

2021
State Fire Assistance for Mitigation-
Mechanical Fuels Grant
Summary



FY 2022 State Fire Assistance for Mitigation - Mechanical Fuels Grant Summary Report

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Figure 1: Mulcher inputting a shaded Fuel Break.

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**FY 2022 State Fire Assistance for Mitigation -
Mechanical Fuels Grant**

**Grant Funded Through USDA – Forest Service
Award #19-DG-11083148-001 CFDA #10.664**

The State Fire Assistance for Mitigation (SFAM)- Mechanical Fuels Grant is intended to provide financial assistance to reduce the hazard of high-risk fuels on private lands through the use of hazardous fuel reduction. The grant's goal is to protect communities within the 32 high risk counties in Central Texas identified by Texas A&M Forest Service. Priority was given to landowners that: live within those counties, are located in a county or city that has an active Community Wildfire Protection Plan, or live within a Firewise USA Site. In Texas there are 33 counties where public officials at the local level have written a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to mitigate their wildfire risk. A CWPP requires identification of projects to reduce heavy vegetation loads and restore fire adapted landscapes that border the community.

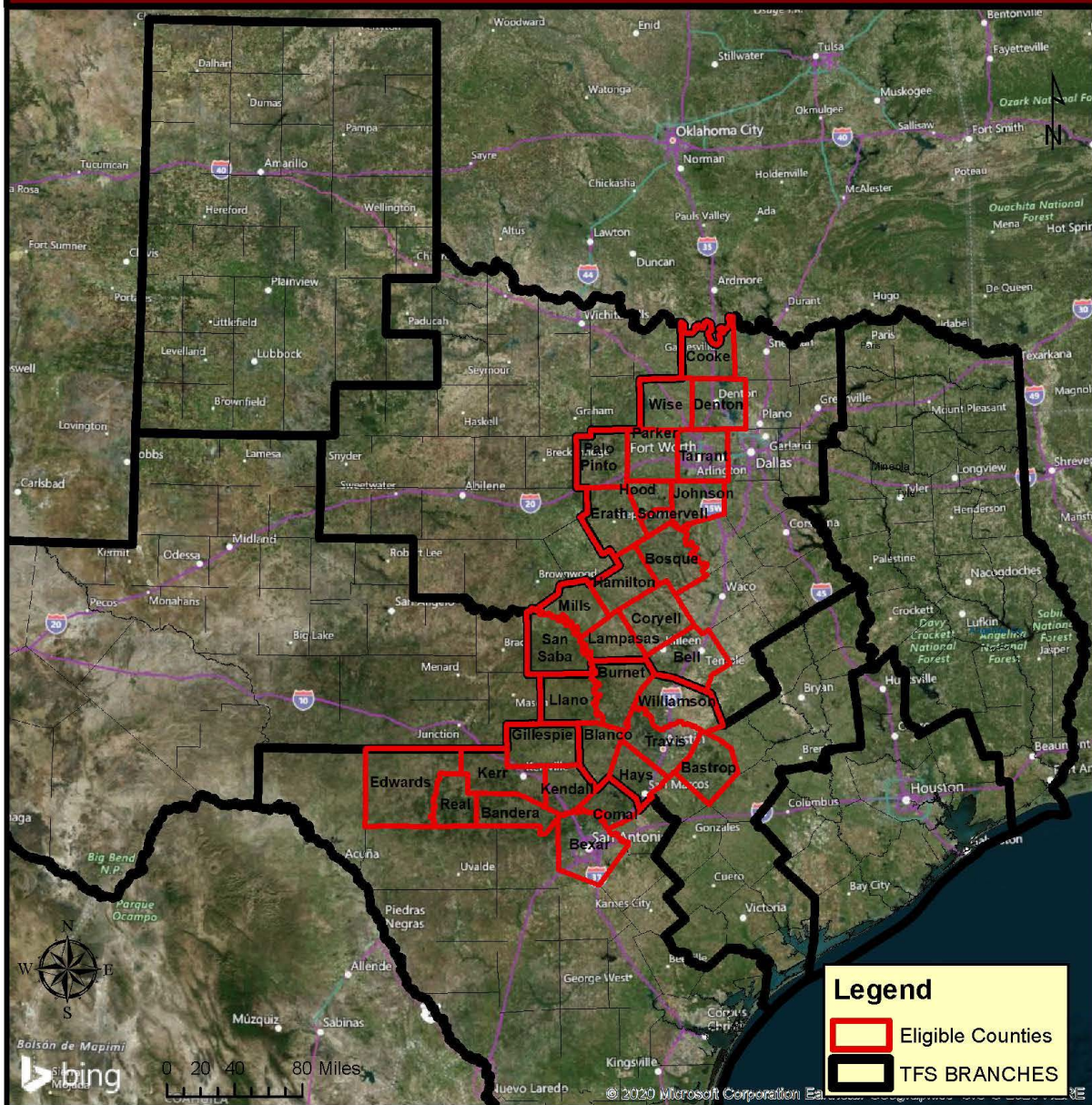
The Scope of Work for the SFAM- Mechanical Grant is to reduce the risk of home loss from wildfires through the use of accepted mechanical fuel reduction practices. Projects were located in the 32 eligible counties in Central Texas identified by Texas A&M Forest Service Mitigation and Prevention Department and Applied Technology Department as high priority, (see attached map). The goal of the grant is to protect high risk communities by reducing their risk from catastrophic wildfire. Grant recipients will be reimbursed for actual costs up to the thresholds listed in the grant application for conducting mechanical fuel reduction projects on their property. Work will be conducted by a private contractor of the landowner's choosing or by the landowner and his or her employees.

