



Southwest Idaho
Resource Conservation
And Development



FIELD TRAINING FOR DEFENSIBLE SPACE: HOMEOWNERS AND STUDENTS WORKING TOGETHER

The Southwest Idaho Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council through the cooperative efforts of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Northwest Nazarene University (NNU), Meridian School District, Boise School District, City of Boise, and the home owners of the Boise Heights Subdivision Association, the Field Inquiry Research Experience (F.L.R.E.-Up) Teams collected field data in and around the area of the Boise Heights subdivision, in Boise Idaho.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- 10 schools from Meridian and Boise districts participated
- 24 students collected data
- 5 volunteers supervised the project
- 3000 hours of volunteer time provided through the USDA Earth Team program and the RC&D
- 137 structures were assessed

Students used REDZONE SOFTWARE to assess each structure's quality of defensible space. REDZONE SOFTWARE focuses on the Wildland Urban Interface. This data was then compiled into a publication to be presented to homeowners with recommendations that will help to reduce the chances of property destruction in the event of a wildfire. The reports provide candid, individual hazard-risk assessments for each property evaluated. Homeowners may use the suggestions within the report to alter the area surrounding their homes, also known as defensible space.

The defensible space concept encourages landscaping and construction methods that reduce the amount of combustible materials and vegetation within close proximity of the structure. This space has been proven to be a key factor in determining whether a home will or will not survive a wildfire.

The students also surveyed the fire hazard of 57 occluded areas in and around Boise. All spaces were mapped out and analyzed with areas ranging from 3.5 to 560 acres and totaling 3,965 acres overall. Students found the vicinity center of their assigned test plot and examined features such as percent of ground cover, vehicle access, or how close structures were to the occluded spot. This information was gathered using Redzone, Quadrant, and Firemon survey software.