

NEWS RELEASE

Colorado Springs, Colorado
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MARKIT! FORESTRY MANAGEMENT COMPLETES A MAJOR STEEP SLOPE ENVIRONMENTAL FORESTRY PROJECT FOR THE FLAGSTAFF WATERSHED PROTECTION PROJECT

Markit! Forestry Management ("Markit! Forestry") has completed a significant and complex environmental forestry project for the Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project on approximately 500 acres around Mount Elden and the Dry Lake Hills area north of Flagstaff, Arizona. The Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project targeted steep-slope timber thinning in areas not accessible to ground-based equipment. Trees were felled by hand crews, and whole trees were removed by helicopters to landing areas for processing and decking.



Mount Elden, Coconino County, Arizona

Mount Elden is a dominant and picturesque feature of Flagstaff and is visible from almost every part of the city. The mountain rises almost 2,400 feet above the surrounding area, and its exposed, rocky slopes reach an elevation of approximately 9,300 feet.

In June 2010, the Schultz Fire near Flagstaff burned over 15,000 acres, including Schultz Peak in the Coconino National Forest. In the aftermath of the Schultz Fire, the greater Flagstaff area experienced severe and repeated flooding, resulting in tens of millions of dollars of damage to infrastructure and private property. In response to the Schultz Fire and the subsequent

damage, in 2012 residents of Flagstaff approved a \$10 million bond to support forest restoration work within key watersheds on the Coconino National Forest and on State and City lands. Originally identified as the "Forest Health and Water Supply Protection Project," this initiative is now known as the Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project ("FWPP"). The FWPP is one of a few examples in the United States of forest restoration work in National Forests being funded by a municipality.

Forests and wildlands around Flagstaff had not previously been treated to prevent fires due to a number of factors, including steep and rocky terrain, the desire to not disturb wildlife habitat, the desire to not disturb existing hiking and biking trails, and economic infeasibility due to the low timber value and the costs of treatments. The \$10 million bond provided an opportunity to overcome these problems and finally undertake the work needed to restore healthy and fire-resistant forest lands.

The steep slope and helicopter work was awarded to Markit! Forestry in October 2018, and the allowable period of performance for the work extended for three years: from October 2018 until October 2021. Markit! Forestry began work on the ground in January 2019, and finished its work in August 2019. Although 36 months had been allocated to completing the steep slope forestry work, Markit! Forestry completed the work 28 months early. Although hiking and biking trails and certain recreational areas were closed during the forestry operations, Markit! Forestry planned and executed its work to minimize disruptions to recreational activities in the forest.

Jay Smith, the Forest Restoration Director for Coconino County, Arizona, commented:

One of Markit! Forestry's specialties is steep slope logging, which is something that we don't have around here as far as the logging capacity to handle these steeper slopes like Mount Elden. As a flood control district in Coconino County, we're real concerned about those areas burning and then subsequently having the post-wildfire flooding. So, we're trying to treat those steep acres, and Markit! Forestry is one of the few companies around that has been willing and able to come down here and contract with us to do that work.

Pat Gayner, Vice President of New Business Development at Markit! Forestry remarked:

Markit! Forestry is thankful to have had the opportunity to work on the Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project. The work was tailored to our strengths in landscape scale, steep-slope, rocky terrain and helicopter logging work. This project was environmentally sensitive, with certain wildlife restrictions suspended for the three-year period of performance. By completing the project in eight months we minimized disruptions to migratory birds, Mexican Spotted Owls and other wildlife. Completing the project quickly also allowed hikers and bikers to quickly return to the trails and forest areas that they love. Our team is proud to have completed the Mount Elden project with excellence and to have the Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project be Markit! Forestry's first project in Arizona.



Helicopter Removing Timber on Mount Elden.



Log Decks and Slash Piles on Mount Elden.

Markit! Forestry Management is a full-service environmental forestry management company headquartered in Colorado Springs. Markit! Forestry provides Forest Fuels Reduction, Forest Health Restoration, Post-Fire Rehabilitation, Defensible Space, Timber Harvesting and Trail Building services on Municipal, State, Federal and private land. Markit! Forestry specializes in steep slope and difficult terrain forestry, helicopter logging, and multidiscipline forestry projects. For more information on Markit! Forestry Management please visit www.markitforestry.com, or call Pat Gayner at 719-593-2365.