

**Hazard Fuels Reduction Project  
Final Report**

**Partners for Fish and Wildlife**

**Agreement # 11331W002**

**Project # 2001-Partners-02**

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# Hazard Fuels Reduction Project Final Report

## Background

Hazard fuels (highly flammable brush and other woody material) were removed on twenty-five acres of privately owned land in the Middle Klamath River Subbasin thru a cooperative project between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife and four individual private landowners. The project goal is protection of critical wildlife and fish habitat from the impacts of high intensity wildfire.

Wild fires are an important ecological component in the Middle Klamath River Region, but because of high fuels accumulations due to fire suppression and other land management activities, the risk of high intensity fires has increased. High intensity fire can impact riparian areas, soil and slope stability, in addition to destroying mature trees important for owls and other wildlife. It is recognized by forest ecologists and local tribes that fire in the Middle Klamath landscape is important for maintaining habitat diversity and forest health.

The objective of the project was to mimic as best as humanly possible the effects of low intensity fire through removal of ground fuels (flammable wood on the ground) and ladder fuels (flammable low lying tree limbs) while retaining a tree shade canopy. Under-brush and limbs were piled and burned or chipped. The end result was an open tree under-story and a closed tree shade canopy. A shaded and closed canopy will suppress brush growth and thus required less long-term fuels reduction maintenance.

## Methods

Areas with 80% to 100% over-story tree shade cover and dense underbrush with heavy ground and ladder fuels were selected for project treatment. Boundaries were then measured, mapped and flagged. Individual work plans were prepared for each property. Fuels were cut and either chipped or burned depending on the availability of a chipper and location of the specific treatment area. Areas near roads with good access could be chipped, while in more remote or steep areas the fuels were piled and burned. All small diameter low tree limbs, vines and brush were removed and chipped or burned. Larger diameter logs were not cut or removed from the ground, to protect wildlife using them. Small diameter fuels were targeted because of the flammability and flashy nature of those fuel types. Pre and post project photos were taken at each of the four sites to be used for long term effectiveness monitoring.

## Results

After removal of under-tree story brush and limbs, project areas were noticeably more open and cleaned of fuels accumulations (See photos in Appendix 1). Landowners reported seeing deer, elk and raptor bird species using the treated areas more than before the treatment. All landowners were pleased with the project and feel they have reduced the risk of catastrophic wildfire impacting wildlife and fish habitat.

## Budget and Cost Share

	USFWS	Landowners cost share	Project Total
Labor	10,000.00	\$7,075.00	
Equipment hours (chipper, tractor, chainsaw)		\$2,800.00	
Supplies (fuel)		\$125.00	
Total Cost	10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$20,000.00

## Appendix 1 Project Photos

Pearlingi property after fuels treatment



Soto property



Watson Property



Riggan Property

