

LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
PIKE AND SAN ISABEL NATIONAL FOREST
AND
CIMARRON AND COMANCHE NATIONAL GRASSLANDS

AMENDMENT NUMBER 32

(June 20, 2008)

<u>Page Code</u>	<u>Superseded</u>	<u>New</u>
Chapter III – 81& 82	--	1

Reason for this Amendment:

A decision has been made to designate additional areas where fire managers may use naturally-ignited wildland fires to achieve management objectives. The Forest Plan currently contains direction for managing naturally-ignited wildland fires in wilderness areas. This amendment expands the use of naturally-ignited wildland fires to achieve management objectives beyond designated wilderness areas, to all National Forest lands in the Wet Mountains, Sangre de Cristo Range and Spanish Peaks.

The intent of this amendment is to reintroduce, where desirable and feasible, the natural role of fire in maintaining the proper functioning and health of natural communities, and to reduce the long-term threat of catastrophic wildfires.

Based on the Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) rating system, roughly 35% of the plant communities on the Pike and San Isabel Forests fall into Condition Class 2 or 3. Condition Classes 2 and 3 represent plant communities that have been moderately to significantly altered from their historical range of variability, with regard to species composition and structural arrangement. This alteration is generally attributed to decreased fire frequency, arising from 80+ years of aggressive fire suppression. A moderate to high risk of losing key ecosystem components has been identified for these landscapes.

The build up of forest fuels over the past 80 years is annually inflating the potential for explosive fire growth during drought years, and decreasing the Forest Service's ability to control them when high to extreme fire conditions exist. By allowing some lightning ignited fires to burn at low to moderate fire intensity levels, I hope to reduce the proportion of acres burned under high to extreme conditions.

Amendment # 32:

This amendment of the 1984 Plan changes:

1. Add to Management Activities, Chapter III – 82, Amendment Number 6:
 - a. Vegetation Treated by Burning

2. Add to General Direction, Chapter III – 82, Amendment Number 6:
 - a. Use unplanned ignitions on areas identified in this Plan to achieve management objectives.

3. Add to Standards and Guidelines, Chapter III – 82, Amendment Number 6:
 - a. Naturally-ignited wildland fires may be used in predetermined areas under specified conditions to achieve the following management objectives:
 - Reduce the occurrence and/or adverse impacts of potential catastrophic wildfires over the long-term.
 - Maintain or restore the ecological composition, structure and functioning of fire-dependent ecosystems.

 - b. Naturally-ignited wildland fires may be used to achieve management objectives under conditions specified in an approved fire management plan, in the following areas:
 - All Wilderness Areas within the Pike and San Isabel National Forests.
 - All National Forest lands in the Wet Mountains, along the east slope of the Sangre de Cristo Range, and in the Spanish Peaks.

Management Activity	General Direction	Standards and Guidelines
Vegetation Treated by Burning	Use unplanned ignitions on areas identified in this Plan to achieve management objectives.	a. Naturally-ignited wildland fires may be used in predetermined areas under specified conditions to achieve the following management objectives: - Reduce the occurrence and/or adverse impacts of potential catastrophic wildfires over the long-term. - Maintain or restore the ecological composition, structure and functioning of fire-dependent ecosystems.
		b. Naturally-ignited wildland fires may be used to achieve management

		<p>objectives under conditions specified in an approved fire management plan, in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Wilderness Areas within the Pike and San Isabel National Forests. - All National Forest lands in the Wet Mountains, along the east slope of the Sangre de Cristo Range, and in the Spanish Peaks.
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Significance of this Amendment:

The affects of these changes to the 1984 Plan have been appropriately analyzed in an Environmental Assessment, which is on file at the PSICC. As such, I have determined that this is not a significant amendment to the Forest Plan, according to direction established in 36CFR219.14(b)(2) for the 2008 planning rule, and 36CFR219.10(f) which governs planning documents that existed prior to 11/9/2000.

/s/ Robert J. Leaverton
 ROBERT J. LEAVERTON
 Forest Supervisor

June 20, 2008
 Date