

News Release
USDA Forest Service
Coronado National Forest
300 West Congress
Tucson, AZ 85701
www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado



Effective Immediately

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DOUGLAS RANGER DISTRICT PRESCRIBED FIRE

Whitmire Fire Scheduled for Early March

TUCSON, AZ (February 26,) - The week of March 3rd 2008, personnel on the Douglas Ranger District, Coronado National Forest, plan to implement a prescribed fire project in the Peloncillo Mountains of southwestern New Mexico. Weather and other conditions permitting, 155 acres of National Forest Land will be burned as part of a study led by the Rocky Mountain Research Center.

Burn implementation was attempted on several occasions in the fall and early winter, however, storms prevented Forest Service personnel from completing the project. If environmental conditions are not conducive for burning the week of March 3rd, personnel will explore opportunities to implement the burn into mid-spring.

The research is a watershed study which investigates the impacts of two prescribed burning prescriptions on several ecosystem components. Additional studies will cover the effects of fire on the movement of side-slope soils and stream channel deposits, soil nutrient changes, and flora and fauna.

The study is a joint partnership effort by the USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, in cooperation with the Coronado National Forest, the Animas Foundation, and with local ranchers, who also are members of the Malpais Borderlands Group.

The study comes under the general Rocky Mountain Research Station mission of "Achieving Ecosystem Management in the Borderlands of the Southwestern United States through Coordinated Research/Management Partnerships." The study objectives are intended to provide the scientific basis to establish the desired future conditions for the planning region based on the highest quality biological science integrated with desired future social and economic conditions within the context of private agency partnerships, and to plan and implement a long-term systematic program of basic and applied research and coordinated monitoring to integrate past and future research findings.

This burn is being implemented in coordination with other prescribed burns in the area to reduce the amount of smoke in the airshed. It will be ignited with south to west winds to eliminate smoke in any urban or smoke sensitive areas. Four 30 to 60 acre units will be burned over a four day period, resulting in little, if any residual smoke after each unit is burned. No impact is expected on Forest users. Please contact Kris Condos or Ruben Morales at 520-364-3468 with any questions regarding this project.

**1. Whitmire Burn Vicinity Map:
New Mexico**

