



Bear Jaw Interagency Fire & Fuels

3350 OLD MUNDS HWY
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18 May 2023

2023 Bear Jaw Community Cleanup

Bear Jaw, with the assistance of Coconino County Public Works, completed the collection and haul portion of the 2023 Bear Jaw Community Cleanup program as part of the NFPA Wildfire Community Preparedness Day. This included the design and implementation of an Incident Action Plan and use of the Incident Command System (ICS). The intent was to remove as much material from the home ignition zone to reduce the hazard to our citizens and first responders alike in the event of a catastrophic wildland fire. The dates are designed to capture the time before the annual fire season when the Bear Jaw Crew is at full staffing but before they are assigned to wildfires throughout the region.

This project would not be possible without the assistance of Arizona Public Service in the form of a \$3,500.00 Community Impact Grant. Coconino County opened and manned the Willard Springs green waste site, mailed fliers and provided a truck and two trailers. Coconino Emergency management delivered and set up 3 digital sign boards. Both Highlands Fire District and Pinewood Fire District supplied additional personnel to assist in receiving bags.

Starting on 25 April 2023 and continuing through 15 May 2023, 22 personnel from Bear Jaw collected bags of pine needles and cut slash piles to haul to Willard Springs Transfer Station. This coordinated effort included the use of 7 separate vehicles, 6 trailers, and 1 chipper. 2,156-man hours were put in over the duration of three-weeks with an additional fifty hours in planning.

Over the course of the two weeks the crew collected the following from 2,870 parcels of private property.

- 20,479 - Individual Bags Removed
- 2,636 - Cubic Yards of Slash Removed
- 15,000 - Bags Distributed Free of Charge

The use of GPS data allowed the acquisition of precise location and amount of material to improve the program in the future while keeping costs at an absolute minimum.

This program is designed to reduce hazard in the Wildland Urban Interface in the most difficult fuels to mitigate. Traditional costs for fuels reduction in these areas are above \$2,000 per acre and generally not available under federal and state grant opportunities. Due directly to the joint effort of our public and private partners we were able to create a safer community and reduce the risk to private property in the event of a catastrophic wildland fire in the Munds Park, Mountaineer and Kachina Village communities.

This year proved to be the most difficult due to the record setting slash accumulated due to the winter snowstorms. Many residents abided by the rules set out for the protection of our employees and to you, we thank you. There were those that abused the program by adding dog waste, household trash, and rocks along with exceeding the bag limit. This limits the effectiveness of the crew and puts the program at future risk. In addition to the Bear Jaw Community Cleanup program, Coconino County continues to accept green waste at Willard Springs free of charge on Fridays and Saturdays through October.

Our Special Thanks and Appreciation

Kevin Van Horn and staff– Coconino County Public Works

Janet Dean – Arizona Public Service

Staff of Agee's Barbecue Market, Staff of Kota's Coffee House and Pinewood Property Owners Association

Thank you for making our communities safer for all of our residents and first responders.