

# Santa Fe National Forest – 2020 “Fuel” Wildfire

## Fuel Treatment Effectiveness Report

### *Introduction*

The human caused Fuel wildfire was reported at 13:24, June 21<sup>st</sup>. 2020 on the Jemez Ranger District. The fire occurred during peak fire season; temperature was 90 degrees, relative humidity was 9%, 1000 hour fuels were in the single digits, with Energy Release Component in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. The area surrounding the location of the Fuel wildfire was just north of the 2018 Venado wildfire which burned over 4,000 acres (Figure 1). The Guadalupe drainage that the fire occurred in is orientated south to north which makes the potential for large fire growth high, due to southwest prevailing wind direction and the potential for fire alignment with the wind and fuels. Some of the values at risk in the area are Jemez Reservation lands upslope and to west, Rancho del Chaparral Girl Scout Camp to the north and updrainage, the Las Vacas and Guadalupe creeks and a powerline that serves the Girl Scout Camp and other private inholdings.

### *Fuel Treatment Effectiveness*

The treatment unit where the wildfire started was part of a larger 852 acre fuels reduction project thinned/plied in 2016 with fuelwood removed in accessible areas over the next two years. The fire location is adjacent to over 2,400 acres of various fuel reduction thinning projects that have occurred since 2015. One of the fuel reduction objectives was treating along busy road corridors where human ignitions could lead to large fire growth. Funding for the fuel reduction came from various sources; New Mexico State Forestry, Joint Chiefs, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and Forest Service Hazardous Fuels funding. Pre-thin conditions were overstocking of small diameter predominately ponderosa pine. The photos below show fuels conditions before thinning, post-thin & pile burn and post wildfire.



**Pre-thinning typical stand.**



**Post-thin and pile burn.**



**Fuel Wildfire effects.**

The fuels treatment allowed firefighters to suppress the wildfire to 1.4 acres in environmental conditions where success would be difficult in an area where prior fuels treatment had not occurred. See Figure 1 for fire location and previous fuels treatments.

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**Brian Riley, Jemez District Ranger:**

**Date: 7/15/2020**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Riley".

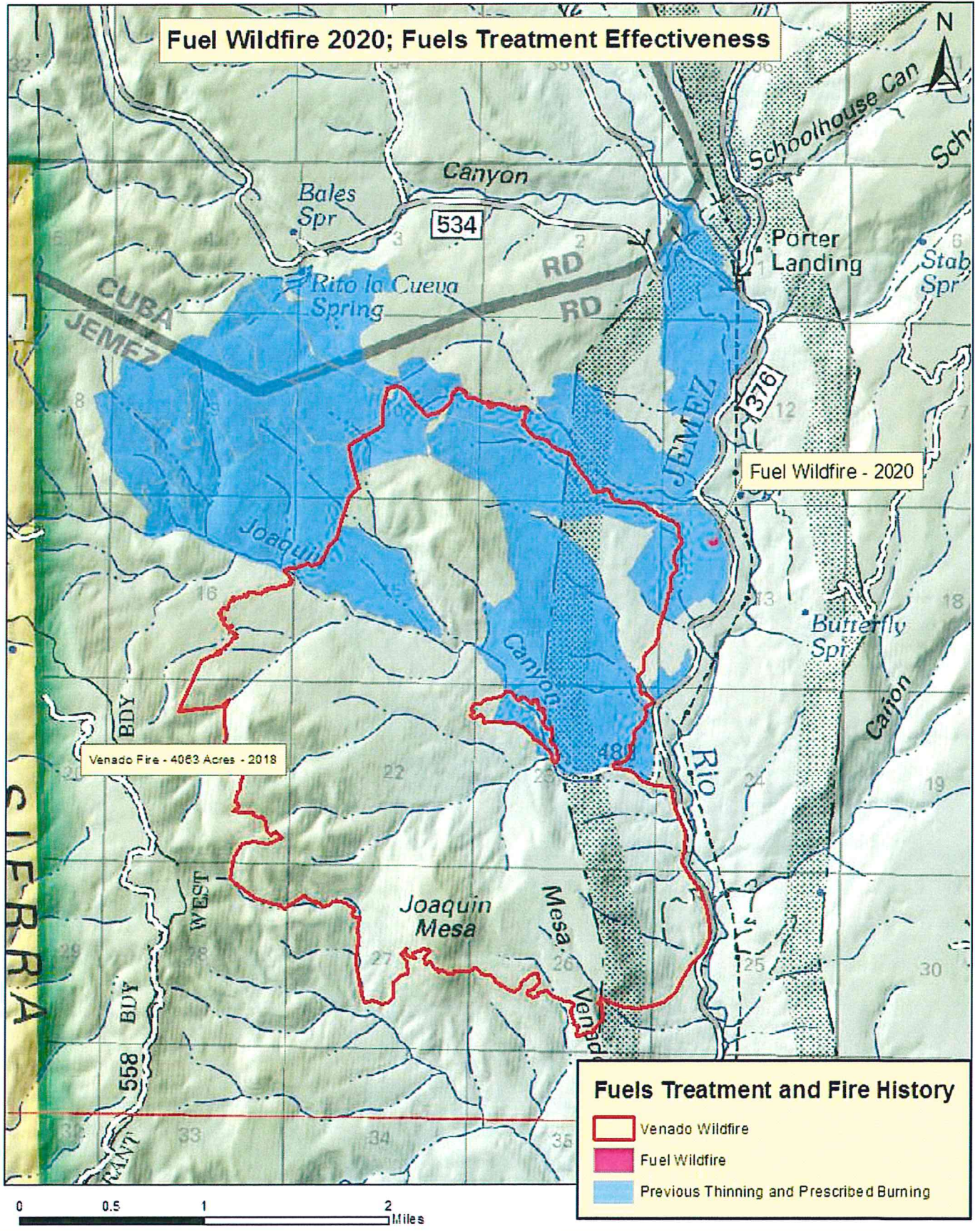


Figure 1: Fire location and fuels treatment locations.