

Casper Mountain Forest Stewardship Association's
Natrona County Mountain

NEWS

Spring 2014

SPONSORED BY: Casper Mountain Forest Stewardship Association and
Wyoming State Forestry Division Cooperating

Notes from the President

Now's the Time to Protect Your Home and Make Your Forest Healthier

Spring is just around the corner on Casper Mountain, snow is melting and soon you will be able to get out in the woods and enjoy some recreational forestry. This is the spring and summer to enhance your forest's health and protect your home or cabin from the devastation of wildfire.

Think back to 2006 and 2012 when we had little snow and an extended drought lasted through the summer and into the fall. When we have conditions like this and fire occurs there is no time to prepare your home and forest to survive. Now is the time to take advantage of moist conditions to get your defensible space done, or if it is done, continue that work beyond the hundred foot area you already treated.

The first step however should be to do your annual defensible space cleanup. Remove the broken branches and damaged trees from last year's early snowstorm. Clean any pine needles from your roofs and gutters and remembered to move fire wood piles at least 50 feet from any structures during the summer months.

If you haven't completed your defensible space around your home or cabin, now is the time to do it. Establishing that 100 foot radius of treated area around your structure can make a difference as to whether your home or cabin will be there after a wildfire. If you've already done your defensible space, then it's time to move beyond that hundred foot area and continue with your forest management.

In this area continue to thin trees, remove ladder fuels and cleanup dead and down woody debris. By completing this work you are accomplishing several important goals in protecting your forest. The first and most obvious one is that you are reducing the likelihood that your stand of trees will be lost in the event of wildfire. At the same time, by thinning the trees you are improving the health of those remaining trees which will make them resistant to mountain pine beetle, other forest pests and diseases and give that area more of an open park like appearance.

Remember that there is grant money available to help with the cost of completing these forestry activities. Not only that but Natrona County Wildfire Mitigation Project has people that can come help layout your defensible space or the forest areas beyond. Take advantage of this financial help, protect your home and your forest from wildfire and when it's all done, it looks great. Don't wait another year do it now.

Casper Mountain Forest
Stewardship Association

Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 15th

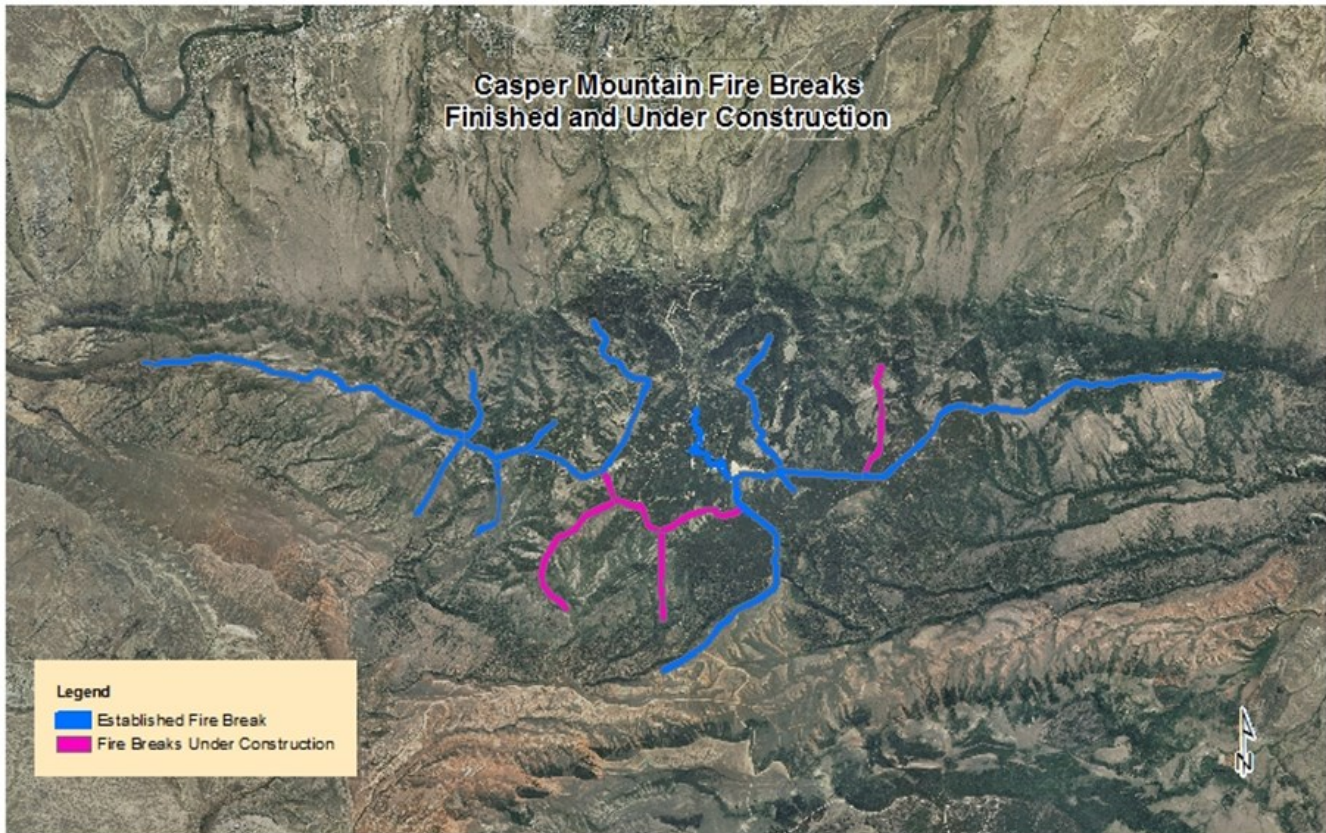
7:00 p.m.

