



MIFMU MONTHLY

## GRANTS AND AGREEMENTS

### Rural Fire Assistance

We initially received notice that the fire districts within Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit (MIFMU) that applied for Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) in 2010 were awarded a total of \$81,040. Since then, the final award amount has been increased to \$88,240. The twelve (12) cooperators that applied for RFA funding should be receiving notification from the BLM State Office regarding their awards in the very near future. Although the financial requests (\$120,527) were greater than the dollar amount awarded, each applicant will receive some funding to assist them in increasing firefighter safety and enhancing the fire protection capabilities of rural fire departments in the area.

### Community Assistance

MIFMU initially received notice that \$21,000 was allocated to award fire departments, local governments, community service organizations, educational institutions and non-profit organizations through the Wildland Urban Interface Community Assistance program. In

addition to the original amount, we requested and subsequently received an additional \$60,000 from the national office and an additional \$20,000 in fuels project savings for a total of \$101,000 to award through the Community Assistance program. This represents 481% of the original amount allocated. Across the state, Community Assistance was allocated \$312,850, or 329% of the original allocation of \$103,000.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has been working with cooperators through the Community Assistance awards to help mitigate fire hazards and provide fire safety education, training and planning for catastrophic wildfire events within, or in the vicinity of lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. This year, MIFMU received one application for the 2010 Community Assistance program from the West Region Wildfire Council. WRWC requested the Community Assistance award to hire a regional Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Coordinator and implement fuels reduction projects on private land and that are identified in a completed CWPP.

## COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS

Anchor Point and AMEC have set up meeting dates, times and locations for the Delta, Gunnison, Montrose and Ouray County CWPPs. The meetings will be taking place on August 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>.

<b>Montrose County CWPP</b>	<b>1500-1700</b>	<b>Pioneer Room at Friendship Hall (County Fairgrounds)</b>
<b>Delta County CWPP</b>	<b>0900-1100</b>	<b>Delta County Sheriff's Office Conference Room</b>
<b>Ouray County CWPP</b>	<b>1500-1700</b>	<b>Ridgway Events Center</b>
<b>Gunnison County CWPP</b>	<b>1100-1300</b>	<b>Gunnison County EOC</b>

The Hinsdale County CWPP Core Team met on August 4<sup>th</sup> to review the County's Draft CWPP. Forest Stewardship Concepts, Ltd. is currently editing the document for final review and signature.

The Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003 supports the role of communities in federal land management planning by providing an opportunity to influence where and how federal agencies implement fuel reduction projects on federal lands. A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is the most effective way to take advantage of this opportunity.

The CWPP process is effective in improving coordination and communication between emergency response agencies and the community. Spending an adequate amount of time developing a CWPP can help clarify and refine priorities to protect life, property, infrastructure, and valued resources. This process can lead communities through critical discussions about private and public land management, as well as identifying opportunities for fuels reduction within a designated wildland urban interface boundary.

According to HFRA, the wildland urban interface is considered "any area within or adjacent to an at-risk community that is identified in recommendations in a Community Wildfire Protection Plan." In the absence of a CWPP, HFRA limits the WUI to within 0.5 mile of a community's boundary or within 1.5 miles when mitigating circumstances exist. Fuels treatments can occur along evacuation routes regardless of their distance from the community. With a CWPP, community-established WUI boundaries can help meet local management needs, include both public and private land, and improve access to funding sources. *Federal financial assistance for hazardous fuel reduction projects on non-Federal lands is available through state and federal partners for wildland urban interface communities defined in CWPPs.* In Colorado, a CWPP must meet the requirements of HFRA (2003), as well as minimum standards identified by the Colorado State Forest Service in 2009.

# SMOKEY BEAR TURNS 66

*(The following has been adapted from various sources)*

Smokey Bear, the iconic brown bear wearing a forest ranger's hat who reminds citizens they are the first line of prevention against forest fires, celebrated his 66th birthday on August 9<sup>th</sup>.

Smokey Bear, a mascot of the United States Forest Service, was created to educate the public on the dangers of forest fires. Smokey's debut poster was released on August 9, 1944, which is considered his birthday. Overseen by the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Campaign, the first poster was illustrated by Albert Staehle. The message underneath reads, "Smokey says – Care will prevent 9 out of 10 forest fires!"



