

18 COLUMBIA HILL SHADED FUEL BREAK PROJECT

With California's wildland-urban interface areas quickly growing, as well as the population of Nevada County, the objective of the Columbia Hill Shaded Fuel Break Project is to create a shaded fuel break in the Columbia Hill area of Nevada County.

Strategically, the project will tie in with the earlier established Montezuma Fuel Break to give firefighters a place to make an efficient stand against a wildfire on the San Juan Ridge.

In the 6 mile fuel break area there are approximately 85 separate landowners, 47 of whom chose to participate in the project. Nearly all of these homeowners have insufficient defensible space and combining this with poorly maintained roadside vegetation, the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County was able to work with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to identify the prior mentioned aspects of the area as a recipe for disaster.

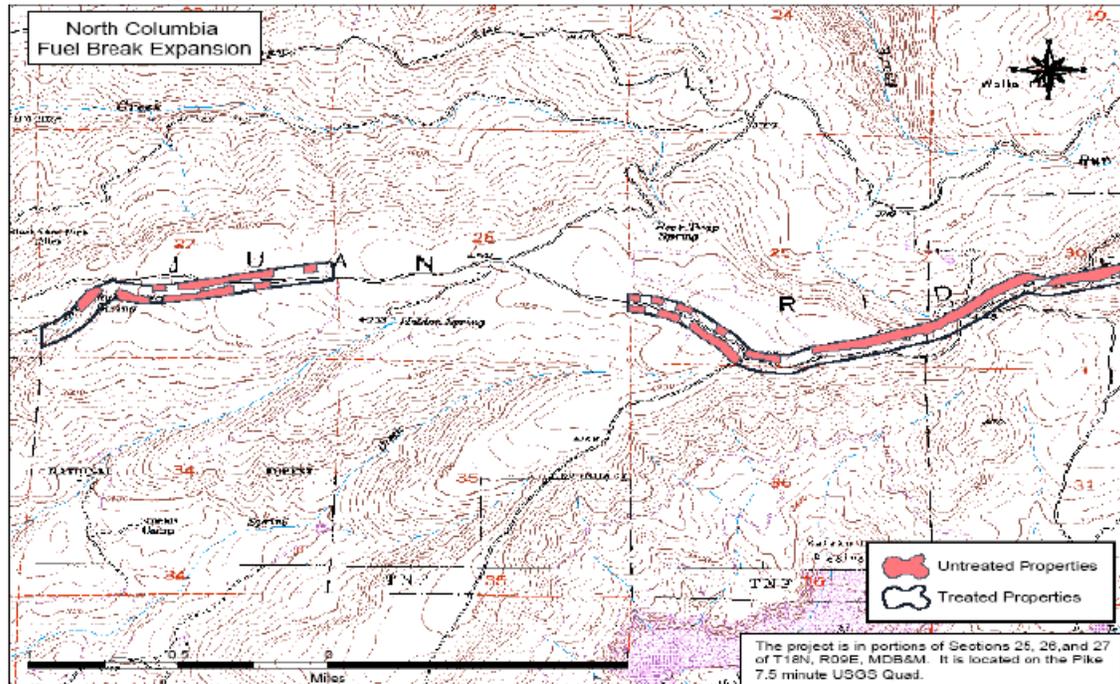
The Columbia Hill area is predominately heavy timbered land with thick manzanita understory fuels.

Actions involved in the proposed project

The Columbia Hill Fuel Break Project was designed to tie in with previously established fuels reduction efforts, such as the Montezuma Fuel Break. Specifications written into the project called for the creation of a 400' wide shaded fuel break to run 200' along both sides of Tyler Foote and Cruzon Grade Roads in the project area. There has been strong support and great interest in this project from the involved community.

Event 1: Fuel Break Construction. A community meeting was held in July of 2003 to introduce this project to the community. After a number of other mailings to landowners, the FSCNC began meeting with landowners who chose to participate in the project to mark property boundaries as well as determine what specific work they would like accomplished. Under the grant funding the project the FSCNC was also able to hire a contracted forester who met with each landowner who wished to have timber removed from their land to mark timber and confirm their wishes. Once this was accomplished, a Timber Harvest Plan was submitted to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the hand clearing and timber work was put out to bid. Pending approval of the Timber Harvest Plan, the FSCNC will select a licensed timber operator to contract with to complete the work at which time a FSCNC representative will be on site at all times to ensure correct operations are taking place on individually owned lands. The end result will be a 400' wide fuel break throughout much of the Columbia Hill area. With the exception of one small area that has only been cleared to 100' along the roadsides, **this portion of the project has been completed.** The additional portion to be cleared will be funded by a newly acquired Proposition 40 Grant.

Event 2: Fuel Break Maintenance. With the exception of one parcel, all participating landowners have agreed to donate revenue from their harvested timber back to the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County. These funds will be placed in a trust fund and utilized to maintain the fuel break over the next five to ten years.



19 GRANITEVILLE TOWNSITE PROJECT

As an addendum to the existing Columbia Hill Fuels Reduction Project, the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County has identified two additional areas for targeted fuels modification / reduction. One of these areas is located in the area immediately surrounding the Graniteville townsite. Graniteville is predominantly heavy timberlands with manzanita under story fuels with approximately 20 year-round residents and a number of seasonal vacation absentee property owners. The community of Graniteville has been very active in fuels reduction activities and wild fire preparedness both independently and in conjunction with the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County.

Event 1: Establish Funding sources – The Fire Safe Council of Nevada County has secured funding for this project from the US Forest Service.

Event 2: Fire Safe Council of Nevada County staff will be working with USFS and CDF staff to complete necessary environmental compliance for the project. This is scheduled to take place in early summer of 2005.

Event 3: Treatment of approximately 120 acres of non-Federal lands within and immediately adjacent to the Graniteville Townsite. This step is planned for this Summer on all private lands surrounding the townsite. Project due to be completed prior to the first snowfall of winter.