



Zion National Park Fire Management



Zion Staff Participates in Hazard Fuel Clean-Up Day

Employees of Zion National Park recently participated in a highly successful hazard fuels clean-up day in Zion Canyon in preparation for the 2005 fire season. A total of 37 interdivisional employees (both permanent and seasonal) and volunteers spent March 30 picking up and piling downed and dead debris from a 30-acre area. This debris has been rapidly accumulating on the canyon floor due to the recent drought and continues to pose an increased risk to possible wildland fires.

Much of the work was done in the vicinity of Zion Lodge, whose protection from wildland fire is a high priority for the park. The park's fire management crews, along with local contract crews, have been working over the past few years to reduce hazardous fuels in the Zion Lodge area in accordance with the park's Fire Management Plan's goal to protect park infrastructures and the public from the risks of wildland fires. The debris piles created by the staff were later burned by fire management crews when appropriate weather conditions existed.

This fuel reduction project will also make it easier for the park's maintenance division, with guidance from the fire and resource management staffs, to conduct their third consecutive year of mowing excessive exotic vegetation in the canyon to also reduce the risks from wildland fires. After the staff completed the hazard fuel clean-up, they were treated to a barbecue lunch.

This hazard fuel clean-up day in Zion National Park is one of several treatment projects planned for the next few years in areas of the park's interface. They will help to protect park infrastructures and other resources from wildland fires, while also providing safety for both park staff and visitors. The policy of using fuels treatments in the park will help to perpetuate the natural and cultural values for which Zion National Park was established.