Nevada Division of Forestry
Western Region
2003 Seasonal Firefighter Program

Clockwise from top: Six Mile Fire, Storey County. Tree Planting, RPSTC. Fuels Management, Spooner Lake State Park. Live Fire Training, Douglas County Airport.

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Overview

In 2003 Nevada Division of Forestry-Western Region hired 35 Seasonal Firefighters. Thirty Seasonal Firefighters staffed seven Type III wildland engines – two each in Carson City, Douglas and Storey Counties and one in Washoe County. This was an increase of one engine and eight Seasonal Firefighters over last year. Five Seasonal Firefighters were assigned to Minden Helitack, at the Douglas County Airport. The increased staffing improved the safety, efficiency and effectiveness of the seasonal engine companies. Along with the added personnel the Seasonal Firefighters were given new duties. When not on fires they worked on a number of proactive fuels management projects.

Wildland Fire Academy

Seasonal Firefighters attended an intensive three-week wild land fire academy at the Regional Public Safety Training Center. The NDF Training Captains were in-charge of the academy and NDF station personnel and command staff provided much assistance. In addition to the required basic firefighter training, the Seasonal Firefighters received training in safe vehicle operations, chainsaws and CPR. The "final exam" was a live burn exercise at the Douglas County Airport. Throughout the academy there was a strong emphasis on safety, teamwork and professionalism. In addition, the staff helped the returning Seasonal Firefighters develop their team leadership skills.

Top: Driver Training, Bottom: Seasonal Cadets

Fire Suppression

Nevada experienced below normal fire activity, during the 2003 fire season. Nevertheless, Seasonal Firefighters helped fight 49 fires in the Sierra Front area, including the following:

American Flats
Ames
C-Hill Complex
Chilcoot Complex
Highway 50
Lockwood Landfill
Red Rock
Robb
Roland
Seven Mile
Six Mile
Voltaire
Voltaire #2

⮜ Voltaire, Carson City

American Flats, Lyon County

Voltaire #2 Carson City ➢

Fire Prevention

Fire Hazard Signs were posted at back country access through out the Sierra Forest Fire Protection District and Storey County.

Smokey Bear Fire Danger Sign was installed along Highway 341 in Gold Hill and another fire prevention sign in Six Mile Canyon.

Public Information Checkpoints were established at Kings Canyon and Ash Canyon to provide back country users with fire safety information.

Defensible Space Inspections were conducted to help homeowners improve their homes chance of surviving a wildfire. Three hundred inspections were completed in high fire risk communities such as; Lake View Estates, Alpine View Estates, Jack's Valley, Job's Peak, Autumn Hills, and Horizon Hills.

Smokey Bear and Seasonal Firefighters visited and gave fire prevention information to almost two thousand children at school programs, the Carson City Children's Museum, Camp Sundowner, the 4-H Pumpkin Patch at Lampe Park in Gardnerville and the Forest Stewardship Day.

James Lee Park Grand Opening Seasonal Firefighters passed out fire prevention education materials and helped with East Fork's Fire Safe Trailer.

Forest Steward Day Seasonal Firefighters worked with over 275 volunteers to rehabilitate the Gondola fire.

Great Reno Balloon Races Seasonal Firefighters helped launch the Smokey Bear Balloon.

Fire Safe Highlands Seasonal Firefighters helped with a live fire demonstration of fire proofing gel for 80 homeowners.

