



Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit



For Immediate Release
Thursday, September 14, 2007

Contact: Lynn Barclay
970-826-5096

BLM Prescribed Burn Scheduled For Middle Mountain

Craig, CO - The Bureau of Land Management, Little Snake Field Office is planning to conduct a prescribed burn 90 miles northwest of Craig, CO. The 450 acre project is located on BLM public and state land one half mile south of the Wyoming border and four miles east of the Utah border on Middle Mountain.

One objective of the project is to reduce the amount of hazardous vegetation or fuel and break the continuity of the fuel that currently exists. This will lessen the chance of a catastrophic wildland fire that could occur in that area. Such a fire could potentially burn the entire stand of lodgepole pine and other vegetation during one fire with severe effects. Providing openings in the fuels in this area will also give firefighters defensible space to work from and safer control points should it become necessary in the event of a wildland fire. Other objectives of the burn are to encourage the regeneration of Aspen as well as improve elk habitat.

Prescribed burn projects are scheduled for spring or fall, outside the normal fire season for northwest Colorado. Depending on weather and burning conditions, the project will likely start the week of September 16 and require two to three days to complete, however smoke may be visible the following week. Fire personnel will monitor and patrol the project area several days following the burn to ensure there are no hot spots outside the fire perimeter.

The project is located in Colorado Division of Wildlife hunting unit 201. A sweep of the area prior to the burn will be conducted by fire crews to alert hunters. The fire will temporarily move elk and other wildlife out of the immediate area, but game return quickly and have been observed rolling in ashes and eating newly sprouted grasses. Since the project is designed to burn in a mosaic pattern, leaving islands of unburned vegetation, game will also return to the unburned islands of vegetation for forage and cover.

Fire crews will begin by blacklining or burning vegetation along portions of the perimeter. This will act as a buffer or holding line by removing flammable fuel. Four engines and a water truck are assigned to this project. The required prescribed burn plan that specifies the desired weather and fuel conditions, as well as other guidelines for safe and efficient operations is in place. Aerial ignition may be used to complete the main portion of the project. Colorado State Air Pollution smoke permits have been obtained for this project. Smoke may be visible from Highway 13 and County Road 10N.

Please call the BLM Little Snake Field Office, 970-826-5000, if you have questions.

- End -