Ag Resource & Learning Center

2011 Fairgrounds Road

Written By Sam Weaver,
CMFSA President

Casper Mountain Fire Breaks



The Casper Mountain Fire District has been working with the Natrona County Wildfire Mitigation Project to establish fire breaks across the mountain. These fire breaks will allow firefighting personnel a better chance to contain large fires, reducing the loss of homes, cabins and other improvement on Casper Mountain. Below is the status of fire break projects:

Beartrap Road; from the Restaurant to Star Wallow—COMPLETED

Tower Hill; from East End Road across Tower Hill to the North—COMPLETED

West End Firebreak; from Micro Road through Regal Road to the west end of Casper Mountain—COMPLETED

East End Road Firebreak; following the East End Road from Beartrap to the east end of Casper Mountain—COMPLETED

Hogadon/ West Garden Creek Firebreak; from the Hogadon parking lot, north along the east side of the top of the west fork of Garden Creek to the north face of Casper Mountain—COMPLETED

Archery Range Firebreak; from Micro Road to the Archery Range following the Archery Range Road—IN PROGRESS/ FUNDED

Crooked Pine Firebreak; from the Archery Range Firebreak to Bear Trap Road following the Crooked Pine Trail—IN PROGRESS/ FUNDED

Peterson Trail Firebreak; from the East End Road running north along the Peterson Trail to the open meadows above the north face of Casper Mountain—PLANNING STAGE/ FUNDED

Aspens Subdivision Fuelbreak - Crooked Pine Trail SW to West Side of Aspens Sub-division—PLANNING

LIVING IN LION COUNTRY

Much of Wyoming is prime mountain lion habitat. These large, efficient predators have always lived here, preying on wildlife and fulfilling an important role in the ecosystem.

Mountain lion habitat is essentially the same as their prey. This species has the largest geographic range of any native American mammal other than humans. Once they ranged from coast to coast in the United States, but today eastern populations are extinct or endangered. The West is their stronghold, and in Wyoming they have become increasingly common throughout the state. Generally, lions are calm, quiet and elusive, and are most active from dusk to dawn. However, they do travel and hunt in daylight. Lions are most commonly found in areas where deer are plentiful and cover is adequate. Such conditions exist in mountain subdivisions, urban fringes and open spaces. Consequently, the number of mountain lion/human interactions has increased. This increase is due to a variety of reasons: more people moving into lion habitat, increases in deer numbers in the immediate vicinity of humans, presumed increases in lion numbers and expanded range, more people using hiking and running trails in lion habitat, and a greater awareness of the presence of mountain lions.

You may live or recreate in lion country. Like any wildlife, mountain lions can be dangerous. With a better understanding of mountain lions and their habitat, we can coexist with these animals.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU LIVE IN LION COUNTRY

Follow these simple precautions to reduce the risk of problems with mountain lions on or near your property.

DON'T FEED ANY WILDLIFE... By feeding deer, raccoons or other wildlife on your property, you will inadvertently attract mountain lions. Predators follow prey. Store all garbage securely.