Fuels Management Projects

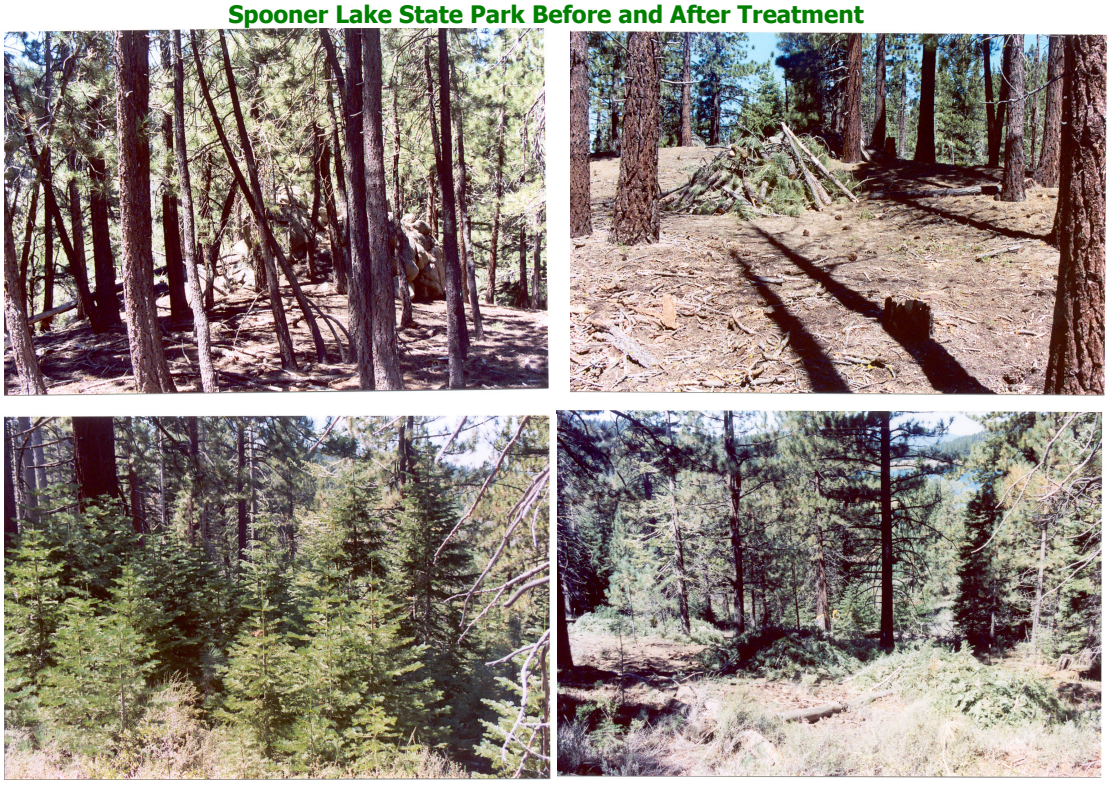
Clear cut logging during the Comstock Mining era, followed by a century of fire exclusion and recent draughts has resulted in unhealthy, over-crowded forests that are susceptible to insect attacks and catastrophic fire. Seasonal firefighters worked on the following fuels management projects, designed to start reducing the high fire risk in the Sierra Front:

Davis Creek Regional Park – Prepared large accumulation of logs and dead branches for disposal.

Galena Creek Regional Park - Removed dead trees and thinned approximately ten acres of over-grown forest.

Spooner Lake State Park - Removed small fire-prone fir trees that were crowding out pines and aspens, and removed dead trees from approximately ten acres.

Spooner Lake State Park Before and After Treatment



Virginia City Highlands - Bark beetles have killed over 800 hundred Pinyon pine trees. Working with the Fire Safe Highlands, dead trees were removed from 16 parcels and along Geiger Grade.

Washoe Lake State Park - Cleared dead brush and dry grass from around campsites, and helped seed fuel breaks with fire resistant perennial grasses.

Jack's Valley Elementary School - Hand cleared brush from fence lines to help complete a fuel break around the school.

Alpine View Estates - Helped the Jack's Valley Volunteer Fire Department's "Compost Your Combustible" program, by hauling off brush, which residents and crews had cleared from around homes.

We at the Nevada Division of Forestry-Western Region are proud of our Seasonal Firefighters. They have shown dedication and professionalism on their many assignments. Throughout the fire season they had an excellent safety record. They helped protect the people and natural resources of Western Nevada by controlling wildland fires, improving forest health, reducing fire hazard, and conducting fire prevention activities. This winter, eight Seasonal Firefighters will be paid by grant funds to continue working on fuels management projects in State and County parks. Next fire season we look forward to expanding the Seasonal Firefighter's involvement in fuels management and fire prevention projects.