

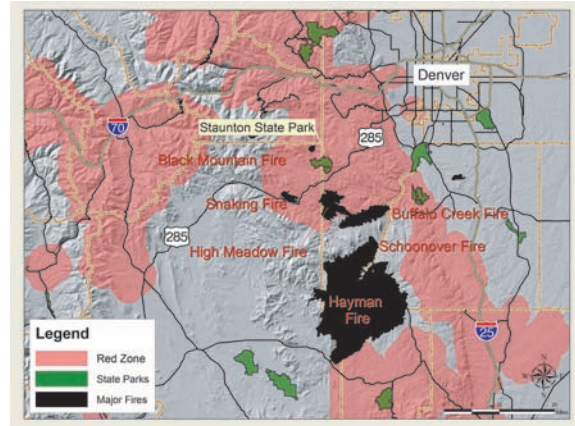


Forest Thinning/Wildfire Mitigation Station

Background

- The 2002 fire season dramatically called attention to the serious buildup of forest fuels particularly along the Front Range. Colorado State Parks initiated an ambitious multi-year fuels reduction project to reduce this wildfire threat, as well as to improve the large mammal habitat and forest health.
- Projects are planned in close cooperation with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS). The CSFS oversees the mitigation contractors and organizes and supervises the prescribed burns.
- Staunton State Parks was the first park chosen for this work because of its location in the "red-zone", the high fuel load zone and surrounding private property.
- Funding for these projects comes from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) via the Colorado Lottery, and from the US Forest Service, the CSFS and from a watershed protection grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Regional Map showing major fires near Staunton S.P.



Projects Completed

- Phase 1 consisted of a 246 acre project to thin in overly dense Ponderosa Pine that intergraded into lodgepole pine at its north end. This was planned in 2002 and implemented in 2003 using a selective logging method and providing a large fire break through the center of the park along the existing dirt road. Aspen were left and many new aspen are growing in this area now. An additional 61 acres (phase 1b) was treated by selectively removing logs on the west side of the road in early 2004.
- Pile burns and 3 separate 30 acre prescribed broadcast burns were conducted within the Phase 1 and 1b areas from 2004 through 2006. These fires have stimulated lush growth of native grasses and wildflowers and have helped give the native species a competitive advantage over the few weed species present.
- Phase 2 consisted of a 6 acre series of patch cuts conducted in lodgepole pine on the hillside to the west of the main road. Ponderosa woodland after thinning

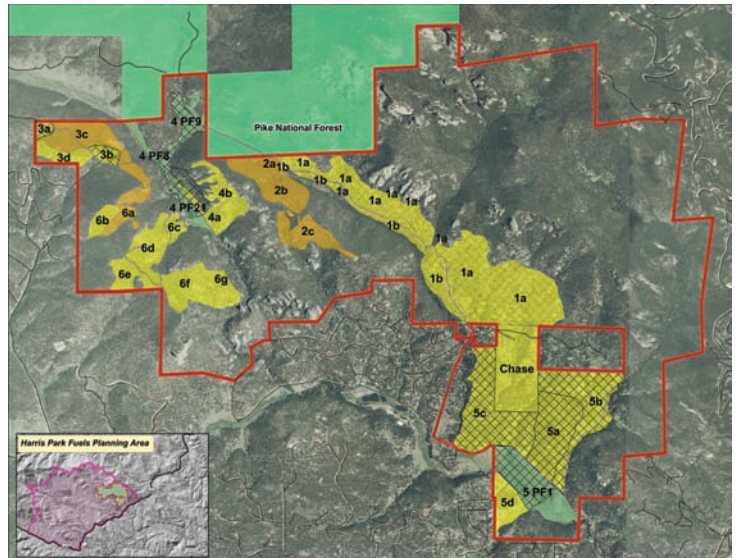
Ponderosa woodland after thinning



- Phase 3 was conducted in 2004 with a 14 acre project in mixed conifer and aspen. The Colorado Youth Corps was employed to remove conifer that had begun to overtake stands of aspen. The Youth Corps selectively felled the conifers by hand and removed firewood.
- Phase 4 was initiated in 2006 with a broadcast burn in the meadows along Elk Creek and some removal of ponderosa that was encroaching on historic meadow areas. Also a 60 acre meadow along the Elk Creek Road in the Davis Ranch area was burned. Again the fires reduced litter buildup and stimulated vigorous growth of native grasses and forbs.
- Phase 5 was completed in fall of 2007. The project consisted of mastication (mechanical treatment with a hydroaxe), in a 250 acre area of ponderosa woodland and forest in the Davis Ranch Area. The hydroaxe was able to focus will grinding the smaller trees and dispersed chunks of wood such that logs did not need to be removed and slash piles were not be created.

Projects Planned

- In spring of 2007, projects were planned on the 80 acre Chase property and Phase 6. The treatments will reduce the fuel load and also promote growth of more aspen trees which provide good wildlife habitat, reduced fire danger, and beautiful scenery in the fall. Prescribed burns will continue to be part of the treatment and will follow 1-2 years after the mechanical work.
- The next phase of project planning will focus on Phase 2, Phase 3 and the forested portion of Phase 4. Planning of those phases is expected to be complete by summer 2008.



Treatment at the Landscape Scale

- The treatments on the State Park will help reduce the risk of fire coming through the park. Fires tend to move from the Southwest toward the Northeast, so to protect homes to the west of the park, treatment is needed at the landscape scale to the west as well as within the neighborhoods. The Colorado State Forest can provide advice to landowners within the “Harris Park Planning Area” area through the Front Range Treatment Partnership. Contact the CSFS in Jefferson County at 303-279-9757 and in Park County at 719-687-2951 if you want to help be part of reducing the risk of wildfire at the landscape scale around your neighborhood.

