



July 17, 2009

# **Black Mesa Ranger District Managing the Wagon Draw Fire for Resource Benefit**

The fire is 8 miles north of Forest Lakes off Forest Road 170. Current size is 350 acres and is burning mainly in ponderosa pine with flame lengths between 1 and 2 feet. Fire behavior has been low to moderate, with some small group torching of pole sized pines.

This lightning caused fire is being actively managed by the Black Mesa Ranger District for resource benefit – which just means that Fire Managers are using this fire as a tool to improve forest health. How does actively managing this fire improve forest health? The fire is cleaning-up the forest by slowly burning through the understory and debris on the forest floor, plus it thins out the excess small-diameter trees and returns nutrients to the soil. Actively managing fire for resource benefit reduces the future risk of destructive high-intensity wildfires. After all, fire is an integral component of southwestern forest ecosystems – our forests evolved with frequent, low intensity fires.

## **For More Information**

Dial 5-9-3 from Frontier land line in southern Navajo and Apache Counties, or (928) 333-3412 from anywhere, or visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/asnf> or [www.593info.org](http://www.593info.org)