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The Carpenter Road Fire started August 14 on a hot, dry, windy day when firefighting resources were critically low. The fire was contained September 18 after 36 days. It burned 21,000 acres of the Spokane Reservation and an estimated 56 million board feet of commercial timber, valued at over $14 million.

The WUI Roads treatments are a series of isolated roadside treatments strategically located to enhance fire protection and mitigate fire risk to timber, the Pierre Place cultural site, and critical elk habitat. Selected sites next to homes and roads were thinned and the natural fuels and slash removed. This creates open, healthy conditions with a relatively clean forest floor. In the event of a wildfire, the planned objectives of the sites were to reduce potential fire intensity, prevent tree torching and crowning, and provide defensible space for firefighters and emergency services personnel. This was accomplished by thinning young trees to 12 to 16 feet apart and then chipping and spreading the remaining slash.



Fire effects immediately adjacent to the WUI Road Treatment, nearly 100% crown scorch.

During the Carpenter Road Fire, the treatments aided public and firefighter safety. In the early phases of the fire, the treated areas reduced the fire's behavior enough to give Tribal law enforcement officers a chance to evacuate residents in the Carpenter Road area. Firefighters also had an immediate opportunity to attack the fire directly. As the fire hit the treatment area, it transitioned to a backing surface fire, allowing firefighters to use the road system as a holding point. By reducing fire behavior, firefighters were able steer the fire around the treatment, successfully protecting the Pierre Place cultural site. Once the fire moved through the treatment area, fire activity increased, forcing firefighters to back away.

While the WUI Roads Treatment areas experienced significant damage, the entire area was not severely burned. Thinning and prescribed fire treatments allowed green islands within the treatment area to survive, which will help the forest floor regrow.

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