Upper Colony II Fuels Treatment Project

Who: Bureau of Land Management

What: 1,080-acre Upper Colony II Fuels Treatment Project thinned pinyon and juniper trees and brush along wildland fire urban interface in the Carson City District. The fuels treatment proved successful during the Burbank Fire in Fall 2011 which threatened 20 percent of the residences in Smith Valley. Within minutes of its ignition, the fire entered the treatment area. The influence of the treatment caused decreased flame lengths and rates of spread and allowed firefighters to safely make direct attack and defend homes and private property. Even though the residences experienced ember showers and low-intensity surface fires, they survived because of the fuels treatment and defensible space.

When: The Upper Colony II Fuels Treatment Project was initiated in Fall 2009 and conducted in winter/spring 2011.

Where: Lower east slope of the Pine Nut Mountains just above numerous homes along the western edge of Smith Valley.

Why: Smith Valley has been ranked as a High Hazard Community by the Nevada Community Wildfire/Hazard Assessment Project. The Upper Colony II Fuels Treatment Project 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.

How: Upper Colony II Fuels Treatment Project thinned pinyon and juniper trees and brush by masticating vegetation to create an urban interface fuel break.