



... leadership in building local partnerships for sustainable community and resource development

... to improve the quality of life for residents of north-central Idaho.



NEZ PERCE COUNTY FIRE MITIGATION COORDINATION

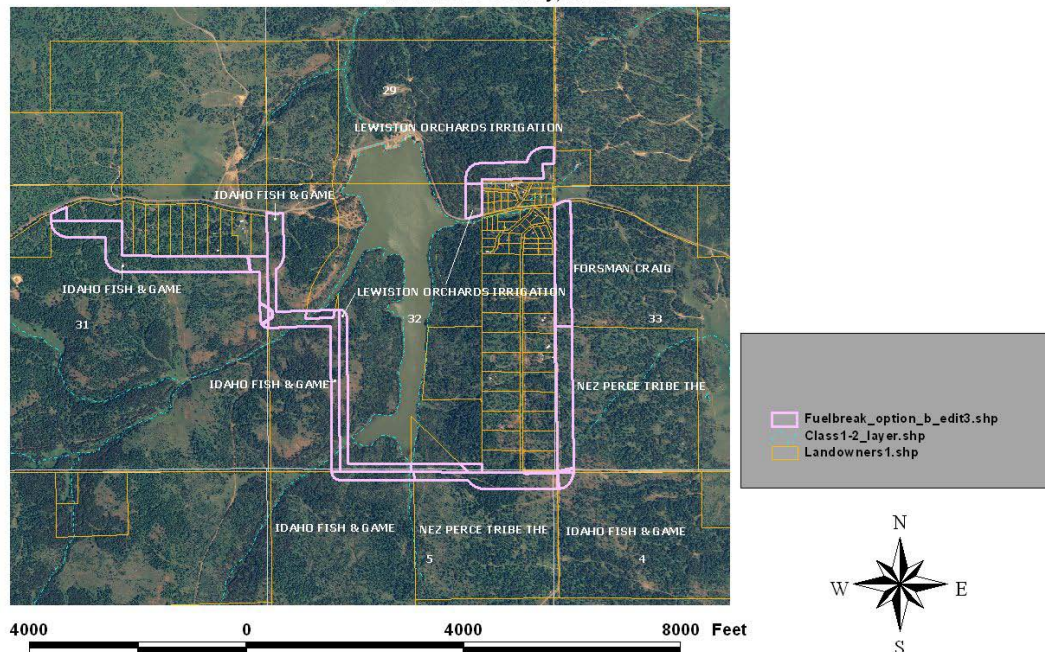


Nez Perce County encompasses wildlands with a frequent fire regime and has a significant amount of wildland-urban interface. Fires coming out of Hells Canyon & the Salmon River breaks are very difficult to control. Fuel management is proactive fire suppression and Nez Perce County chose to be proactive by securing a Fire Mitigation Coordinator. The County approached the Clearwater RC&D Council for assistance. The Council maintains a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for community assistance to projects such as this. The Council was able to provide funding to partially support a Fire Mitigation Coordinator position.



**Soldier's Meadow Hazard Mitigation Project
Option B Shaded Fuel Break
Portions of sections 31, 32, & 33, Township 33 North, Range 3 West.
Portions of sections 4 & 5, Township 32 North, Range 3 West.
Nez Perce County, Idaho**

The Fire Mitigation Coordinator for Nez Perce County was able to secure a Western States grant that provided funding for fuels treatment activities. Partners for the project at Soldier Meadows include: Idaho Fish and Game, Lewiston Orchards Irrigation District, the Nez Perce Tribe and private landowners.



The treatment strategy was to thin dense stands, reduce ladder fuels and to break up the continuity of ground fuels. Some stands were so overgrown that there were 2000 trees per acre. Machinery was used to grind up the biomass and distribute as mulch. Mulch material on the ground is too compacted for a fire to do anything but smolder. The mulch returns nutrients to the soil & holds in moisture.



The finished product is a stand that won't carry a fire on the ground or through the crowns of the trees. The spacing in this stand is now about 200 trees per acre. In all approximately 510 acres have been treated across ownerships to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire.