



# Taos SWCD

Fire Prevention Program

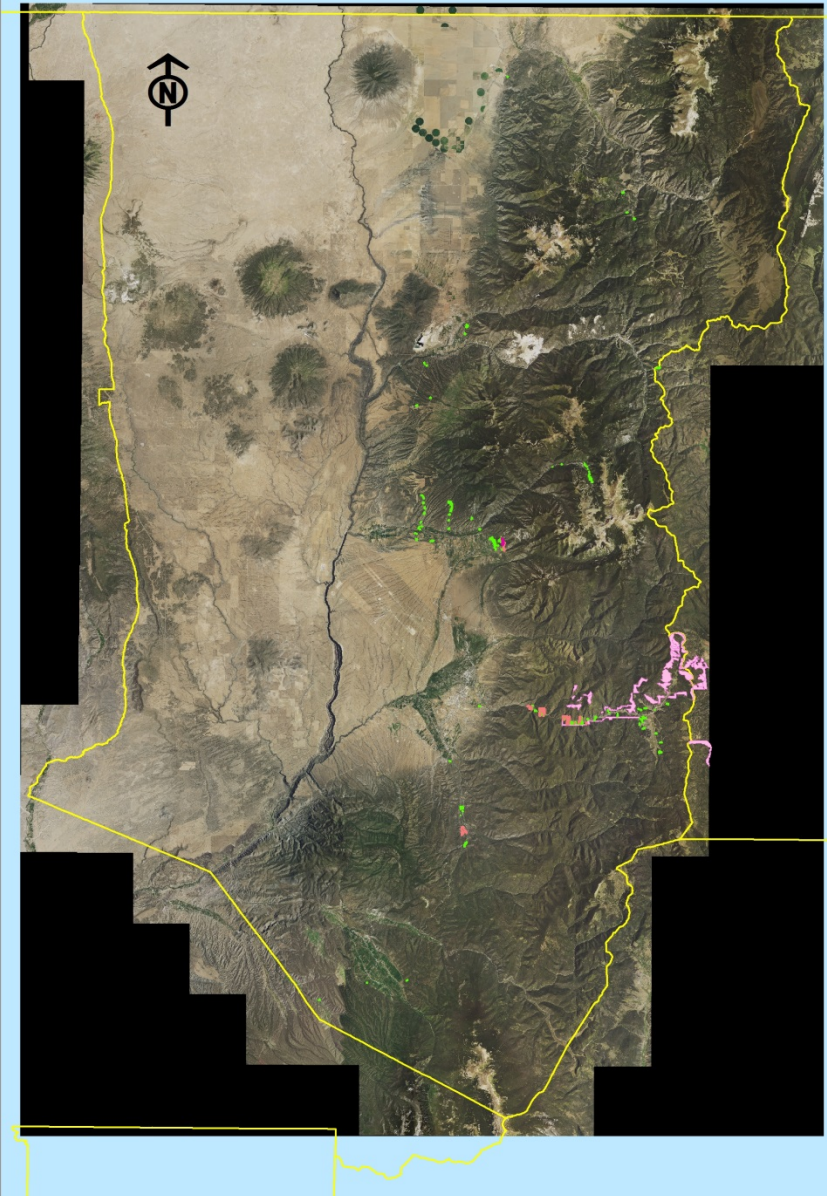
2002-2017



# history

- Established 2002
  - Protect Homeowner's From Forest Fires
  - Protect Water Supply for Agricultural Users
- Accomplishments by 2017
  - 278 Program Acres Thinned (1.45 acres average/189 treatments)
  - 210 Non-Program Acres Thinned (Grants)
- Context
  - Reach the Entire Community Through Flexibility
  - Working with the Carrot, not the Stick
  - Dr. Phil

# 2002-2017 Projects





# application process

- Landowner Applies to Program
- Meet Landowner on Property
  - Discuss general standards - how they apply specifically to their property, and what it would look like post-treatment
- Complete Hazard and Risk Assessment
- Document Landowner's Goals
  - Compare fire safe "perception" to standards
- TSWCD Board Review
  - One application at a time for transparency
- Approved landowners scheduled for treatment plan preparation
  - Landowner present during tree marking/boundary work
- Bid is awarded, Consultant inspects once thinning is complete.