Smokey Bear's message, "Remember...



Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires", was created in 1947 by the Ad Council. In April 2001, Smokey's message was updated to "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires". According to the Ad Council, Smokey Bear and his message are recognized by 95% of adults and 77% of children in the U.S.

Smokey's correct full name is Smokey Bear. In 1952, the songwriters Steve Nelson and Jack Rollins had a hit with "Smokey the Bear". The pair said that "the" was added to Smokey's name to keep the song's rhythm. This small change has caused confusion among Smokey fans ever since. The Forest Service emphatically denies that the name was ever "Smokey the Bear;" however, in the 1950s, that variant of the name became very widespread both in the popular imagination and in print. The campaign to remind the public of the correct version of the name is almost as old as the Smokey Bear campaign itself.

The fictional character Smokey Bear is administered by three entities: the United States Forest Service, the National Association of State Foresters, and the Ad Council. Smokey Bear's name and image are protected by U.S. federal law, the *Smokey Bear Act of 1952* (16 U.S.C. 580 (p-2); 18 U.S.C. 711).

Though the US Forest Service fought wildfires long before World War II, the war brought a new importance and urgency to the effort. The forest service began using colorful posters as a way to educate Americans about the dangers of forest fires. Since most able-bodied men were already serving in the armed forces, none could be spared to fight fires on the West Coast. The hope was that local communities, educated about the danger of forest fires, could prevent them from starting in the first place. The Japanese, on the other hand, saw wildfires as a possible weapon. Forest fires could harm the US by destroying valuable natural resources and causing general havoc.



In the Lookout Air Raids of 1942, the Japanese attempted to set

southwest Oregon's coastal forests ablaze. In two separate attempts in September 1942, a Japanese submarine surfaced and launched a Yokosuka E14Y floatplane loaded with incendiary bombs. Neither attempt was successful, thanks primarily to weather conditions, and the actions of two quick-acting fire lookouts.

The Japanese renewed their wildfire strategy late in the war: from November 1944 to April 1945, some 9,000 fire balloons were launched with an estimated 10% making it to the US. Five children and their teacher, Mrs. Elsie Mitchell, who was five months pregnant, were killed by one of the bombs near Bly, Oregon, on May 5, 1945. The group found the balloon and while examining it, one of its bombs detonated. A stone memorial has been erected near the site.

The living symbol of Smokey Bear was an American black bear who in the spring of 1950 was caught in the Capitan Gap fire, a wildfire that burned 17,000 acres in the Lincoln National Forest (New Mexico). Smokey had climbed a tree to escape the blaze, but his paws and hind legs had been burned. He was rescued by a game warden after the fire.

At first he was called "Hotfoot Teddy," but he was later renamed Smokey, after the mascot. A local rancher who had been helping fight the fire took the cub home with him, but he needed veterinary aid. New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Ranger Ray Bell took Smokey to Santa Fe, NM. His wife and their children cared for the bear cub. The story was picked up by the national news services and Smokey became an instant celebrity. Soon after, Smokey was flown to the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., where he lived for 26 years. Upon his death on November 9, 1976 Smokey's remains were returned by the government to Capitan, NM, and buried at what is now the Smokey Bear Historical Park.

In 1952, after Smokey Bear attracted considerable commercial interest, the Smokey Bear Act was passed to take Smokey out of the public domain and place him under the control of the Secretary of Agriculture. The act provided for the use of Smokey's royalties for continued education on forest fire prevention.

In April 1964, Smokey was given his own ZIP code, 20252.

Smokey lends his name and image to the *Smokey Bear Awards*, which are awarded by the United States Forest Service:

*"To recognize outstanding service in the prevention of wildland fires and to increase public recognition and awareness of the need for continuing fire prevention efforts."*

For Smokey's 50th anniversary in 1994, he was honored with a U.S. postage stamp that pictured a cub hanging onto a burned tree.

