



Bureau of Land Management Colorado Southwest District

News Release

BLM Southwest District Office, Colorado

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BLM Tres Rios Field Office plans prescribed pile burns in Dolores and Montezuma counties

MONTROSE, Colo. – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Southwest District plans to burn slash piles on public lands managed by the BLM Tres Rios Field Office beginning Tuesday, February 27, 2024, if conditions allow. The BLM Southwest District provides fire and fuels management for the Yellow Jacket/McElmo project area, located on BLM lands within Canyons of the Ancients National Monument. The site runs north and south of Montezuma County Road G in Montezuma County, Colorado. Firefighters plan to resume burning at the Dawson project area located in Disappointment Valley 12 miles east of Egnar, Colorado in Dolores County.

The Yellow Jacket/McElmo project area consists of approximately 283 acres containing piles of tamarisk, Russian olive, and willow slash from a previous invasive species removal project. The Dawson project area consists of approximately 50 acres of piñon, juniper, and oak piles in a research area designed to study the effects of thinning in piñon and juniper stands.

“The goal of the Yellow Jacket/McElmo project is to remove invasive species such as tamarisk and Russian olive to restore native plant communities back into the area, while also reducing hazardous fuels that pose a wildfire risk to public and firefighter safety,” said Tyler Corbin, acting BLM Fire Management Specialist.

Once initiated, the prescribed pile burns may take multiple days to complete and will be monitored throughout the process to ensure public safety. While smoke may be visible in the area at times, most of the smoke will lift and dissipate during the warmest parts of the day. A detailed burn plan outlines the parameters for prescribed burns.

The BLM obtained smoke permits from the Colorado State Air Pollution Control Division, which identify atmospheric conditions under which the burns can be implemented. Prescribed fire smoke may affect your health. For more information, visit <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health>.

For information on prescribed burns, visit the Southwest District BLM Prescribed Fire InciWeb page (<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7852/>) or follow us on Twitter (https://twitter.com/SWD_Fire) and Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/BLMMontroseFireUnit>).

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The Southwest Colorado BLM District covers the BLM Gunnison Field Office, Uncompahgre Field Office, and Tres Rios Field Office in the Colorado counties of Archuleta, Conejos, Delta, Dolores, Gunnison, Hinsdale, La Plata, Mesa, Mineral, Montezuma, Montrose, Ouray, Rio Grande, Saguache, San Juan, and San Miguel.

The BLM manages approximately 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The agency's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.