



East Mountain Forest Health Program
Ciudad Soil & Water Conservation District
www.ciudadswcd.com

What is the East Mountain Forest Health Program?

The program involves on-the-ground work in three project areas, along the North 14 corridor between Tijeras and La Madera, east of Tijeras off I-40 to Sedillo Hill and south along the Hwy 337 corridor from Tijeras to Torreon. The program's goal is to reduce the wildfire risk to residents and businesses in the District's East Mountain Area.

What do the projects entail?

In response to the Cerro Grande fire in 2000, residents in forested areas of the west decided to step up efforts to protect their communities from similar disasters. It was clear that overgrown forests had to be restored to a more natural condition, with open areas and reduced fuel loads. On the federal side of the fence, the U.S.D.A. Forest Service has concentrated on building fuel breaks near high-risk areas within the wildland/urban interface (WUI), where homes and businesses are built in or adjacent to forest lands. The East Mountain Forest Health Program (EMFHP) was begun to help landowners reduce the risk of wildfire damage on private lands, while at the same time improving the forest's overall health.

The program involves a cooperative effort between government organizations forest health contractors and private landowners. All work is being done on a voluntary basis and is based upon the availability of funding.

Who is sponsoring the program?

Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) manages the program in cooperation with the State Forestry Division of the New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department.

How does the program work?

Landowners who are interested in treating their property must complete an application form and submit it to Ciudad SWCD. The landowners and District staff develop a plan for treating their particular tract of land. Treatments may include creating defensible space around structures (mandatory), general tree thinning, and/or creating a fuel break (around a subdivision's perimeter, or along a shared border with national forest land). The District then assigns qualified contractors to perform the specified work.

Project funds will cover 70% of the cost for the on-the-ground work. The landowner(s) must provide the remaining 30% match.

Who can I contact to find out more about the program?

Contact Sue Hansen at 761-5446 or Carol Moritz at 761-4986 at the Ciudad SWCD office, 6200 Jefferson NE, Room 125, Albuquerque, NM 87109.