# Evaluation

# Can this home be saved?

For more information:

[Firewise.org](https://www.firewise.org)

- Roof and Walls
  - Class “C” or Better
  - Most vulnerable components
- Deck
  - Ground or elevated
- Chimney/Vents
  - Spark Arrestor
- Windows
- Other
  - Wood Pile
  - Propane Tank
  - Secondary Structures
  - Minor flaws in defense

# Could a fire start and/or spread?

For more information:

GTR INT-122  
NFPA 1144

- Zones
  - Zone 1 – 0 to 30' (flat slopes)
  - Zone 2 – 30 to +200'
- Fire Hazard Rating
  - National Fire Defense Rating System (NFDRS) = Fuel Model
  - Fuel Model + Slope = Fire Hazard Severity (L,M, or High)
- Crown Fire Potential
  - Horizontal Continuity (spacing)
  - Vertical Continuity (ladders)

# What are the community threats and risks?

For more information:

NFPA 1144

- Wildland Risk/Hazard Form
  - Community-level factors
    - Roads: Ingress/egress, condition
    - Vegetation: Fuel Model/Defensible Space
    - Topography
    - Building Construction
    - Fire Response Resources
- Awareness w/in Community
  - Demonstration Potential
- Ember Zone
  - Most probable risk.
- Adjacent Projects



## Is there owner buy-in?

- Are they willing/able to pay 15% of cost?
- What has landowner already done?
  - Retrofit exterior of structures
  - Landscape maintenance
  - Past thinning
- Active in Community
  - FIREWISE

