



Parleys & Lambs Canyons Fuel Reduction Projects

Fact Sheet

The importance of the Central Wasatch Mountains to our communities cannot be underscored. Local communities and visitors alike have a high regard for these forests and watersheds, and their contributions to our health and quality of life.

Have the canyons always looked this way?

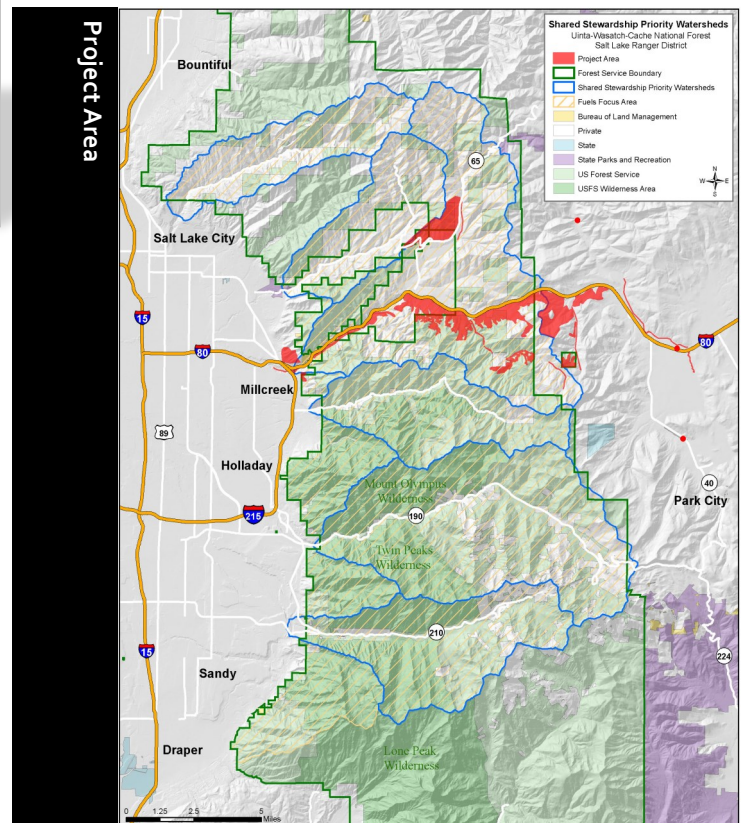
No. In the mid 1800's, the pioneers began settling what is now known as Salt Lake City. The Canyons along the Wasatch Front provided water, timber, stone, land for grazing, game for hunting, and recreational opportunities. By 1900, these activities had deforested the canyons and caused the water flowing out of the canyons to be dirty and unsuitable for drinking. To protect the water supply, the Salt Lake Forest Reserve was established in 1904 as one of the first forest reserves in the country. Since then, Salt Lake City and the Forest Service have partnered to improve water quality by reforesting the canyons, removing mining and grazing, and managing recreational use.

What needs to change now?

We are now at a critical juncture where management of our beloved Wasatch Front needs to adjust. Maintaining the resilience of our drinking water is imperative when faced with the challenges of climate change, rapid population growth in the Salt Lake Valley, and fire suppression over the last hundred years. Suppressing fires has resulted in heavy accumulations of dead surface fuels (e.g. things that will carry a fire such as dry leaves and twigs, trees, or grass), and unnaturally dense stands of mature trees. Additionally, over the last few decades, trees have died from various diseases and insects such as spruce beetle, mountain pine beetle, and balsam wooly adelgid. These dead and

dying trees increase the potential for severe fires that may impact drinking water and other values we care about, like recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat, infrastructure, and human life and safety. To help address the management challenges we now face, a collaborative comprised of the U.S. Forest Service, State of Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, Salt Lake City Public Utilities, and Save Our Canyons was formed.

Together, we will improve watershed health by actively managing for the resilience and health of the forest. To address the unnaturally high fuel loading, we have several projects we will begin implementing this year in Lambs and Parleys Canyons (*see figure below*). These projects were designed to help to reduce the fuel



loading in strategic areas along Lambs Canyon road, I-80, and around the communities in lower Lambs and Parley's Canyons.

What will these projects accomplish?

Located in the second most arid state in the nation, these projects aim to reduce the risk of unwanted or catastrophic wildfire and wildfire severity in watersheds that provide our drinking water. These projects are just the beginning of the work needed within the Salt Lake County Protected Watershed Fuels Focus Area. In addition to improving overall forest and watershed health, the desired outcomes of this project include:

- ▲ Improve resiliency of the forest
- ▲ Protect water supply
- ▲ Protect lives and infrastructure
- ▲ Maintain a sustainable recreation experience
- ▲ Improve wildlife habitat

What will the impacts be?

While work is being done, visitors can expect to see or encounter the following:

- ▲ Fresh cut trees
- ▲ Slash (tree branches and leaves) and other materials
- ▲ Soil disturbance
- ▲ Intermittent trail/trailhead closures
- ▲ Treatments are expected to take 5 years to complete

How big of an area will be impacted?

The impacts are expected to occur on:

- ▲ 500 acres where trees and branches will be cut and piled, later to be burned
- ▲ 30 acres where we will cut and then chip debris
- ▲ 800 acres where we will use a tree masticator
- ▲ 1670 acres where smaller trees and branches will be lopped and scattered

Heavy Fuel Loading Before Treatments



Piles Left to Dry During Treatment



Pile Ignitions During Treatment



Where can I find more information?

For more information about fire management, climate, shared stewardship and other topics, visit the USDA Forest Service's resources on Managing the Land - <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land> <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/uwcnf> <https://twitter.com/UWCNF> <https://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Forest-Service-Uinta-Wasatch-Cache-National-Forest/1477262249207367>