Grant recipients were reimbursed actual costs not to exceed \$750 per acre for hand-cut fuel breaks or \$2000 per acre for mulched fuel break. Total limit of reimbursement per grant recipient was \$10,000. The grant was to be used only for the reimbursement of costs to landowner for creating the mechanical fuel break. When these treatments are conducted within the mosaic of homes and open spaces known as the Wildland Urban Interface, they can reduce wildfire ignitions in the area and restrict the movement of a wildfire if it is moving toward the community.

As part of the grant, a ranking matrix was used to determine which applicants work would benefit the surrounding community the most by reducing their wildfire risk. Major factors in this ranking included the use of the Texas Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal (TxWRAP) to determine the density of structures near the work unit, if the city or county had a CWPP, proximity to a Firewise Community, the number of homes protected from work and the proposed amount of acres to be completed.

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Central Texas- Communities At Risk Initiative



These 32 counties are eligible for the State Fire Assistance for Mitigation- Mechanical Fuel Reduction Grant. Contact your Texas A&M Forest Service- Wildland Urban Interface Specialist for details.



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The SFAM- Mechanical Fuels Grant opened for applications on July 15, 2021, with a deadline to apply on or before August 31, 2021. A total of **18 applications** were received. Of these, **13 applications were approved** based on the criteria in the ranking matrix. The approved landowners had 90 days after receiving their approval letters to complete their agreed upon work.

The FY 22 SFAM Mechanical Fuels Grant accomplishments include **10 landowners** completing mechanical treatments for a total of **39.75 acres**. The grant program allowed these landowners to be reimbursed at a rate between \$750 -\$2,000 per acre (depending on treatment), for a total of **\$69,536.33** paid through the grant funding process.

Detailed Breakdown of the Grant Program for FY 2022:

- 18 applications were received by TAMFS
- 13 mechanical treatment agreements were approved by TAMFS
- 10 of these 13 sites completed their mechanical treatments
- 39.75 acres were successfully treated
- \$69,536.33 was paid to landowners for reimbursement of costs

List of Mechanical Treatments Completed by County:

- Bell - 3 applicants, 8.9 acres
- Bexar – 1 applicant, 1.83 acres
- Burnet – 3 applicants, 15 acres
- Erath – 1 applicant, 5 acres
- Lampasas - 1 applicant, 4.02 acres
- Palo Pinto - 1 applicant, 5 acres

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Pre and Post Treatment Photos



Before and after pictures from applicant mulching 2.49 acres



Before and after pictures from applicant mulching 2.49 acres



Before and after pictures from applicant mulching 5 acres