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BLM Plans Aerial Seeding Project Next Week

MONTROSE, Colo. - During the week of December 10, a Bureau of Land Management contract crew will use an airplane to spread native seed in two areas north of Hotchkiss and Paonia.

“The warm weather conditions have given us the opportunity to continue field work well into December,” said Kelly Homstad, BLM fire use specialist. “The aerial seeding project will allow us to increase healthy, native forage for big game in the area.”

A \$60K grant from the Habitat Partnership Program enabled the BLM to purchase the native seed mix that was specifically selected to ensure it is sustainability and its ability to compete with non-native species in the area.

The public will see the plane dropping seed about five miles north of Hotchkiss on about 500 acres in the Oak Mesa area and about three miles north of Paonia near the Farmers Mine Road.

This project is a continuation of field work that was started in 2011. In addition to spreading seed, the projects require thinning vegetation in the areas to allow sunlight and moisture to reach the ground. Environmental Assessments were completed for the projects and can be reviewed at <http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/ufo.html> under project numbers DOI-BLM-CO-S050-2008-0001 and DOI-BLM-CO-S050-2011-0015.

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