



Success Story March 23, 2009

Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests

ARRA and the Forest Service People Go to Work Reducing Wildfire Hazards

On March 17th, 2009, marking one month since President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the Deschutes National Forest awarded two contracts to put forty people to work reducing hazardous fuels in Central Oregon. Six days later on March 23rd, the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests awarded two more contracts to hire another one hundred people.

These crews will work on the Crooked River National Grassland in Jefferson County, and near Sisters, Bend and LaPine in Deschutes County to reduce the hazardous fuels of wildfires. The work awarded so far amounts to approximately three million dollars worth of contracted work on the land.

Deschutes, Jefferson and Crook Counties in Central Oregon are three of the six counties with the highest increases in unemployment rates recorded recently in the state of Oregon. When the first ten million dollars of economic stimulus funds were allocated to the Forest Service in Oregon, close to five million dollars were designated to put people to work in Central Oregon. The Forest Service is to award approximately \$ 1,997,000 in contracted work in Deschutes County, \$ 1,997,000 in Jefferson County and \$ 970,000 in Crook County.

Crews are already beginning to work for Melcher Logging Incorporated of Sweet Home, Oregon on thinning and biomass removal work at the Head Thin Project in Jefferson County on the Sisters Ranger District of the Deschutes National Forest. This contract was a \$ 1,471,740 award putting approximately twenty persons to work across 3,200 acres.

Also this week, another twenty persons employed by the Quicksilver Contracting Company of Bend, Oregon, begin lower elevation thinning work across 3,630 acres in the Bend Fort Rock Ranger District of the Deschutes National Forest in Deschutes County. This contract award was for \$402,582.

On March 23rd, two more contracts were awarded for approximately one hundred persons to thin and hand pile hazardous fuels in Jefferson and Deschutes Counties. PatRick Contracting of Redmond, Oregon will hire approximately sixty persons to thin and pile juniper on the Crooked River Grassland in Jefferson County across 1,939 acres. This award was for \$ 421,960.

Another award for \$ 412,322 was made to GFP Contracting of Sisters, Oregon for work on the Sisters Area Fuels Reduction (SAFR) Project. Work begins on 502 acres of the Deschutes National Forest near homes that have been evacuated during large wildfires in recent years. GFP

will hire approximately forty persons to do the work. Approximately two million dollars more will be awarded to contractors in coming weeks as project areas become free of snow.