

Conservation Implementation Strategy Project

Hot Springs Wildfire and Forest Pest Mitigation



This Project At-A-Glance

Partners

Fall River Conservation District

Custer Conservation District

National Wild Turkey Federation

South Dakota Division of Wildland Fire

Fall River County Emergency Management

South Dakota Family Forest Association

Funding for this project is provided by the EQIP Program and partners with financial and in-kind contributions.

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The Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS) is a new phased-in approach to deliver conservation programs to farmers and ranchers across South Dakota. Funding for CIS comes through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Funding and support from other agencies and groups can be leveraged and coordinated to focus on mutual issues of the highest priority.

Background

Much of the land surrounding the City of Hot Springs is forested and privately owned. Many acres of these lands are overstocked with ponderosa pine trees and are prone to insect epidemics and moderate to severe wildland fire that can destroy property, reduce resource values, and potentially threaten the City of Hot Springs. Fire Suppression over the past few decades has caused tree density, and accumulation of ground fuels to increase. Which has led to an increased potential for a catastrophic wildland fire in the immediate vicinity of the City of Hot Springs. The Fall River Community wildfire protection plan says, "The City of Hot Springs has some areas that are at severe risk of uncontrolled wildfire. Steep topography with dense conifer vegetation has the stage set for possible catastrophic fire events."

Goals

The goal of this project is to provide technical support and financial assistance to landowners to thin trees, reduce fuels, remove trees encroaching into meadows and grasslands, reduce wildfire and insect hazard, improve forage production and habitat diversity, and mitigate the spread of invasive species.

Desired Outcomes

Approximately 500 acres of participating privately-owned forest will be pre-commercially thinned to reduce fire hazard within the project area, and 200 acres will have encroaching pines removed from meadows and grasslands. These treatments will also increase habitat diversity and forage availability for livestock and wildlife

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Resource Concerns:

Primary Concerns	Secondary Concerns
Wildfire Hazard, Excessive Biomass Accumulation	Degraded Plant Condition—Excessive Plant Pest Pressure
Plant Productivity and Health	Feed and Forage Imbalance
	Terrestrial Habitat for Wildlife and Invertebrates

Core Practices	Supporting Practices
Forest Stand Improvement (666)	Woody Residue Treatment (384)
Brush Management (314)	Herbaceous Weed Treatment (315)
Fuel Break (383)	

Time Table of Project

- **Batching date of February 4, 2022.**
- **Eligibility date of March 11, 2022.**
- **Ranking Deadline of July 29, 2022.**

