



January 2005

Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Grand Teton National Park

Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Forest Service  
Bridger-Teton National Forest

---

## Teton Interagency Fire Management

### Rural Fire Assistance Program Supports Jackson Hole Fire/EMS

The National Park Service, in conjunction with Grand Teton National Park, provided \$4,000 to the Jackson Hole Fire/EMS department through the Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) Program this past year. The Jackson, Wyoming - based department was one of 62 rural fire departments within the National Park Service Intermountain Region to receive funding through the program in 2004.

An important component of the National Fire Plan, the federal RFA Program assists rural fire departments with equipment, training and prevention needs on a cost - share basis. The program was initiated to increase firefighter safety and enhance wildland fire protection capabilities in rural areas that often rely heavily on volunteer firefighting resources. Specifically, it targets rural and volunteer fire departments that have a substantial cooperative role in the protection of Department of Interior lands and support interagency fire efforts. Jackson Hole Fire/EMS, along with the Bridger- Teton National Forest and Grand Teton National Park, has helped create a strong partnership that provides mutual support and consistent objectives in the area of fire management.

Jackson Hole Fire/EMS used the grant money to purchase six Bendex-King radios for use during wildland fire incidents. Effective communication is a fundamental component of safe wildland fire operations and a key element of the Standard Firefighting Orders and Watchout Situations. The safety of both rural and cooperating federal firefighters is enhanced when local departments are equipped with radio equipment compatible to that of interagency partners.

The RFA Program was developed following the 2000 fire season, when Congress recognized that safe and effective protection in the wildland-urban interface requires close coordination among local, state, and federal firefighting resources. Additionally, Congress acknowledged that rural and volunteer fire departments responding to wildland fires needed to improve overall firefighter safety and enhance their wildland fire protection capabilities. Congress authorized the establishment of the RFA Program and appropriated \$10 million to the Department of the Interior to initiate the program. More information about the National Fire Plan and the Rural Fire Assistance Program can be found at [www.fireplan.gov](http://www.fireplan.gov).

Jackson Hole Fire/EMS plans to utilize the RFA grant program again this year to purchase personal protective equipment. The department operates seven stations in Jackson, Wilson, Hoback, Moran, and Alta, Wyoming.



February 2005

Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Grand Teton National Park

Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Forest Service  
Bridger-Teton National Forest

---

## Teton Interagency Fire Management

### Monitoring Information Shared at Interagency Fire Effects Symposium



For the past three years in northwestern Wyoming, Grand Teton National Park and the Bridger- Teton National Forest have hosted a Fire Effects Symposium to bring together fire effects monitors, researchers, resource managers and fire professionals to talk about current projects and findings. This year's symposium, held in early February, brought new participants and many informative presentations. Approximately 60 participants attended the workshop. Discussion topics ranged from fire effects on soil microbes to detecting noxious weeds in burned areas.

Fire - related topics always draw interest from both agency personnel and the private sector in the Greater Yellowstone Area. Many complex natural resource management issues are linked to fire's disturbance on the landscape, including conservation easements, livestock grazing, wildlife disease, and cultural landscapes. The symposium provides an opportunity for information sharing and future planning that helps multiple agencies and disciplines coordinate their efforts for adaptive management.

The Teton Interagency Fire Effects program has developed into a very cooperative interagency resource, monitoring plans for Grand Teton National Park, several area national parks, and the Bridger- Teton National Forest. The 2004 season marked the sixth year of the program. Four seasonal Biological Science Technicians assisted the Fire Effects Lead Monitor in plant identification and monitoring through the installation and reading of vegetation plots. Additionally, the crew received assistance from a U.S. Forest Service volunteer and two habitat biologists from the Wyoming Game & Fish Department. This past season, the crew began implementing new protocols that will help disseminate project level information to burn bosses and project planners.

Monitoring the effects of fire on ecosystems is an important part of the wildland fire program by documenting basic information, detecting trends, and determining whether fire and resource management objectives have been met. Using results from a high quality monitoring program is critical to the continued success of the fuels program and the commitment to adaptive management practices.



*Crew members look at burn severity effects and compare them to long term regrowth.*



*In 2004, the Fire Effects program developed and tested a new sightability method for measuring ladder fuels in the wildland-urban interface.*



March 2005

Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Grand Teton National Park

Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Forest Service  
Bridger-Teton National Forest

## Teton Interagency Fire Management

### *FireWorks* Curriculum Materials Now Available Locally



*In the FireWorks lesson Will It Burn?, participants conduct experiments to investigate which kinds of fuels are harder to burn and why.*

The Teton Interagency Fire Education program has added the *FireWorks* curriculum to its collection of educational materials to use in classroom and outreach activities. The *FireWorks* curriculum, developed by the Rocky Mountain Research Station in Missoula, Montana, consists of approximately 35 lessons and three trunks of laboratory materials, specimens and reference materials to study fire ecology.

