

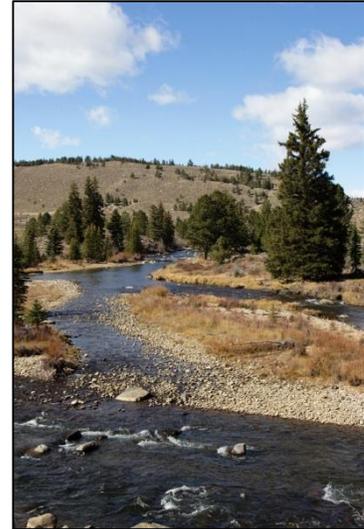
Fire and Fuels Management



Background Information

The Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy was developed by the secretaries of the departments of Interior and Agriculture in 1995 in response to the dramatic increases in the frequency, size, and catastrophic nature of wildfires in the United States. This policy requires land managers to have an approved Fire Management Plan for BLM-administered lands with burnable vegetation. The Fire Management Plan provides a foundation for integrating fire management with all other BLM resource management programs in the Royal Gorge Field Office (RGFO). The Fire Management Plan is a tool for planning and achieving resource management objectives on BLM-administered land as defined in the governing RMP. The first Fire Management Plan was developed in 2001 for the Front Range Interagency Fire Management Unit. Since then, several revisions, changes, and updates have been made to the Fire Management Plan to stay current and consistent with new guidance and policies.

Fuels within the RGFO planning area include grasslands, shrublands, pinyon-juniper, ponderosa pine, mixed conifer, and aspen. Wildland urban interface areas are areas in which undeveloped lands meet or intermix with human development. These developments can include communities and subdivisions, as well as isolated structures and infrastructure. Wildland urban interface areas have drastically increased over the last two decades and have become a major part of planning efforts in the BLM's fire and fuels programs. Prescribed fire and mechanical treatments are primary components of the hazardous fuels reduction program in the planning area.



Potential Decisions:

Fire and fuels management planning as part of the Eastern Colorado RMP/EIS may:

- Identify landscape-level fire management goals and objectives
- Identify allowable uses and management actions to achieve the fire management goals and objectives, and support the goals and objectives for vegetation, wildlife, and other resources
- Identify the geographic areas that are/are not suitable for management of natural ignitions to meet specific land management objectives (e.g., fire for resource benefit)

Planning Issues:

- How can fire and fuels management be implemented to return the landscape to more sustainable and resilient condition?
- With the uncertainty of future funding, how can the BLM maintain flexibility within the fire and fuels program so that resources can be shifted to emphasize areas that are being funded while maintaining the long-term capability to perform all aspects of the fire management job?
- What trends and likely future conditions are important to consider when planning prescribed fire and mechanical treatments in the planning area?

Tell Us What You Think!

If you have input on these topics, please share it with us in a scoping comment.

1. Are there additional fire and fuels management topics that should be covered in the EIS?
2. Under what conditions should fire suppression or fuel reduction activities occur?
3. Can you recommend sources of information that should be used in the RMP/EIS?

Please submit your comments and other information via email to ECRMP.comments@blm.gov