LANDSCAPE FOR SAFETY... Remove vegetation to eliminate hiding places for lions, especially in areas where children play. Make it difficult for lions to approach your property unseen. Avoid using plants that deer prefer to eat. If your landscaping attracts deer, mountain lions may be close by.

INSTALL OUTDOOR LIGHTING... Keep the perimeter of your house well lit at night, especially along walkways, to make lions visible and discourage lion activity.

KEEP CHILDREN SAFE... Keep a close watch on children whenever they play outdoors. Make sure children are inside between dusk and dawn. Talk with children about lions and teach them what to do if they encounter one.

CONTROL YOUR PETS... Roaming pets are easy prey and can attract lions. Bring pets in at night. If you leave your pet outside, keep it in a kennel with a secure top. Don't feed pets outside; this can attract raccoons

KEEP LIVESTOCK SECURE... Where practical, place livestock in enclosed sheds or barns at night. Close doors to all outbuildings since inquisitive lions may go inside for a look.

TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBORS... Encourage your neighbors to follow these simple precautions. Prevention is far better than a possible lion confrontation.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU MEET A MOUNTAIN LION

No research has been conducted to determine what is the best course of action if a human is confronted by a lion. But, some patterns of lion behavior and appropriate human response are emerging based upon observations of people who have experienced this situation.

With this in mind, the following suggestions may be helpful. Remember, every situation is different with respect to the lion, the terrain, the people and their activity.

DON'T HIKE ALONE... When you walk or hike in mountain lion country, go in groups and make plenty of noise to reduce your chances of surprising a lion.

KEEP CHILDREN CLOSE TO ADULTS... Make sure children are close to you and within your sight and control at all times.

NEVER APPROACH A LION... All lions are unpredictable. Most mountain lions will try to avoid a confrontation. Give them a way to escape.

STAY CALM... when you come upon a lion. Talk to it calmly but firmly. Move slowly.

DON'T RUN... Back away slowly only if you can do so safely. Sudden movement or running may stimulate a lion's instinct to chase and attack. Face the lion and stand upright. If you have small children with you, pick them up if possible so they don't panic and run.

DO ALL YOU CAN TO APPEAR LARGER... Raise your arms. Open your jacket if you are wearing one. If the lion behaves aggressively, throw stones, branches or whatever you can get your hands on without crouching down or turning your back. Wave your arms and speak firmly. The idea is to convince the lion that you are not prey and that you may in fact be a danger to the lion.

FIGHT BACK... if a lion attacks you. Lions have been driven away by prey that fights back. People have fought back successfully, using rocks, sticks, fishing poles, garden tools or bare hands. Try to remain standing and face the animal.



FRONT PRINT

Casper Mountain Fire Department

Welcome to the 2014 Wildland Fire Season

Welcome to the 2014 wildland fire season. At least I can report that the season has indeed begun for the Casper Mountain Fire Department. Our annual training and refreshers are well under way. The days when we used to call the radio stations to ask for volunteers whenever we had a fire seem so long ago.

Your Fire Department greatly appreciates the thanks and good wishes that many of you express during and after notable fires. Many of you then ask what, if anything you can do to help the Fire Department. Well hold on because here comes some suggestions.

Just like the Department's fire season begins long before the first wisps of smoke appear, the season for helping your Fire Department also begins early. Please allow me to offer a few suggestions that will greatly help us and will also greatly increase the likelihood that your property will survive a fire.

First is to simply clean up the ground and remove ground fuels and ladder fuels as these are what usually is responsible for most preventable fire spread. Something as simple as cleaning pine needles and other debris from your roof and around buildings will go a long way toward improving the odds that the structure will survive a fire. Also, in the summer, stack your fire wood away from buildings or anything you don't want to burn. Remember that if you don't clean around your property then firefighters may have to try to do so as a fire approaches. Not a good idea.

A big thing in the fire world is access. All landowners seem to want their little "slice of heaven" to appear natural and undisturbed. Nobody likes the idea of what they fear will be big road cuts but the hard reality is that if we can't get our apparatus into an area, then we are greatly limited as to what we can do in terms of fire suppression. Oftentimes simply removing a few strategically placed trees at turns or narrow spots can make all the difference that is needed.

Something that continues to amaze me is that everyone expects the Sheriff and Fire Department to quickly arrive at their property but many of these same people don't have address numbers posted where their driveway turns off of the road. Please make sure that your address numbers are conspicuous and placed where responding units can see them (especially at night) and be properly directed by them. By the way, don't be fooled for a minute thinking that burglars are drive around looking for address numbers. If they're interested in your place they already know where you are.