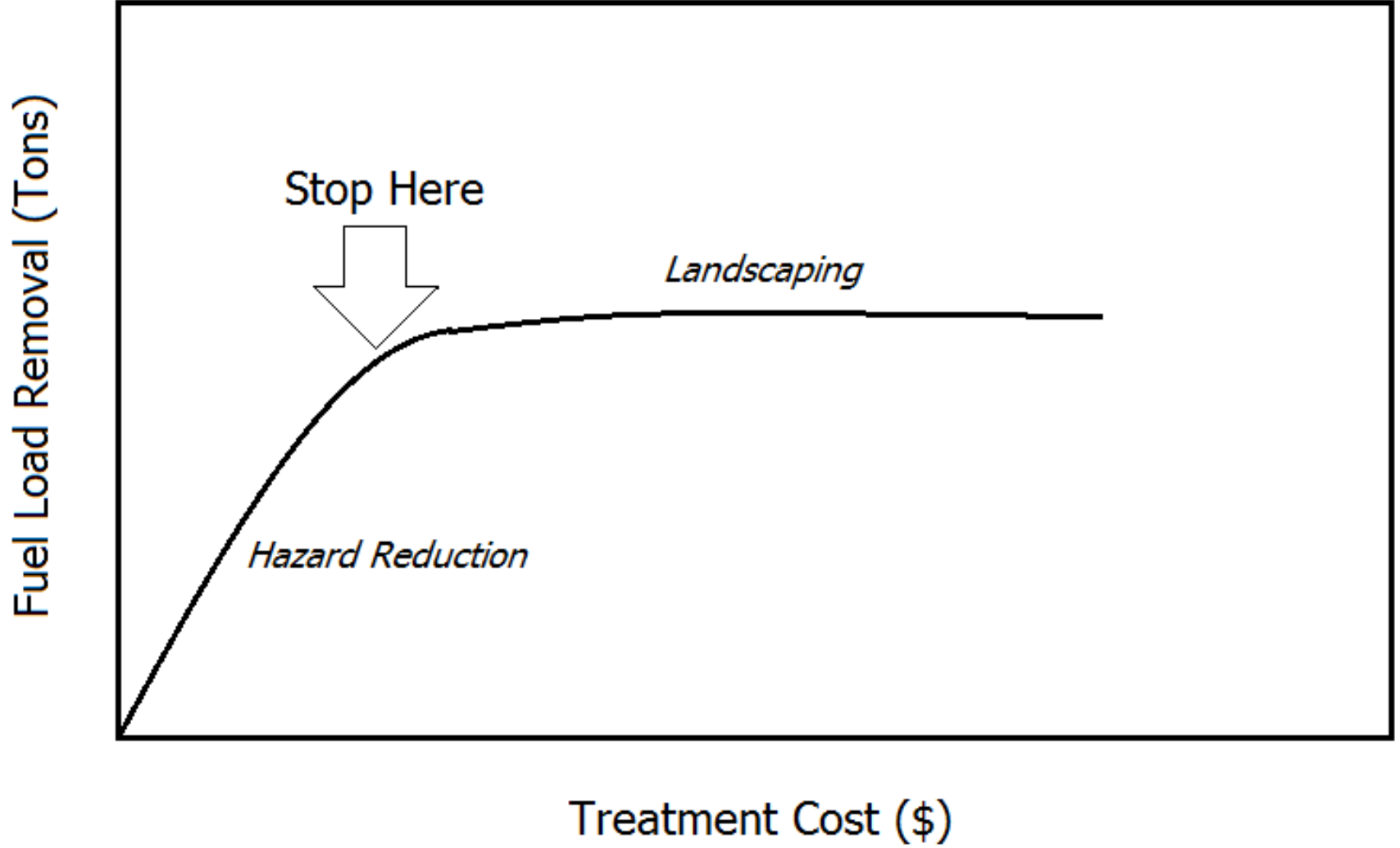


# Implementation



# Keeping Bid Prices Low

- Not Landscaping
- Disposal of material cut most expensive
  - Pile and Burn cheaper
  - Use material for erosion control cheapest of all
  - No disposal required of larger material
- Using all tools in the “Toolbag”
  - Landowner’s do work themselves at a reduced rate
  - Extended contract window so contractor can use as “filler” in between more profitable private customers
  - Mastication
  - “Bundling” smaller parcels into one contract
  - Multi-year contracting





# More than just fire

- Enriching the Landowner and Community
- Modifying treatments to address other resource concerns
  - Soil stabilization
  - Forest and grassland restoration
  - Forest health
- Cultural needs
  - Local firewood and small wood products
  - Improving understory grazing (wildlife and livestock)
  - Clear out ditches/riparian zones
- Lowering Maintenance Costs

