

NEWS RELEASE

Fishlake National Forest
115 East 900 North
Richfield, UT 84620



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Wildland Fire Being Used on the Fishlake National Forest

A lightning-caused fire on the Fishlake National Forest that began on July 25, 2004 is currently being managed for resource benefits. Forest personnel determined that wildland fire use was appropriate for this remote fire and developed a Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP). Wildland use fires are those that are burning in an area where no property values are at risk, and where the natural resources would benefit from the managed wildfire.

The **Razorback Ridge fire** is located approximately 25 miles south east of Salina near the eastern edge of the Forest on the Old Woman Plateau, and has been seen from Interstate 70 and Utah Highway 10. It is burning in mountain mahogany, scattered pinyon/juniper and Gambel oak on a ridge top bordered on three sides by cliffs. The first day of the fire it burned approximately one acre on the south facing ridge top. Local wildland fire crews will monitor the fire each day until it is declared to be out, or a determination to suppress has been made.

The fire is expected to continue to burn along the ridge until the large fuels are consumed because of drying conditions during this time in the season. Daily assessments will be made to prohibit the fire from becoming a threat to lives or property. The fire may also be reassessed if concerns such as smoke become an issue. A decision will be made each day whether to continue the wildland fire use or to change tactics and begin suppression.

The Fishlake National Forest allows wildland fire use in predetermined areas to achieve multiple resource benefits. While the destructive potential of wildland fire is evident, fire is recognized as an essential part of forest ecosystem health. Many plant and animal species are dependent upon fire to create the exact conditions they need to flourish.

Fire managers seek to strike a balance between suppressing fires that threaten lives or property, and allowing fire to be used as a tool to promote forest and rangeland health. Many of central Utah's ecosystems are well adapted to fire burning through them and they need periodic fire to stay healthy. Fires such as this are considered beneficial and are permitted to burn under specific conditions. Only fires ignited by natural causes may be managed for resource benefit, not those that are human-caused.

Over time, fallen dead trees, needles and other debris (fuels) are accumulated. Wildland fire use can be managed to burn in a natural way to reduce fuel build up and provide benefits to the resources by recycling nutrients, for example, until rain or snow puts it out. During this time, fire specialists will closely manage the fire until it is declared out.

If you would like more information about Wildland Fire Use on the Razorback Fire, please contact Fred Houston, Richfield District Ranger, phone 435-896-9233.