In the event that a fire occurs, TAKE EVACUATION ORDERS SERIOUSLY!!! Remember that your possessions are just things and can be replaced. Don't risk your safety or that of firefighters just trying to save "stuff".

Also check the Casper Mountain Fire Department Facebook page for updates from your Fire Department.

Best wishes for a good and safe spring and summer.

Mike Huber, Chief

Casper Mountain Slash Pile

With the onset of dryer weather conditions and melting snow, it will be time to work on defensible space and tree thinning. Due to the attraction of Ips Beetles to green slash throughout the spring and summer months, it is not a wise practice to leave green slash on the property. The Casper Mountain Slash Pile, located on tower hill on Natrona County property, is available to those wishing to dispose of slash. This is being provided as a courtesy by the Natrona County Roads, Bridges, and Parks. We would like to review a few courtesy guidelines pertaining to this slash pile:

1. No “trash” items including scrap lumber, furniture, metal, and tires. SLASH NO TRASH!
2. No items with nails or other objects which can puncture tires.
3. No stumps, these often do not burn up and can be a problem if they smolder and snow cover disappears.
4. Pile from the inside of the pile, outward. Piling along the edge of the pile, prohibits others from utilizing the pile.
5. Please try and keep the pile as tight and compact as possible as loose piles do not burn well.

Please follow these guidelines and remember that this is a community SLASH pile. Thank you to the Natrona County Roads, Bridges, and Parks for the use of the site and the maintenance of the slash pile.

NFP Cost-Share Defensible Space Practice Rates

| PRACTICE | COST-SHARE% | MAXIMUM Practice Cost | Cost-Share Rate NOT TO EXCEED |
|------------------|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Defensible Space | 50% | \$4,200/treatment | \$2,100/treatment |
| Fuel Treatment | 50% | \$1,600/acre | \$800/acre |
| Fuel Breaks | 50% | \$1,800.00/acre | \$900/acre |

DEFENSIBLE SPACE—Thinning, pruning, and fuels removal, as prescribed by the Wildfire Mitigation Plan by a Resource Professional, in a circular area not less than 100 feet from the exterior of a residence or business structure. Defensible Space Rate can also be used for planned construction site of a residence or business structure.

FUEL TREATMENT—Thinning, pruning, and fuel removal in areas other than the defensible space described above, as prescribed by the Wildfire Mitigation Plan written by a Resource Professional. Slash shall be removed from the site, chipped or piled for burning.

FUEL BREAK—Thinning, pruning and fuel removal in key areas identified by a Resource Professional and Wildfire Mitigation Plan. Key areas being those identified to support wildland firefighting suppression actions. Slash shall be removed from the site, chipped or piled for burning. Fuel breaks shall be at least three contiguous acres in area to qualify.

Landowner may hire a contractor or complete the work themselves. Records are to be kept of landowner in-kind hours and are to be turned in to the County Firewise Program upon completion of the practice.

After A Wildfire: Erosion Control

From "Recovery After A Wildfire", Copyright 2013, Firewise Wyoming Natrona County Project, Business Resource Group, Casper WY

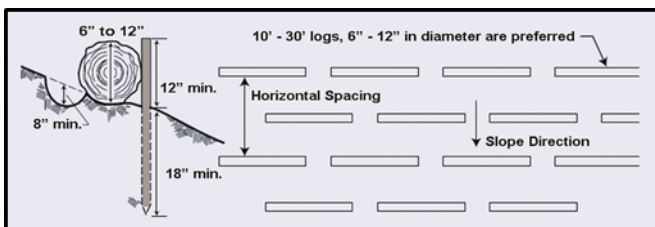
Wildfires are an integral part of nature. They can have many positive effects on plant ecology and wildlife but also can have devastating effects on life and property. The potential for severe soil erosion is a consequence of wildfire because as a fire burns it destroys plant material and the litter layer. Slopes left denuded by forest or range fires are susceptible to accelerated soil erosion, flash flooding, and debris flows.

Shrubs, forbs, grasses, trees, and the litter layer break up the intensity of severe rainstorms. Plant roots stabilize the soil, and stems and leaves slow the water to give it time to percolate into the soil profile. Fire can destroy this soil protection. There are several steps to take to reduce the amount of soil erosion. A landowner, using common household tools and materials, can accomplish most of these methods in the aftermath of a wildfire.

