



**UPPER COLORADO RIVER
INTERAGENCY FIRE MANAGEMENT**
NPS Colorado National Monument
BLM Grand Junction and Colorado River Valley
USFS White River, Grand Mesa and
Uncompahgre National Forests



NEWS RELEASE

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Prescribed fire planned for Palisade watershed

GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. – A recent agreement completed among the Bureau of Land Management, the Town of Palisade and City of Grand Junction means Grand Valley residents could be seeing smoke on the slopes of the Grand Mesa this spring.

The agreement outlines the plans for a 646-acre prescribed fire designed to improve environmental conditions within the Town of Palisade Watershed about seven miles southeast of town.

“The 2009 Palisade Watershed Fire Mitigation Plan identifies this area as needing treatment to reduce the chance of a large, intense wildfire that could severely impact the watershed,” said Frank Watt, Public Works Director for the Town of Palisade.

The prescribed fire is planned in oak brush and other shrubs on 588 acres owned by the Town of Palisade and 58 acres of BLM.

Because this area hasn’t burned in a number of years, a large amount of debris and other fuel for wildfires has built-up. This burn will decrease that fuel load, helping reduce the risk of a much larger, unwanted wildfire. A prescribed fire will burn much less intensely than a wildfire, but it will still be effective at reducing fuel loads in the area.

“We will only ignite this prescribed fire if conditions are ideal for a safe, effective burn, as well as for good smoke dispersal away from area communities,” said Lathan Johnson, Fuels Specialist for the BLM Grand Junction Field Office.

The planned burn will also improve wildlife habitat by stimulating new, more nutritious plant production in the burned area.

“We anticipate conditions to be right for this burn in April, but depending on weather, it could happen as early as March,” Johnson said. “We want to get information out early

given the prescribed fire's location. Smoke will be very visible throughout the Grand Valley, Plateau Valley and I-70."

Additional notice will be given to the media and public once the burn is scheduled.

A detailed prescribed fire plan has been developed, and appropriate smoke permits have been obtained from the State of Colorado.

For more information about this planned prescribed fire, contact Lathan Johnson, (970) 244-3120. A map of the planned burn is available at:

<http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/gjfo.html>

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