

Long Valley (Cromberg) Fuels Reduction Project
Grantee: Plumas County Fire Safe Council
Grant # 04-DG-11051150-005

Final Report

3/31/07

General

This project was approved by the Plumas RAC in the second round after a full application submittal in January, 2003. It was intended to reduce fuels on approximately 350 acres of lands owned by a variety of private property owners in the Long Valley/Cromberg/Sloat area along SR 70. The project was brought to the Plumas County Fire Safe Council (PCFSC) by the Long Valley Volunteer Fire Department subsequent to completion of homeowner consultations (voluntary fuels inspections) and development of a community evacuation plan project with the Fire Safe Council. Plumas County Fire Safe Council (PCFSC) is the project sponsor. The project participants were identified and initially organized locally by members of the Long Valley Volunteer Fire Department. PCFSC entered into contract with USFS on 3/5/04 for Title II funds after significant discussions and decisions concerning the disposition of any revenues received from sale of fiber material (logs and chips). All revenues were put back into the project. This was the first Fire Safe Council project designed (from its initiation) to use expected project revenues towards accomplishing project objectives.

The project was funded by \$ 15,000 in Title III funds from the Plumas County Board of Supervisors (approved 6/17/03) and \$ 84,000 in Title II funds approved by the Plumas County RAC under the Secure Rural Schools program. The initial contract with USFS was to end on 11/30/05. The project took until 3/31/07 to complete.

Upon approval of the Title III application by the Board of Supervisors (for planning), the PCFSC solicited for Registered Professional Foresters and hired Brian Wayland to design the project and accomplish the necessary environmental work towards securing the appropriate CDF permit(s) and NEPA conversion. A noticed public meeting for the project was held jointly with USFS at the Sloat Town Hall on 3/25/04. USFS also has received approval on a subsequent application to the Plumas RAC for \$ 92,000 on the adjacent "Old Sloat Road" fuels reduction project to cover 260 acres of USFS lands.

During 2004, the RPF prepared and submitted the necessary CEQA documents for conversion to NEPA and USFS decision. A total of 571.9 acres were reviewed for possible inclusion in the project.

Two California Department of Forestry (CDF) permits were applied for and issued in 2006 to carry out the project: *Forest Fire Prevention Exemption* (LaMalfa- #2-06EX-487-PLU) and *Emergency Fuel Hazard Reduction Exemption* (# 2-06EM-001-PLU).

Materials Removed

The RAC application projected that 364 MBF (thousand board feet) of Sawlogs and 3500 Green Tons (GT) of Chipped material would be removed from the area, as part of the project, in order to reduce fuel loading to the 2-4 foot predicted flame length target. This volume projection called for approximately 1.04 MBF and 10 Green Tons per acre for the 350 [initial] acres. The final results were that 127.22 MBF in logs and 743.7 Bone Dry Tons (BDTs) of chips (roughly the equivalent of 1,487.4 Green Tons) were delivered and sold. Only 107 acres had material removed (see above chart), since the mastication treatment leaves all material on-site. The 107 acres thus had 1.18 MBF per acre removed (very close to the 2003 estimate) and approximately 13.9 Green Tons per acre removed (approximately 40 % above the 2003 estimate).

Hazardous Fuel Reduction Costs and Revenues

Hazardous fuels contractors (three local firms) were paid \$159,916.09 for their work or \$1,032 per acre accomplished (155 acres). The projected net cost to the federal Treasury (in the original application) was \$240 per acre (\$ 84,000 for 350 acres). The projected net cost to the federal treasury was increased to \$466 per acre in the same (9/16/05) contract amendment which modified the project acreages. The final net cost to the Treasury was \$542 per acre, slightly less than double the originally predicted costs and 16 % greater than the revised net costs.

No projections of revenues were made in the original grant application although the amount of logs and chips were predicted (see above). All Revenues (\$ 81,161) were used to defray project costs. These revenues included \$23,798 from sale of wood chips (or \$32 per BDT [Bone Dry Ton]) plus \$57,363 from sale of logs (or \$ 451 per net MBF [Thousand Board Feet]).

Financial Components

Expenses of \$180,083.36 included \$176,210.23 for outside contracts (97.8 % of expenses). Forester expenses [included in outside contracts] were \$16,294.14 (9% of all expenses). Hazardous fuels reduction contractors expensed \$159,916.09 to the project (88.8 % of overall expenses). The administrative costs (Plumas Corporation on behalf of the Fire Safe Council) were \$3,873.13 (2.2 % of overall expenditures).

Overall Financial

A total of \$180,083.36 was expensed in this overall project for all purposes through 3/31/07. All \$ 84,000 in Title II funds have been expensed and drawn down. All \$15,000 in Title III funds (for planning) have been expensed and drawn down. Revenues from sale of chips and logs have been received totaling \$ 81,161.60. Total revenues of \$180,161.60 were received for this project. The remainder of revenues beyond expenses (\$78.24) is being reimbursed to USDA Forest Service.

The project Prospectus (bid document) was issued in May, 2005. It called for bids to be received in July 2005 for approximately 220 acres. A mandatory field tour was held on 7/6/05. Bids were received from LTOs and contracts were negotiated, based upon time and materials, with a maximum amount. The RPF developed the final appraisal on the project after bids were received. All work, with the exception of minor cleanup in early 2007, took place in late 2005 and throughout 2006.

Subsequent to bids being received, PCFSC requested and was granted a decrease in the proposed treated acres from 350 down to 161, due to increased net logging costs beyond what was estimated when the project was developed in 2003 as well as more specific identification of actual acres to be treated versus prospective ownerships. The proposed amendment (#1) was executed by both parties on 9/16/05 as project fuels reduction planning activity was being finalized. All owners signed 'Landowner Agreements'.

The District Ranger signed the Decision Notice on this project in September, 2005. The project proceeded as weather and timber contractors allowed. Mastication proceeded first in early 2006. Biomass thinning took place later in 2006 as weather allowed. Three separate fuels reduction operators worked on the project during various phases. The Title II Contract was extended by USFS to 12/31/06.

All \$ 84,000 in RAC implementation funds on the grant have been received from USFS. All mechanical harvesting was complete by 12/28/06. Some minor mastication, hauling of a few loads of logs to the mill as well as downing of some hazard trees were accomplished after 12/31/06 to finalize the project. Some revenues were also received after 12/31/06. CDF signed off on the work in March, 2007.

Hazardous Fuels Reduction Accomplished

Fuels were reduced on a total of 155 acres at ten (10) ownerships. This is 3.87 % less than the 161 acres agreed upon in the 9/16/05 Contract Amendment.

Parcel Name	Mechanical Mastication Acres	Commercial Thinning Acres	Conventional Falling with Mechanical Option, acres
B	10*	35	-
F	-	17	-
P	-	-	1.5
Sa	-	-	17.0
Ga	20	-	-
Se	12.5	25	-
Gr	1.5	-	-
J	1.0	-	-
H	1.0	-	2.5
D	2.0	9.0	-
TOTALS	48.0	86.0	21.0