

Massive West Shore fuels project to start this year

The West Shore Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction and Forest Health Project will treat approximately 4,875 acres extending from Emerald Bay to Burton Creek State Park.

The project includes thinning and fuels reduction treatments intended to reduce the risk of severe wildfire, provide defensible space to adjacent communities, and improve forest health by thinning trees in high density areas, which decreases the risk for widespread tree mortality during drought conditions, insect infestation and spreading of diseases.

Thinning methods will consist of hand and mechanical removal of brush and trees, which will then be removed for saw logs, biomass, or fuel wood. Remaining material will be chipped, masticated, or piled for prescribed burning. Piles will be burned approximately one to three years later, once the fuels are dry.

Temporary roads will be constructed to allow for mechanical treatment. Follow-up treatments may include prescribed understory burning.

Thinning could begin as early as this summer or fall. It could take 10 years to complete.