**It Worked, it Really Worked! Fuels Treatment Slows the Burbank Fire**

Perhaps no one had a more triumphant end of fiscal year than the Carson City’s District’s Fuels Specialist Tim Roide.

On September 30, lightning started the Burbank Fire in dense brush, pinyon and juniper trees just above numerous homes along the western edge of Smith Valley, Nevada. On the fire’s first two days, winds were strong, relative humidity was low and fuel conditions were at their driest point of the season. Almost immediately after ignition, fire behavior became intense and quickly moved downslope toward numerous homes. The fire threatened about 20 percent of the residences in Smith Valley and showered embers that ignited numerous spot fires ahead of the main fire.

Sure that doesn’t sound like a fabulous end to the fiscal year but here’s where the good news comes in. As the fire entered the BLM’s recently completed 1,080-acre Upper Colony II Fuels Treatment Project on the eastern slope of the Pine Nut Mountains, fire intensity moderated and the rate-of-spread slowed. Thanks to the influence of the fuels treatment, firefighters were able to safely attack the fire and protect homes and property.

“The fuels treatment and defensible space work by homeowners made all the difference in the world,” said Rob Loveberg, Fire Chief for the Smith Valley Fire Protection District. “There is no doubt in my mind that without these efforts, structures would have been lost.”

The Upper Colony II Fuels Treatment Project was initiated in Fall 2009 and completed in Spring 2011. The treatment was designed to enhance public and firefighter safety, reduce the risk for uncharacteristically large and intense wildland fires and improve ecosystem health, while maintaining aesthetic and recreation values. The project thinned pinyon and juniper trees and brush by masticating vegetation to create to create an urban interface fuel break.