

FUELS: Blaze was kept small and handled quickly

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reached 90 degrees and winds gusted at 10-15 miles per hour.

Approximately 10 years ago fuels specialists thinned out small ponderosa pine, juniper trees, and removed brush, considerably reducing the fire fuels available to burn. Typically the presence of small trees and thick underbrush make controlling a fire under hot and dry conditions difficult. Today the understory on this particular parcel is composed of small scattered shrubs, bunchgrass and ponderosa pine. Not a single tree torched in the fire area; the fire stayed on the ground and could easily be controlled by firefighters arriving on scene with water and hand tools.

“Conditions are especially dry this fire season, even with the wet winter and spring we had this year, increasing the potential for fires to spread quickly,” noted Ed Keith, Deschutes County forester. “Fuel-reduction projects such as this allow for safer and more effective fire suppression.

“Fires are a natural occurrence here in Central Oregon, so everyone, including

Deschutes County, must take responsibility for their property to mitigate the potential losses to themselves and their neighbors,” Keith added. “Everyone, from homeowners to firefighters and other community leaders, have a role to play in wildfire preparedness and better adapting to wildfire in Deschutes County.”

“Fuels treatments on landscapes and defensible-space projects greatly reduce the impact that fires will have on the landscape and in neighborhoods adjacent to those landscapes,” said Alison Green, program coordinator for Project Wildfire. “Hazardous fuels treatments allow for safe and effective fire suppression and a chance for communities to better understand their roles

and responsibilities when living in a fire-prone environment such as Central Oregon.”

The outcome could have been very different if the fire had occurred in the same area — but where fuels had not been reduced. This fire is added proof that years of coordinated fuel reduction efforts by county, state, federal and private landowners in Deschutes County pay dividends in the form of providing a safer environment for firefighters to work in while also providing safety to communities.

For more information about Project Wildfire visit www.projectwildfire.org. For more information on fire-adapted communities, visit fireadaptednetwork.org.



Fuels reduction was a boon to firefighters.

PHOTO COURTESY SISTERS FIRE

Starting off young...



PHOTO BY AWBREY GAINES

Reagan Gaines, age 3-1/2, was helped by Sam Mitchell in Peewee Showmanship during Deschutes County Fair 4-H competition.

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“Friends of Furry Friends” - by Valerie Fercho-Tillery (46" w x 59" h)