

The Marshall Fire - Sediment & Erosion Control

Town of Louisville and Superior, CO



PROJECT OVERVIEW

CUSTOMER:
Town of Louisville and
Superior, CO

PRODUCTS:
BMPs / Sediment Control
Hydromulch
Tackifier

LOCATION:
Louisville and Superior, CO

CHALLENGE

The devastating Marshall Fire in Superior and Louisville, CO in 2021 not only destroyed the community infrastructure, but also put the environment at great risk due to the unstable soils and sediment runoff.

SOLUTION

FEMA and the local municipalities in the burned watersheds worked together to contain debris and pollutants by using BMPs to ensure the waterways were protected and soil conditions were stabilized, protecting air and water quality. Both forest and urban fires affect the soil health, often leading to rapid noxious weed growth and hydrophobic soils.

PRODUCT ADVANTAGES

- Sediment control measures were put into place to keep debris and sediment from leaving the burned sites and contaminating waterways and air quality. Creating a perimeter was vital to containing sediment, ash and the many toxic pollutants associated with burned homes and vehicles.
- Once perimeter controls were in place, hydromulch and tackifier were applied to hold the sediment and debris in place to avoid more damage from storm events.
- Selecting the best products for the project was imperative for people to start to rebuild their lives.

BACKGROUND

On December 30, 2021, both extensive drought and high winds contributed to the most destructive urban fire in Colorado history. A grass fire quickly moved from the fringes of Boulder, CO to Louisville and Superior, causing massive tragedy to the municipalities in the form of both personal and commercial property loss and overall devastation of the impacted communities. Each property that was damaged or burned not only represented a family's life, but also their community, which they cherished.

PROJECT SCOPE

The Marshall Fire destroyed over 1,000 properties and damaged at least another 150 acres of land. Friends and families were displaced from their homes and businesses not knowing what to do next. The community came together and worked with national, state and local public officials in coordination with engineering firms, as well as industry experts, to determine the next steps.

METHOD

Erosion and sediment control measures were put into place as soon as the courageous fire fighters deemed it safe to enter the project zone. Based on past experience, there was an understanding that the soil had to be stabilized with hydromulch and tackifier before moving onto the next phase of rebuilding the community. Looking back and analyzing the events of the Marshall Fire has led to further insights. For example, even though the perimeter was secured and stabilized, future efforts will follow a more aggressive approach with stronger methods of containment and soil stabilization that could be better anchored and remain in place around building perimeters until the contaminated sites are cleaned up.

THE SOLUTION: FERGUSON WATERWORKS

Ferguson worked in conjunction with the entities to help supply the appropriate materials in a timely and efficient manner to protect the waterways and surrounding environment from further damage. Ferguson continues to work with municipal and state officials to ensure that there is proper soil health to prevent and/or decrease the likelihood of this occurring in the future. Protecting our environment and our community is and was our number one priority. To learn more about "The Susceptibility of Colorado's Watersheds to Post-Wildfire Impacts and to Plan and Prepare", visit www.wildfirereadywatersheds.com.

For more information, ask an expert: [Laura Finch \(720\) 557-5842](mailto:laura.finch@ferguson.com)