

# CONSERVATION Showcase

## Conservation Proves Itself at Cuba Fire



Don Moore's continuing drive to improve his rangeland near Cuba, New Mexico is attributed to restricting a wildfire that would otherwise have spread into the Los Pinos area.

"I would like to urge other landowners around the village (and throughout the area generally) to work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Cuba Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), and New Mexico Division of Forestry to get brush cleared away, to get other plants started, and to get trees thinned away from structures or in open land," said Moore. "It is now obvious that doing this sort of work not only improves the appearance and

productivity of the land but it also helps to prevent the spread of wildfires."

On April 9, 2006 fire broke out at a residence and burned approximately 16 acres of private land and one structure in the Cuba area. Several fire agencies from Cuba and the surrounding area responded to the blaze that was being whipped by high winds. Heavy equipment was used to cut a fire break around the fire, while several homes along Reed Road were threatened. Evacuation of residences in the Los Pinos Road area was considered, however, Don Moore's field that had been cleared of sagebrush prevented the spread of the fire into that area.

Moore had entered into an Environmental Quality Incentives Program contract in 2002 with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to apply brush management and range planting to his property. Thus, his field was cleared of sagebrush and not only did not pose the hazard that the surrounding area did, but served as a barrier for the advancing flames.

"My conservation work would not be possible if agencies like the Natural Resources Conservation Service were not there to provide technical and financial assistance," Moore said.