In 2004, Smokey celebrated his 60th anniversary. According to Richard Earle, author of *The Art of Cause Marketing*, the Smokey Bear campaign is recognized as among the most powerful and enduring of all public service advertising. "Smokey is simple, strong, straightforward," Earle writes. "He's a denizen of those woods you're visiting, and he cares about preserving them...He'll stay and fight the fire if necessary, but he'd rather have you douse it and cover it up so he doesn't have to."



# WEST REGION WILDFIRE COUNCIL

Since the last meeting in July, the West Region Wildfire Council (WRWC) has been making progress on several of the action items identified during that meeting. Most significantly, the Council recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for fiscal sponsorship with the San Juan Mountains Association (SJMA). The relationship with SJMA will allow WRWC to consolidate existing and future grants and awards in a centralized location at a reduced administrative fee. Further, SJMA has been working with the Southwest Firewise Council (Durango) to provide a similar service to a like organization. As WRWC hires a CWPP Coordinator and distributes funds to community fuels projects, the experience of SJMA in this realm will be appreciated.

Members of the WRWC met with the Southwest Firewise Council to discuss their organizational structure and the roles and responsibilities of their staff to determine the best course of action for WRWC's growth. Of significance, the West Region

Wildfire Council will contract a position to assist in the education and coordination of wildland urban interface communities within the region. Wildland Urban Interface communities within these counties need assistance to efficiently and effectively carry out the recommendations set forth in their county-wide, Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs). The Council is seeking Community Assistance (BLM) funds in the amount of \$40,000 to fund this position initially for one year. WRWC will also be applying for future year funding for this position through State Fire Assistance (CSFS) funds. It will be the hired individual's responsibility to acquire grant funds or county contributions for their salary beyond these first two years.

WRWC also applied for additional Community Assistance funds to carry out fuels reduction projects on private lands in those areas identified in the respective county's CWPP. The Council will be meeting in late August or early September (date TBD) to define the CWPP Coordinator

position and the process for applying for, and administering the fuels reduction awards.

In July, WRWC decided to support the "Ready, Set, Go – Your Personal Wildfire Action Plan" brochure to distribute to residents in the six county area. Members of the council have been working with the Fire & Life Safety Educators of Colorado to acquire the brochure so that it can be modified to reflect wildfire issues specific to the western slope. In conjunction with the Ready, Set, Go brochure development, WRWC has been working on a logo for their organization.



## FALL RX BURNS

The Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit (MIFMU) plans to conduct several prescribed burns in starting in late-August and continuing through October.

Crews from the Bureau of Land Management Uncompahgre Field Office and the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests will be staffing the burns and monitoring conditions. The prescribed burns will only be conducted under favorable weather and fuel conditions that allow for adequate control while achieving burn objectives.

"These burns will help reduce dense vegetation and fuels and lessen damage that could be caused by catastrophic wildfires," said Dan Huisjen, MIFMU Fire Ecologist. "They will also help to improve wildlife habitat, regenerate new growth and create more plant diversity across the landscape."

Each prescribed burn has gone through an environmental analysis and has a detailed burn plan developed in advance. The burn plans contain specific criteria regarding weather conditions and air quality that must be met to help ensure control of the burn as well as to minimize the potential smoke

impacts to local communities. Smoke may be visible to nearby residents for all projects. Most of the smoke will lift and dissipate during the warmest part of the day. Some smoke may linger over the area and in drainages as temperatures drop during the evening.

The areas planned for treatment include:

### Norwood/Nucla Area

- Columbine Burn (Forest Service): 250 acres of oakbrush, located 12 miles NE of Nucla in Tabeguache Basin.
- Dry Park Burn (BLM): 400 acres of mechanically treated pinyon/juniper, located 10 miles northwest of Norwood along Highway 90.

### Uncompahgre Plateau and Valley

- Chaffee Burn (BLM/CDOW) 500 acres of mixed mountain shrub, located 4 miles southeast of Colona within and adjacent to the Billy Creek State Wildlife Area.
- Little Monitor Burn (Forest Service): 400 acres of mechanically treated pinyon/juniper and oakbrush, located 20 miles southwest of Delta along 25 Mesa Road.
- Highway 90 Burn (BLM): 20 acres of mechanically treated pinyon/juniper, located

9 miles west-southwest of Montrose adjacent to Highway 90.

