

FUELS MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS FOR INTERFACE LANDS

Fuel modification within interface lands is critical for reducing the potential for a costly and damaging fire. The following prescriptions can be utilized for fuel management in three distinct geographic areas, or zones, within the interface.

The three zones are as follows:

1. Defensible Space: This is the area closest to structures and is defined as being within 30 to 100 feet of existing buildings or improvements. To be Fire Safe, this area should be considered to be the leanest in terms of flammable vegetation. In addition to the Shaded Fuel Break prescription treatments described below, all annual grasses are to be maintained to below 4 inches in height. Branches overhanging structures are to be removed along with any portion of vegetation within 10 feet of the outlet of any chimney or stovepipe. Dead wood and branches within the zone and leaves and needles on roofs are also to be removed.

2. Defensible Landscape: This is the area outside the Defensible Space zone (>30 to 100 feet from structures) where the land manager has decided to implement fuel management. This will increase the effectiveness of fuel management activities implemented within the Defensible Space Zone. The Shaded Fuel Break prescription treatments described below can be used as the guideline for fuel management within this zone.

3. Shaded Fuel Break: This is a strategic location along a ridge, access road, or other location where fuels have been modified. The width of the shaded fuel break is usually 100 to 300 feet depending on the site. This is a carefully planned thinning of dense vegetation, so fire does not easily move from the ground into the overhead tree canopy. A shaded fuel break is not the removal of all vegetation in a given area. Fire suppression ground and air resources can utilize this location to suppress wildland fires. Any fuel break by itself will not stop a wildland fire. It is a location where the fuel has been modified to increase the probability of success for fire suppression activities. Ground resources can use the location for direct attack. Air resources may use the location for fire retardant drops. The Shaded Fuel Break prescription treatments described in this document is the guideline for fuel management within this zone.