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Rocky Mountain National Park Fire Management

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United States Forest Service Chief Visits Rocky Mountain National Park

Dale Bosworth, Chief of the United States Forest Service recently joined a group of national and regional Forest Service administrators and Rocky Mountain National Park resource and fire management staff to discuss local fire management issues and interagency partnerships. The meeting was part of a larger "chief's review" of the USFS Rocky Mountain Region.

The Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership was highlighted throughout this session. "What strikes me is how this region has worked together with other partners in dealing with the fuels treatment problem," Bosworth noted. The partnership is an interagency program formulated with a strategy to reduce wildland fire risks through sustained fuels treatment along the Colorado Front Range. Rocky Mountain National Park and Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument have joined forces with the Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forests, Pike & San Isabel National Forests, Colorado State Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, as well as local counties and communities, in a collaborative approach to seek effective cross-boundary fuels treatment projects.

During the meeting, Forest Supervisor Jim Bedwell signed an important interagency agreement covering many aspects of cooperative land management activities between the park and forests. Dr. Merrill Kaufmann, Research Forest Ecologist with the Rocky Mountain Research Station, presented fire history and fuels management research project results. Park Fire Management Officer Jesse Duhnkrack followed with a presentation focusing on some of the cooperative fuels management projects currently underway between Rocky Mountain National Park and the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests. Park resource management staff also provided an update on the elk and vegetation management planning process currently underway for the park and surrounding area.