Following are illustrations of few of the structural practices: straw mulch, straw wattles, contour tree felling, straw bale check dams, water bars, and silt fences, all which stabilize slopes, reduce runoff, allow water to infiltrate soils and facilitate seed germination, root growth and re-vegetation.

Contour Log Terrace

Log terraces provide a barrier to runoff from heavy rainstorms. Dead trees are felled, limbed, and placed on the contour perpendicular to the direction of the slope. Consider leaving some dead trees for wildlife habitat. Logs are placed in an alternating fashion so the runoff no longer has a straight downslope path to follow. The water is forced to meander back and forth between logs, reducing the velocity of the runoff, and giving water time to percolate into the soil.



Logs should be 6 to 8 inches in diameter (smaller logs can be used) and 10 to 30 feet long. The logs should be bedded into the soil for the entire log length and backfilled with soil so water cannot run underneath; backfill should be

tamped down. Dig a trench 8 to 12 inches deep on the uphill side of each log to catch debris. Secure the logs from rolling downhill with stumps (left about 12 inches high after felling), along with stakes or stable standing trees, at each end of the downhill side. If you do not have the equipment or skills to do this work, contact your local Forester for advice, or hire an experienced contractors.

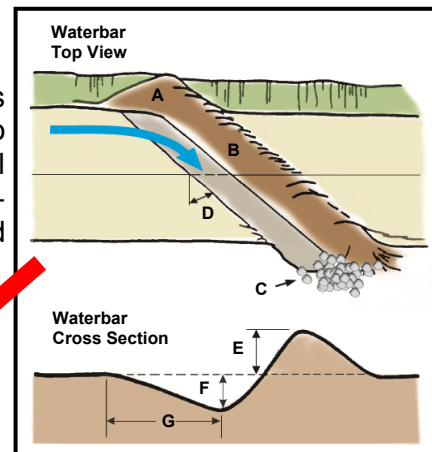
Water Bar

Bare ground and hydrophobic soils left after a fire increase water runoff. This requires intervention to channel water off of the burned area and release it to the streams below. Water bars are berms of soil or bedded logs that channel water off roads and trails to avoid the creation of gullies. Water bars are angled downslope to the outlet side. These bars can divert water to a vegetated slope below or redirect it to a channel that will take it to a culvert. On-site



Waterbar construction for forest or ranch roads with little or no traffic: Specifications are average and may be adjusted to conditions. See graphic.

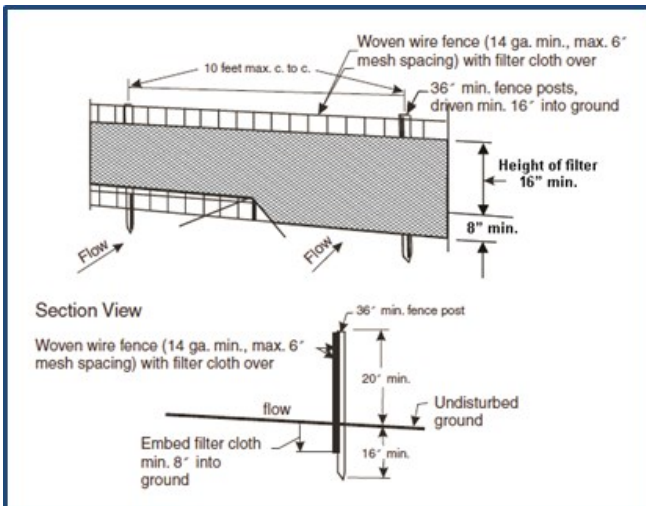
- A. Bank tie-in point, cut 6 inches to 1-foot into the roadbed
- B. Cross drain berm height 1 to 2 feet above the roadbed
- C. Drain outlet cut 8" to 16" into the roadbed
- D. Angle drain 30 to 45 degrees downgrade with road center-line
- E. Up to 2 feet in height
- F. Depth to 18 inches
- G. 3 to 4 feet



slope, season of use, amount of use and the road grade will dictate num-

Straw Wattle

Straw wattles are long tubes of plastic netting packed with excelsior, straw, or other material. Wattles are used in a similar fashion and method as log terraces. The wattle is flexible enough to bend to the contour of the slope. Wattles should be purchased from an erosion control material supplier.



