada, landfill waste wood pile, and pellets manufactured from chipped wood.*



*For Schools boiler building in Ely, Nevada, under construction.*