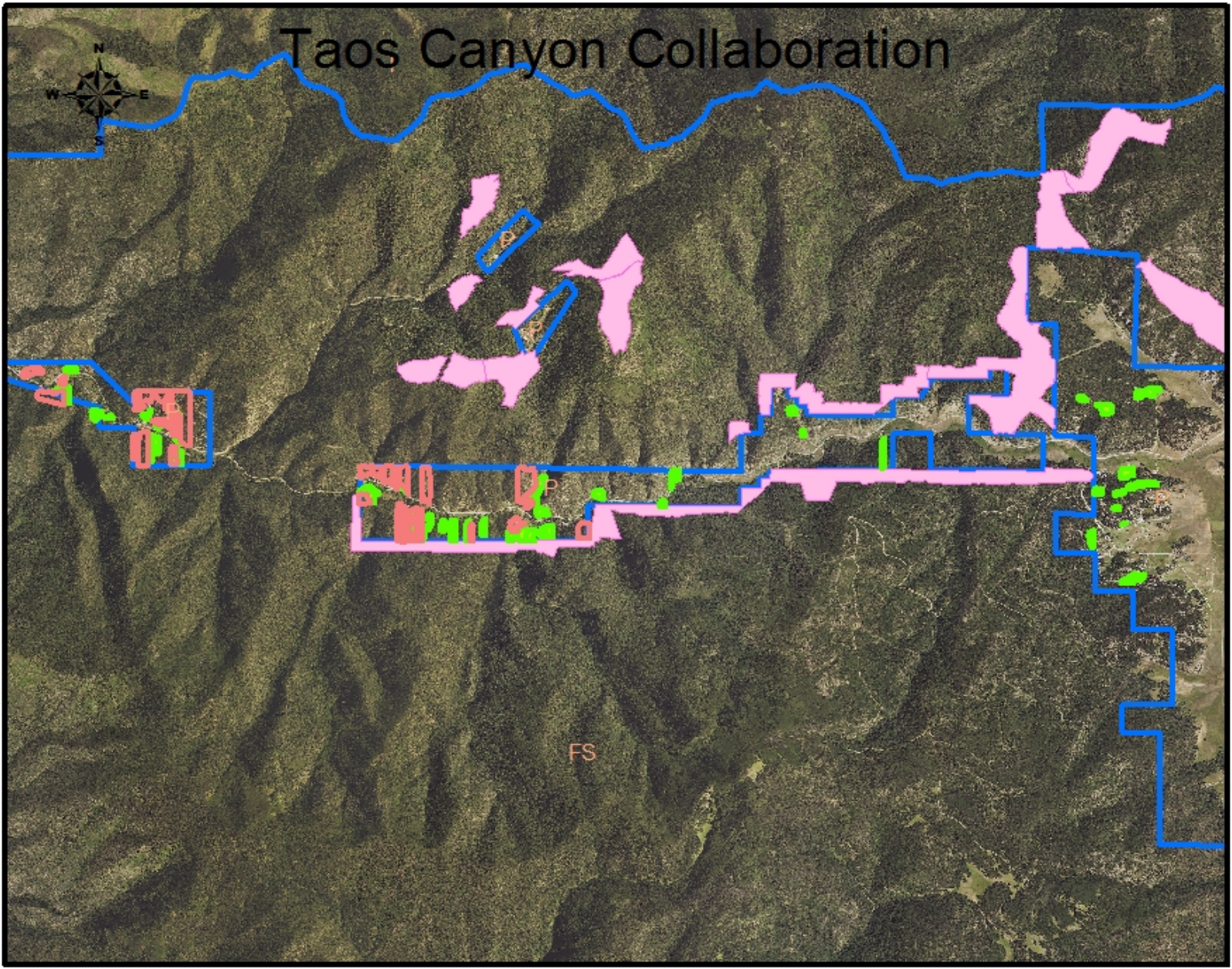


# Challenges

# The Problem of Scale

- Scale of The Problem
  - Regional /Watershed Level
  - Budget Ceiling (Problem)
    - \$21k in 2002 (11 acres/yr)
    - \$130k in 2017 (65 acres/yr)
  - Solutions
    - Private Lands Collaboration (Non-program acres on private lands)
    - Public Lands Collaboration (larger NEPA and prioritized to protect communities) – Facilitate Access!

# Taos Canyon Collaboration







## Maintaining Community Access

- Flexibility for Community Access
  - No Buyer's Remorse
  - Increased Adoption of Thinning
  - Acceptance of Federal Thinning
- Becoming the Technical/Community Lead
  - Not twisting arms builds trust

# Improving Awareness

- Public
  - Local Demonstration
  - Thinning is not Clearcutting
  - Milk Mustache Contests
- Professional
  - Needs at the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) - Good
  - Needs within the Watershed – More Work

A vibrant sunset over a body of water. The sky is filled with dense, textured clouds in shades of orange, red, and purple. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, glowing band of light. The water in the foreground is dark, reflecting the colors of the sky. A dark, silhouetted landmass or horizon line separates the sky from the water.

# Questions?

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