



UPPER COLORADO RIVER

FIRE MANAGEMENT UNIT

BLM-UPPER COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT

USFS-WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST



News Release

Media Contact: Heather S. Marsh, BLM Colorado Public Affairs, hmarsh@blm.gov, (970) 852-9272.

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Wildland firefighters to burn slash piles in Mesa County

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. – Fire managers with the Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire Management Unit plan to burn piles of cut branches and brush – called slash piles – in Mesa County now through April 2026. Smoke may be visible during and after the burns as piles continue to smolder.

Firefighters will only burn piles – a way to reduce fire “fuels” – when the weather conditions are ideal for a safe, effective burn and allow smoke to disperse.

“Fuel reduction projects are one of our most effective tools to help slow wildfires and protect landscapes,” said **UCR Interagency Fire Management Officer Tommy Hayes**. “We’ve seen less fire spread, and intensity, in areas where we did this proactive work.”

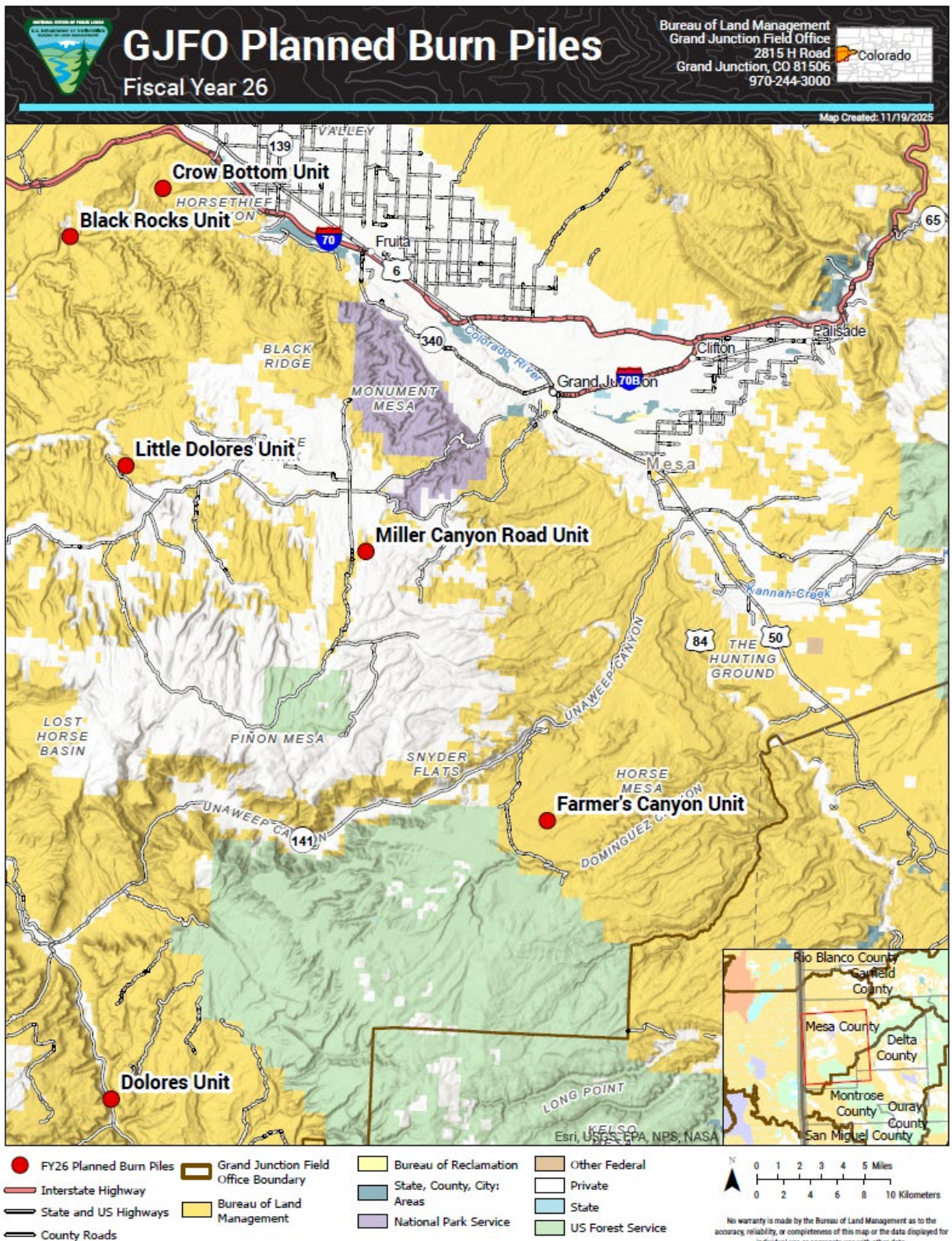
Throughout the year, firefighters thinned Tamarisk, Russian Olive, and native shrubs to create slash piles across the Western Slope. The inspected piles are dry and ready to burn.

The locations for the planned burns are generally remote, and fire managers do not expect smoke issues. If visibility becomes an issue, firefighters will follow a pre-approved backup plan.

Planned burn locations include:

- Farmers Canyon Unit – 15 miles southwest of Whitewater
- Little Dolores Unit – 13 miles southwest of Glade Park
- Black Rocks Unit – 8 miles southwest of Mack
- Crow Bottom Unit – 3 miles south of Mack
- Dolores Units – 11–16 miles south of Gateway (3 units along Hwy 141)
- Miller Canyon Road – 13 miles southwest of Grand Junction

Fire managers follow a detailed, approved prescribed fire plan and have smoke permits from the State of Colorado. Prescribed fire smoke may affect your health. For more information, visit the [“Wood smoke and your health”](#) page on the Colorado Air Pollution Control Division website.



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The Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire and Aviation Management Unit (UCR) includes Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service firefighting resources that cover 4.2 million acres along the Interstate 70, Colorado River and Roaring Fork River corridors from the Continental Divide to the Utah state line. The UCR includes the White River National Forest and the BLM's Colorado River Valley and Grand Junction field offices. The UCR cooperates with other federal and state agencies, local communities, and fire departments on a wide range of activities including fuels treatments, fire prevention, and suppression.