FUELBREAKS and FUEL REDUCTION TREATMENTS

A FACT SHEET FOR WHITE PINE COUNTY HOMEOWNERS

DEFINITIONS:

A **fuelbreak** is a strategically located strip of land, on which a cover of dense, heavy, or flammable vegetation has been drastically changed to one of lower fuel volume or reduced flammability. Fuelbreak construction may include removing, controlling, and possibly replacing highly flammable vegetation with more fire resistant species. Ridgetop fuelbreaks generally have continuous length and width, which requires long-range planning. Fuel density is reduced, ladder fuels removed, and canopy closure reduced in fuelbreak treatments.

Shaded fuelbreaks are created by altering surface fuels and increasing the height of the base of the live crown and opening the canopy by removing trees. This type of fuelbreak spans a wide range of understory and overstory prescriptions and methods of creation through manual, mechanical, and prescribed fire treatments.

GENERAL RULES FOR FUEL MODIFICATION:

- Thin tree canopies to a distance two times the height of the trees and shrubs to a distance two times their height to create space between each canopy. Remove dead and diseased trees first.
- Evenly space thinned trees or thin in small clumps to create the desired appearance.
- If possible, prune/limb trees in the winter to avoid insect infestations. If pruning in other seasons, the tree should be sprayed with approved products to protect tree from insects and disease.
- For mature trees, prune limbs from the bottom of the tree to 4-feet above ground. Avoid removing more than one-third of the trees' live branches.
- Contact your local Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) forester for additional recommendations regarding tree health and extensive tree removal projects.

When applying thinning and pruning treatments it is essential that all tree branches, shrubs, pine needle litter, and other plant biomass be removed from the site immediately to a safe disposal area. This material dries rapidly and can contribute to the fire hazard problem if allowed to remain on the premises.