Silt Fences

A Silt Fence is a temporary barrier made of woven wire (14-gauge with openings no larger than six inches square) and fabric filter cloth (geotextile) that is used to catch sediment-laden runoff from small areas of disturbed soil to keep silt from getting in streams and homes. Posts should be at least 36 inches long. Wood posts should be of hardwood with a minimum cross-section area of three inches. Steel posts should be standard "T" section and should weigh no less than one pound per linear foot.

Silt fences are used for specific situations. Major considerations are slope, slope length, and the amount of drainage area from which the fence will catch runoff. Silt fences should be installed on the contour of a slope in areas

where runoff is more dispersed over a broad flat area in the form of "sheet flow". Silt fences should not be installed across drainage ways, swales, small rills, gullies, ditches or other areas of concentrated water flow. They should be installed near homes, roads, ponds, and streams to divert debris flows away from these sites. Silt fences are made from materials available at hardware stores, lumberyards, and nurseries. (Graphic courtesy of NRCS)

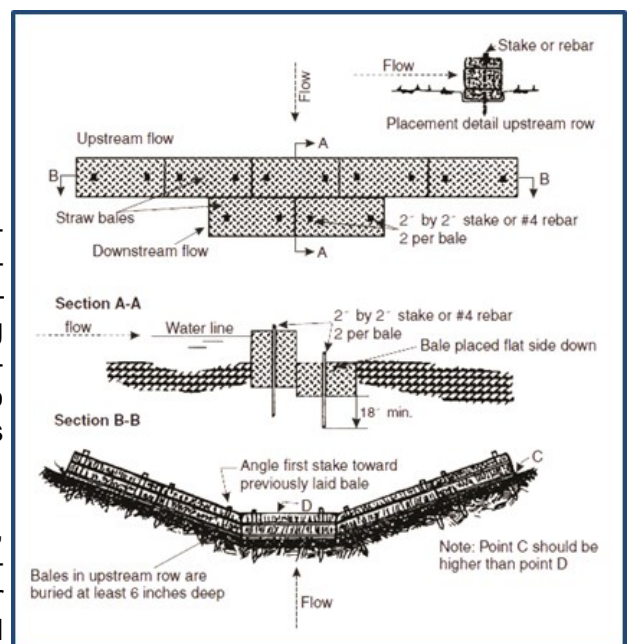


Straw Bale Check Dam

These are temporary sediment barriers constructed of straw bales across very small drainages used to slow debris flow acting as a dam – collecting sediments from upslope and slowing the velocity of water traveling down slope. They are not intended to provide protection from large storm events or to control debris flows in water bodies such as creeks, streams and rivers.

Bales are carefully placed in rows with overlapping joints, much as one might build a brick wall. Some excavation is necessary to ensure bales butt up tightly against one another forming a good seal. Two rows of bales are necessary and should be imbedded below the ground line at least six inches.

For more detailed information visit Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) web site. (Graphic courtesy of NRCS)



Natrona County Mountain *NEWS*

Casper Mountain Forest Stewardship Association's
P.O. Box 281
Casper, Wyoming 82602-0281

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Please do not forget to pay your dues!

New Member ____ Renew Member ____

Name _____

Permanent Address _____

_____ Zip Code _____

Mountain Address or Property Location

_____ Zip Code _____

Phone (home) _____ (work) _____

Name of spouse

Are you a landowner? Yes ____ No ____ Is your spouse? Yes ____ No ____

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP \$15.00 (January 1 to December 31)

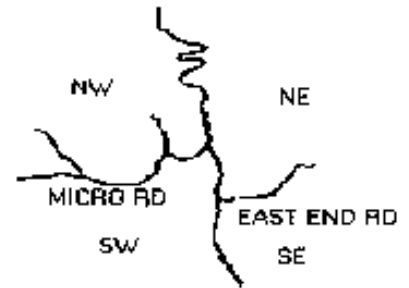
Please attach check payable to: (contributions are tax deductible)

Casper Mountain Forest Stewardship Association

P.O. Box 281

Casper, WY 82602-0281

Receipt Requested: Yes ____ No ____



In what division is your land located?

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| NW <input type="checkbox"/> | Rattlesnake Mtns <input type="checkbox"/> |
| SW <input type="checkbox"/> | South Bighorns <input type="checkbox"/> |
| NE <input type="checkbox"/> | Muddy Mountain <input type="checkbox"/> |
| SE <input type="checkbox"/> | |