- Western Area Powerline Burn (Forest Service): 75 acres of ponderosa pine, located near the Divide Road, approximately 15 miles SW of Montrose.
- Simms Mesa Burn (Forest Service): 300 acres of ponderosa pine understory, located 12 miles south-southwest of Montrose on Simms Mesa.
- Escalante Burn (Forest Service): 340 acres of ponderosa pine understory, located 25 miles southwest of Delta.

### North Fork Valley

- Bear Paw Burn (Forest Service): 400 acres of oakbrush, located 7 miles SE of Paonia along the South Fork of Minnesota Creek.

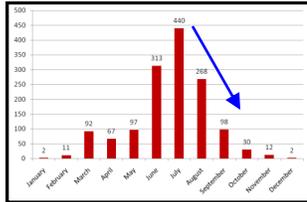
Once early snows have arrived in late October and into December, the fire program will also be burning piles from previous timber harvesting and mechanical treatments. Piles are located along Divide Road, Transfer Road, east of Highway 550 north of Ridgway, and on the North Rim of the Black Canyon.

*For additional information, contact Dan Huisjen at 970-240-5339.*



# WILDFIRE PREVENTION GUIDE

Historically, August is when we observe a downward trend in the both the number of fires and acres burned on the Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit (MIFMU).

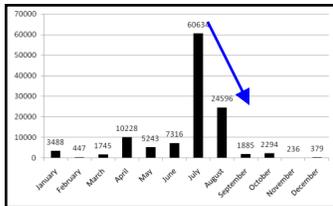


and acres burned on the Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit (MIFMU).

However when looking at the ten-

year period from 1999 to 2008, August still

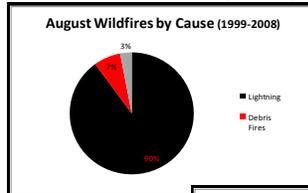
represents the third greatest number of fires - averaging 27 per month, or 19% of the fires in a given year. August



also represents the second greatest number of acres burned during a ten-year period - averaging

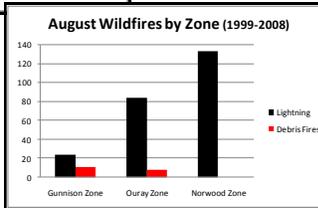
2460 acres per month, or 21% of the acres burned per given year.

The most significant wildfire causes for the month continue to be both lightning and debris fires.



This pattern remains consistent with last month in that the Norwood Zone exceeds the

both the Gunnison and Ouray Zones in the number of lighting caused fires.



Conversely, all of the debris fires have typically occurred on the Gunnison and Ouray Zones in August between 1999 and 2008.



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Look for new updates to come to the MIFMU website in 2010

[http://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch\\_centers/r2mtc/](http://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch_centers/r2mtc/)

## August Events

- **Algeria Fire, Algeria, August 1, 1959 - 48 people killed**
- **Hinsdale CWPP Core Team Meeting, August 4**
- **Buckhorn Fire (Iron Complex), California, August 5, 2008 - 9 firefighters killed**
- **Decker Fire, California, August 8, 1959 - 7 people killed**
- **Smokey Bear's 66th Birthday, August 9, 1944**
- **MIFMU Fuels Conference Call, August 9**
- **Transkei Veld Fire, South Africa, August 16, 1975 - 25 people killed**
- **France Fire, France, August 19, 1949 - 230 people killed**
- **Yellowstone Fires, Montana/Wyoming/Idaho, August 20, 1988**
- **Fires of 1910, Washington/Montana/Idaho, August 21, 1910 - 87 people killed**
- **Blackwater Fire, Wyoming, August 21, 1937 - 12 firefighters killed**
- **MIFMU Fuels Conference Call, August 23**
- **Canyon Inn Fire, California, August 23, 1968 - 9 firefighters killed**
- **Charaugi Fire, Greece, August 24, 2000 - 11 firefighters killed**
- **Montrose County CWPP Meeting, August 25**
- **Delta County CWPP Meeting, August 26**
- **Ouray County CWPP Meeting, August 26**
- **Gunnison County CWPP Meeting, August 27**

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