In February 2003, three members of the Bridger- Teton National Forest and Grand Teton National Park fire staffs attended a 2½ day course that focused on teaching with the *FireWorks* materials. The workshop allowed participants to see many of the lessons included in the program, giving an extensive overview of the range of content and materials. The lessons contain activities suggested for the primary (K-2), elementary (3-5), middle (6-8) and high school (9-10) levels and link each activity to national and local educational standards.

The curriculum promotes interactive, hands-on learning and extensively uses the trunk materials to conduct experiments and demonstrations. However, the number of trunks available for loan is limited, with just over 30 available in eight western states. In order to secure a permanent set of materials for the lessons, the Teton Interagency Fire Education Office submitted an application for a National Park Service Fire and Aviation



Management Community Assistance grant this past year. The project was approved, and the materials arrived early in fiscal year 2005.

The Teton Interagency Fire Education and Information Specialist returned to Missoula last month to assist in teaching the next *FireWorks* training and to serve on a panel to discuss educational outreach successes. The additional experience in working with the materials will benefit the local program as interagency education specialists continue to strive to implement fire education into area school curriculums. Wildland fire provides a rich context for education because it promotes understanding and integration of numerous concepts, including properties of matter, ecosystem fluctuations and cycles, plant and animal habitat and survival, and human interactions with ecosystems. The addition of the *FireWorks* materials will prove to be a useful resource.

For more information on the FireWorks curriculum, trunk locations and scheduled workshops, visit [www.firelab.org/fep/research/fireworks/fireworks.htm](http://www.firelab.org/fep/research/fireworks/fireworks.htm).



April 2005

Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Grand Teton National Park

Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Forest Service  
Bridger-Teton National Forest

## Teton Interagency Fire Management

### *Wildlife Expo Includes Fire Education*



The second annual Wildlife Expo was held this month, sponsored by the Jackson Hole Weed Management Association. Approximately 120 fourth-grade students from two area schools attended the event to learn more about the valley's wildlife and habitat.

Students rotated through six stations, each with a different lesson. The Teton Interagency Fire Program participated in the event, providing a lesson that focused on animals' responses to wildland fire and the effects of fire on their habitat. Students role-played various animals as they ambled, scurried, flapped, and burrowed away from an approaching mock fire. After the students returned as the "fire" subsided, they discussed what benefits to their habitat each animal might find post-burn.

The Teton Interagency Fire Education Specialist planned for the event and presented the lesson with Grand Teton National Park's Division of Interpretation, representing their second collaborative outreach effort this month. The two divisions also worked together to include fire information in a slide show the interpretive staff presented three times to various audiences in the Jackson Hole Latino community. The presentation was developed to give the local Latino population an overview of Grand Teton National Park and point out the differences in missions and regulations between the national park and the neighboring national forest and other public lands. The program was given in both English and Spanish to the Jackson Hole Community Counseling Center, the Latino Resource Center, and Head Start teachers at The Learning Center. It provided a basic orientation to Grand Teton National Park as well as highlighting camping regulations, available activities, and park wildlife. Several slides focused on wildland fire, explaining that visitors may see a variety of fire management activities during trips into the park. "It was helpful having photos and information on fire activity," noted Becky Wiles, Concession Interpretive Specialist who created the slide show. "It generated a lot of questions and interest in fire and the important role of fire on our landscape."



May 2005

Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Grand Teton National Park

Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Forest Service  
Bridger-Teton National Forest

## Teton Interagency Fire Management

### Jackson Hole Fire/EMS Receives 2005 Rural Fire Assistance Funding



The National Park Service, in conjunction with Grand Teton National Park, recently provided \$8,000 to the Jackson Hole Fire/EMS department through the Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) Program. The department was one of 56 rural fire departments within the National Park Service Intermountain Region to receive funding through the program in 2005.

An important component of the National Fire Plan, the federal RFA Program assists rural fire departments with equipment purchases, training and supplies on a cost - share basis. The program was initiated to increase firefighter safety and enhance wildland fire protection capabilities in rural areas that often rely heavily on volunteer firefighting resources. Specifically, it targets rural and volunteer fire departments that have a substantial cooperative role in the protection of Department of Interior lands and support interagency fire efforts. Jackson Hole Fire/EMS, along with the Bridger- Teton National Forest and Grand Teton National Park, has helped create a strong partnership that provides mutual support and consistent objectives in the area of wildland fire management.



Jackson Hole Fire/EMS used the grant money to purchase 145 pairs of Nomex pants for use during wildland fire incidents. Nomex<sup>®</sup>, a brand name for aramid fabric produced by DuPont, is a high - strength, flame - resistant synthetic material used in wildland firefighter clothing. Previously, the department had a mix of older style Nomex pants and did not have a large enough inventory to provide each firefighter with a pair of their own. Though several pairs were stored in each county fire vehicle for responders to access enroute to incidents, they were only available in a limited assortment of sizes. Now, states Rusty Palmer, Deputy Chief of Administration and Prevention for the county, each firefighter is equipped with their own Nomex. "It's stepped up the level of preparedness and professionalism of our wildland fire responders," states Palmer.

The department operates seven stations in Teton County.