



United States Department of Agriculture

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
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News Release

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Mad Creek-area trails to be impacted by Fuels Reduction/Habitat Improvement Project

(STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, Colo.) September 9, 2019 – Fuels reduction work on 230 acres will begin Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2019 on the Routt National Forest, north of Steamboat Springs, resulting in temporary interruptions along trails in the Mad Creek area.

Work is scheduled to occur through Oct. 31 and could cause intermittent, short-term travel delays at several area trails and along one Forest Service Road. Impact to the public may occur when heavy machinery accesses treatment units or is working close to trails. Maps and signage at area trailheads will reflect the location of the treatment units.

Impacted trails include Forest Trails 1100 (Mad Creek), 1140 and 1140.A (Mad Creek/Red Dirt connector trails), and 1169 (Hot Springs). As necessary, workers will serve as trail guards during brief closures.

The project will include road work along Forest Road 128 and a temporary low water crossing will be constructed to allow equipment to cross Mad Creek. This will preserve the historic Mad Creek bridge and repair runoff and erosion concerns near the bridge. Machinery will be working near the bridge for 1-2 days.

The public should avoid the heavy equipment while in operation, as well as the work area. At a minimum, Forest visitors should stay 500 feet away from any equipment. If needed, a short-term Forest closure order could be put in place.

Mastication will be utilized by the contractor to reduce accumulated vegetation/fuels and to improve deer and elk winter range. This work is part of the larger Steamboat Front Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project on the Hahns Peak/Bears Ears (HPBE) Ranger District.

Mastication treatment uses mechanical equipment to shred or mow mountain shrub vegetation such as gamble oak and smaller aspen that is dead or diseased.

The purpose of the multi-year Steamboat Front project is to reduce the hazardous fuels adjacent to Steamboat Springs in the wildland urban interface through the management of forest vegetation; and to improve deer and elk winter range habitat through habitat and recreational use management.

The fuels reduction will create defensible space, fuel breaks, and forest thinning. Colorado State Forest Service will act as the Contract Administrator for this portion of the project, under a Good Neighbor Agreement with the U.S. Forest Service, and has received funding to implement the mastication work. The partnership utilizes the [Good Neighbor Authority](#) authorized in the 2014 Farm Bill and 2014 Appropriations Act.

Colorado State Forest Service is also working with adjacent landowners to treat private property next to the U.S. Forest Service treatment units.

Visitors with questions about roads and trails on the Routt National Forest should contact the HPBE District Office in Steamboat Springs.

- (970) 870-2299, 925 Weiss Dr., 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Mon. - Fri.

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