

Sondreson Community Hall Hazardous Fuels Project Completed

6.1.2014

Work was completed on the Sondreson Community Hall Fuels Project in Phase 2 on May 30th and 31st. The intent of the project was to remove surface fuels, ladder fuels, and provide space between the crowns of the remaining trees to reduce the fire hazard. Phase 1 was completed on May 16 and 17 with the removal of the smaller diameter material as green firewood and posts.

<The workday scheduled for June 21st is not needed and is CANCELLED>

Allen Chrisman, Duke Hoiland, Lee Secrest, Richard Hildner and “Bob the Tractor” met on Friday May 30th to fall the remaining trees to be removed in the project. These trees were large enough to make some sawlog material. Duke, the expert sawyer, felled all the trees – assisted by his Swamper, Pusher and Hooker Allen. Richard and Bob the Tractor skidded most of the material assisted by their Hooker Lee. Logs were skidded with one end suspended to minimize surface disturbance. Both the falling operations and the skidding were done in a way as to minimize damage to the residual stand.



Richard and Bob the tractor skidding sawlogs (left); Duke skidding trees with his ATV(right)



Saturday’s workday again saw a swarm of people at the Hall: Shawn Agnew, Angie Agnew, Debo Powers, Bill Walker, Duke Hoiland, Lee Secrest, Bob Bigler, Karen McDonough, Gary McDonough and Allen Chrisman all helped out. ***In the photo at left, Shawn Agnew is throwing slash on the burn pile. Both he and Angie made it to both workdays – even though they had the store to open up later!***

Excellent utilization was made from the material removed during the Fuels Project. Wil Hammerquist hauled post-sized material to build a jackleg fence at the Polebridge Merc (and made a donation to the NFLA for the material), and smaller material is available in random lengths for green firewood to whomever would like to haul

it away. Sawlogs were donated to Lee Secret, in recognition of his donations of milled lumber and other materials to the Hall in major buildings projects in the past, including the porch project.



Debo Powers and Bill Walker unload slash(L) Bob Bigler, Bill Walker and Debo throw the slash on the burn pile (R) (Note the close supervision by Knute the Dog – just waiting for someone to throw a stick..)



Left: Remnants of the burn pile. Right: Post logging view from back of the Hall



Post Logging views

Some disturbance will be noticeable even with the care taken in falling and skidding. Natural vegetation will rebound quickly with spring rains and warmer temperatures. Some damage

occurred to the old fence at the rear of the property – and may be repaired depending on what the Board decides is appropriate given the overall deteriorated condition of the fence.



More wildflowers may emerge in subsequent years as the increased sunlight to the forest floor stimulates growth. As evidence of the low impact logging techniques used, Allen Chrisman found two Calypso Orchids (Fairy Slippers) in bloom on the final day of the project – undisturbed by the activity around them (**Photo left**).

The project will have a final inspection by Mason Richwine with the Flathead Economic Policy Center, the organization that is providing the grant for the fuels project. Once that is completed, the final paperwork will be submitted by the NFLA to document the value of the Volunteer labor it took to implement the project. 19 different Volunteers contributed 81 hours and the use of equipment for a value of over \$1,900 (see table below).

The NFLA would like to thank all the Volunteers who participated, and especially Duke Hoiland for his professional falling skills and the donated use of his ATV for skidding, and Richard Hildner for the donated use of his tractor for skidding.

2014 NFLA Hazardous Fuels Project Contributed Hours				
Date	Description	Number of Volunteers	Hours	Value
5/16/2014	Falling posts and green firewood, limbing, skidding products, hand piling slash	2	13.0	\$375.00
5/17/2014	Limbing posts and green firewood, skidding products, piling slash, burning slash piles, loading out posts and firewood	13	29.5	\$572.50
5/30/2014	Falling sawlogs, limbing, skidding products, hand piling slash	4	19.0	\$637.50
5/31/2014	Limbing tops, cutting green firewood, skidding products, piling slash, burning slash piles, loading out firewood, pruning, lopping seedlings, cleanup	10	19.5	\$317.50
	Total:		81.0	\$1,902.50

With the completion of the project, the North Fork Landowner’s Association will receive a grant of just over \$300. Contact Allen Chrisman with questions about the project or advice on your own fuels project at 406-249-6130 or chrisman@bresnan.net.