



Bitter Root RC&D Area, Inc.

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Date: May 6, 2004

To: Landowners living in the Bitterroot RC&D Wildland-Urban Interface in Missoula County and other interested parties.

Subject: Seeley Lake area of **Missoula County** Private Landowner Western States WUI Grant Cost-Share Application

Reply Due: June 25, 2004

Enclosed is an application form for the above referenced program. The State of Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation has allocated funds to the Bitter Root Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc. to assist private landowners and communities living in the Bitterroot RC&D Wildland-Urban Interface. This grant is provided in cooperation with Bitter Root RC&D, Clearwater Resource Council, and Missoula County Fire Protection Association. The objectives of this grant are:

1. To assist private landowners and communities reduce hazardous fuels while improving forest health on private lands.
2. To help landowners create and maintain defensible space from wildland fire.

Applications from individual landowners, groups of homeowners, and communities are being solicited. All project proposals will be considered; however, the following criteria will be followed in prioritizing project proposals for funding:

1. Proximity to the National Forest, Wildland-Urban Interface boundary.
2. Location of property(s) to the High Risk areas delineated by the fire district(s).
3. Cooperative projects proposed by multiple landowners and/or communities.
4. Cooperative projects to protect Municipal watershed values.
5. Landowners who have previously demonstrated a commitment to reducing fuel hazards.
6. Areas that demonstrate good, solid community support for reducing fuel hazards in areas where hazardous fuel treatment has not taken place.
7. Projects that will demonstrate success to others.

Hazardous fuels reduction projects will be cost-shared on a 50:50 matching basis. In-kind services will be considered in the cost-share calculation. Funding for this grant will become available after July 1, 2004.

The purpose of this funding is to (1) reduce the fire risk by decreasing the chances of a stand replacement crown fire moving through forested areas and, (2) decrease the ladder fuels, thus decreasing the chances of a fire burning on the ground from entering the crowns of the standing trees and becoming a major fire. Specifications for treatment are to reduce the crown density by

thinning trees to an average of 10 feet between crowns; pruning lower branches up to 12 feet or 1/3rd the height of the tree, whichever is less; and treating all slash created by thinning and pruning as well as any existing fuel concentrations.

Project application forms can be obtained off of the Bitter Root RC&D website at www.bitterrootrcd.org or from the Seeley Lake Fire Department website at www.seeleyfire.org or the Seeley Lake Ranger District office or you can call the Bitter Root RC&D office at (406) 363-1444 ext. 5 and ask for an application to be mailed to you. All applications received by June 25, 2004 will be considered for cost-share funding. Applications will need to be sent to the Seeley Lake Fire Department at P.O. Box 309, Seeley Lake, MT 59868. Applications received after June 25th date will be kept on file for future reference and grant opportunities. For more information, assistance on filling out the application, or for questions regarding this grant, please contact Frank Maradeo, Seeley Lake Fire Department Fire Chief at 677-2400 or RC&D Community Forester, Byron Bonney. Byron can be reached at one of the following: Cell phone: (406) 544-5126. E-mail – bitterrootrcd@cybernet1.com, or Bitter Root RC&D: (406) 363-1444 ext. 5.

Sincerely,

James H. Freeman
President

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