

## Bitter Root Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc.



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# HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION PROGRAM

## Goal:

*To treat 500 - 700 acres + per year (based on funding supply) of private lands to reduce fire risk and improve forest health thus protecting lives, property, and other values at risk.*



*Before treatment*



*After treatment*

The Bitter Root RC&D Hazardous Fuels Reduction Program was established in 2001 after catastrophic fires gripped the Bitterroot Valley for nearly 3 months in 2000. This program offers grant funds on a cost-share basis to private landowners who want to perform hazardous fuel reduction work on their land. The effort is made to work in coordination with areas adjacent to USFS and DNRC hazardous fuels reduction projects thus broadening the area of treatment impact. Local neighborhoods are also encouraged to work together to create a local microcosm of greater fire protection. In order to make this all happen, many partnerships have been developed with federal, state, local and private organizations who have similar goals.

## Program Highlights:

- \$3,536,604 received in grant funds to the Bitter Root RC&D 3-county area.
- \$2.6 million in grant funds utilized to date.
- \$2.9 million in matching landowner contributions to date.
- \$462,000 in grant funds to support other RC&D's in Montana.
- Nearly 5,100 private land acres signed-up
- Nearly 4,200 of those acres have treatment completed.
- 687 private landowners participating.
- 602 landowners completed treatment plan.
- 445 project areas hired private contractors.
- Over 1000 people employed by contracts.
- Over 700 structures directly protected.

*Below: Landowners and National Wildlife Federation (NWF) receive award from Bob Harrington, Dept. Natural Resources & Conservation for participation in Bitter Root RC&D Hazardous Fuels Reduction Program. This willingness to support on-the-ground hazardous fuels treatment effectively protecting 80 residences abutting NWF land.*

