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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Granite Goose Landscape Restoration Project:

My name is Curt Barnett, (a local), born and raised in Adams County and still living in New Meadows. I graduated from MVHS in 1974 and became a 3rd generation logger that summer. I have worked for several different logging companies and started our own corporation (Barnett Brothers Inc in 1996) and was president and general manager for 15 years (2011). At this point in time mechanical logging was taking over and we sold our equipment and went back to work for local contractors. During our 15 years of operation we developed a good reputation with several major fuel reduction plans and never did we use broadcast burning as a management tool. We logged and reduced fuel loads on the Payette, Boise and Sawtooth national forests. A few of the local projects that were accomplished were Meadow Creek fuel reduction in 2001 and 2002 with a state backed plan that included logging, thinning, pruning, chipping, and burning slash that was removed from the timbered areas to a safe burning location. The following year we were asked to do the same in Jughandle Mtn. Estates which we did. Keep in mind that these projects were state backed with grant money and the sell of timber to fund them. The Jug Mtn. Estates job handed us a big fuel job for Jug Mtn. Ranch for the next 2 summers with Pat Knowles as our forester. We went at this job using the guide lines as Meadow Cr. and Jug Mtn. Estates. Keep in mind Jug Mtn. Ranch had no grant money to work with so pruning was left out. There was never a broadcast burn advised or used in any of these fuel reduction plans. Your Granite Goose Landscape Restoration plan includes a lot of broadcast burning or (prescribed fire) technically speaking. In the year of 2001, I attended a 3 day learning course put on by the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension System called: Logger Education to Advance Professionalism. I have attached a copy of the table of Contents. A logging company had to have a accredited logger that had completed that program and took enough classes every year to maintain his or her credentials or the local sawmills would not contract you or purchase timber from you. In the chapter Forest Growth and Development, Forest Site Quality; prescribed fire is used as a site preparation tool especially on slopes greater than 40%. Leap Program Book, page 25. (quote) "On steep slopes, prescribed burning can be used to prepare a new forest. By carefully monitoring moisture conditions, a fire can be set that consumes only a part of the material, leaving the soil humus and large logs undisturbed. A Heli torch lights spot fires designated to burn quickly. Afterwards the site is either planted or allowed to seed in naturally. Using fire for forestry purposes required a valid Forest Practices Notification. Scattered or piled slash should be cured and free of dirt or stumps to minimize air pollution. All burning for forestry purposes should be planned and prescribed to be within air quality guidelines" The LEAP program only uses prescribed fire for reforestation. My concern is the air quality. It seems as though the Payette National Forest is using fire more and especially on easy slopes or gradual ground under 40% alot. These areas could easily be masticated and or mulched instead of burnt. I read where you guys talk about the Native American using fire as a management tool. The Natives did not have the modern machinery and know how of today. Stone axes was their timber tools. The Natives also only burnt in the fall as most of the logging slash is now days. The Forest Service starts burning in the spring and too early in the fall and many prescribed burns get away from them. The last few years we have seen many days of poor air quality where it is unhealthy to go outdoors. In the early 1970's the Fish and Game asked the National Forest to gate roads to help manage elk population. There was too much access and elk were being disturbed during the rut. At first these were seasonal, but now, many are permanent with more going up. There is no access now on D.F property for the public so a lot of people hunt the national forest It is very difficult to go in afoot and get an elk out and impossible if your handicapped or you have wind pushing a prescribed fires smoke to your location. It has also put way to much pressure on the resources where it is not gated. Times have changed many practices on our National Forest System that in my eyes and many people I know do not believe in, I believe the Payette National Forest should scale back their prescribed burning on this project and not lock up anymore of our access to the National Forest. The people who live here health and livelihoods depend on it,

REFERENCE - page 5 of 6: Logger Education to Advance Professionalism (LEAP) Program Notes (table of contents)