

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DNRC SEEKS APPLICATIONS FOR NEXT ROUND OF NATIONAL FIRE PLAN FUNDING
(2010 Western States Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program)**

Missoula, Mont— The Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC) is now accepting applications for the 2010 Western States Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program.

Offered by the office of the Montana State Forester in partnership with the USDA Forest Service, the Western States Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program offers financial assistance for projects addressing four key areas: improving fire prevention in the interface; reducing hazardous fuels; restoring fire-adapted ecosystems; and, promoting community assistance. A complete summary of the criteria, application, and instructions is available on the Montana DNRC website at www.dnrc.mt.gov/forestry/.

Paula Short, DNRC Fire Information Officer, encouraged communities, fire organizations or groups such as homeowner's associations, which are looking for funding to assist in fuels reduction within the wildland urban interface, to apply to the program. "The Western Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program – now in its 9th year – continues to provide valuable cost-share assistance toward protecting communities through fuel reduction, education, and community action."

Application information, applications and guidelines are available on-line at www.dnrc.mt.gov/forestry/. Applications must be **received** no later than August 24, 2009, and must be submitted electronically to nfpgrants@mt.gov.

"Applications are reviewed extensively and prioritized by an interagency screening committee comprised of local, state and federal officials. Applications from Montana, along with those from 16 other western states, are forwarded to a regional committee who will make the final funding decisions," Short explained. "Successful applicants will receive funding the following July."

Short stressed that this program is **not** designed for individual homeowners or landowners. "The DNRC provides assistance for individual homeowners by granting funds to local government, fire departments, homeowner associations, and Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Areas through this program," she explained. "These organizations, in turn, provide cost-share assistance directly to individuals. A good first step for anyone interested in fuels reduction programs is to contact their local RC&D office, fire department, or the Montana DNRC."

For more information about this grant program or the National Fire Plan, contact Short at 406-542-4235.

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