

Fire Managers Prepare for Fire Season, Are You Prepared?

-Color Country Fire Management -

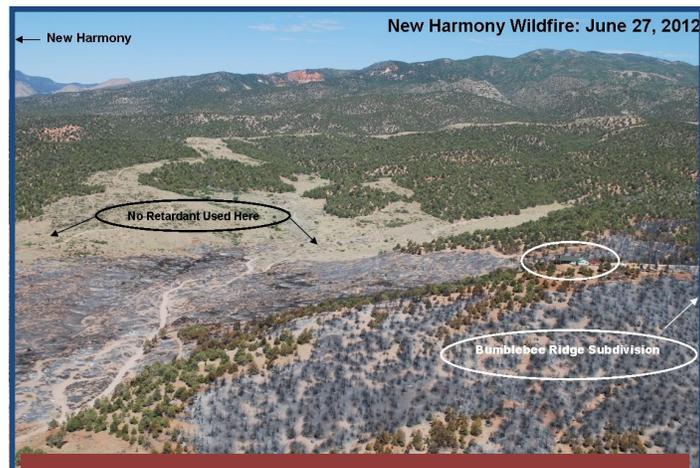
In 2012, many of Utah's communities witnessed the consequences of unwanted wildfires. Fire Managers always prepare for the worst case scenario which plays a vital role in reducing the loss of life and property. This year is no different for the Color Country Interagency Fire Managers in regards to preparing for significant wildfire activity in southwest Utah and northwest Arizona.

There are currently 111 communities in the Color Country Fire Management Area identified as being at risk from wildfire by land management agencies, including the Utah Division of Fire, Forestry, and State Lands, Bureau of Land Management UT/AZ, United States Forest Service, National Park Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs.



Shingle Wildfire: July 1, 2012

Vegetation treatments (multiple phases) aided in the containment of the northwest side of this fire.



New Harmony Wildfire: June 27, 2012

Interagency treatments on private and public land contributed to many homes being saved.

With a sharp, two-year, increase of human caused wildfires in Southern Utah (90 fires in 2010 and 119 fires in 2012), land managers are continuing proactive steps to mitigate the effects to these communities by modifying surrounding vegetation to reduce the risks. A major mitigation practice being used near and in communities is called "Hazardous Fuels Reduction." Large scale fuels reduction projects on public land are conducted to remove vegetation that present a special hazard to communities. These projects are designed to restore the landscape for better wildlife habitat and rangeland/forest health. Fuel breaks are also created to help reduce the intensity of wildfires near communities at risk. During the past 10 years, hundreds of acres of private land have been treated by land and home owners in cooperation with federal community assistance grants administered by the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands. Cooperative treatments on adjoining state and federal lands contribute to the highest likelihood of success in the event of a wildfire.

In 2012, fuels reduction on private and public land contributed to the most successful outcome possible on the 8,000 acre Shingle Fire and the 1,800 acre New Harmony Fire. Although interagency federal and state efforts lessened fire behavior and created a safer environment for firefighters to work, without the public doing their part on their private land, many more homes would have been destroyed in both cases.

As fire season approaches, homeowners are encouraged to take action now to create the defensible space needed around their homes to survive a wildfire and to provide firefighters with a higher chance of success in protecting structures. The public can get involved by joining their local community fire council and by contacting the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands at (435) 586-4408. In addition we encourage the public to support fuels treatments occurring on federal and state lands. Visit us at Utahfireinfo.gov

- Promoting safe and effective fire management through interagency cooperation

