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News Release

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Kaibab National Forest prescribed fire projects to begin tomorrow and continue through next week on the Williams Ranger District

Williams, Ariz., Oct. 12, 2016—For Immediate Release. Fire managers with the Williams Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest plan to conduct two large prescribed fire projects over the next two weeks beginning tomorrow south of Williams and then moving to Pitman Valley west of Parks.

The first of the two prescribed fire projects to be implemented will be the McCracken Project, which is located east and west of County Road 73 between Coleman Lake and Barney Knoll about 6 miles south of Williams. Fire managers plan to treat 2,532 acres with aerial ignition using a helicopter. They anticipate ignitions over three days beginning tomorrow and continuing through Saturday.

Smoke from the McCracken Project is likely to be noticeable near Dogtown Lake, Sherwood Forest Estates, Pitman Valley, Parks, and Bellemont. While major smoke impacts are not anticipated in Williams, it is possible that smoke will be visible from the community and from Interstate 40.

Fire managers had planned to begin treatment of the McCracken Project area Monday but had to postpone due to precipitation received Saturday that increased fuel moistures to levels not conducive for achieving optimal fire effects. A few days of drying have created conditions that are once again ideal for treatment of this area.

If conditions remain favorable following completion of the McCracken Project, fire managers will move to the Green Base Project located in Pitman Valley just west of Parks to begin prescribed fire operations. About 14,181 acres are scheduled to be treated in this area, which is north of Interstate 40, south of Bald Mountain, and west of Spitz Hill. Fire managers plan to use a helicopter to complete aerial ignitions on the burn unit over several days, likely from Sunday through all of next week. Smoke from the Green Base Project is expected to be visible from Interstate 40, Spring Valley, Highway 180, Kendrick Park, and possibly the northern portions of Flagstaff.

Kaibab National Forest fire managers have a number of other prescribed fires planned for fall and winter on each of its three ranger districts depending on fuel moistures and weather conditions. Public notification will be provided prior to the implementation of additional projects.

Fire plays a beneficial role in maintaining the ecological stability of many landscapes, including the Kaibab National Forest. Managers use prescribed fire as a practical means to reduce risks associated with uncharacteristic wildfires that can pose significant threats to public health and safety.

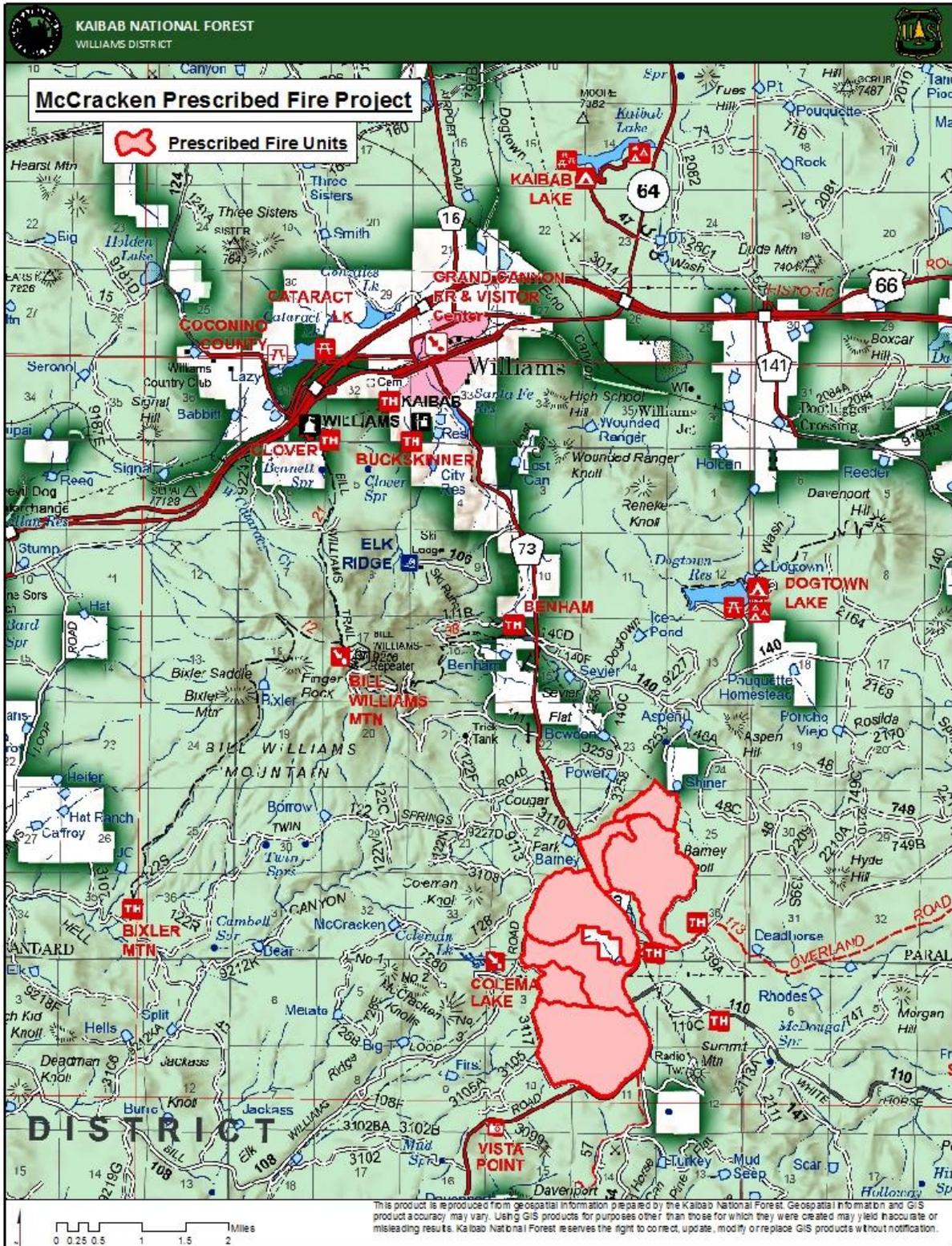
Forest managers recognize that prescribed fires may create negative impacts to air quality at times. However, these efforts, which are essential to restoring forests in a fire-adapted ecosystem, can also significantly reduce the amount and limit the duration of smoke impacts associated with uncontrolled wildfire situations in the future. In order to minimize smoke impacts to businesses and residences during prescribed fires, managers closely monitor wind direction and ventilation and adjust operations accordingly.

In the interest of safety, forest visitors are reminded to obey all traffic signs and use caution when traveling in the vicinity of prescribed fires as firefighters and fire-related traffic will be present.

All prescribed fires on the Kaibab National Forest are subject to approval by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. For additional information on the Smoke Management Division and to view prescribed burn authorizations for any given day, visit <https://www.azdeq.gov/programs/air-quality-programs/smoke-management>.

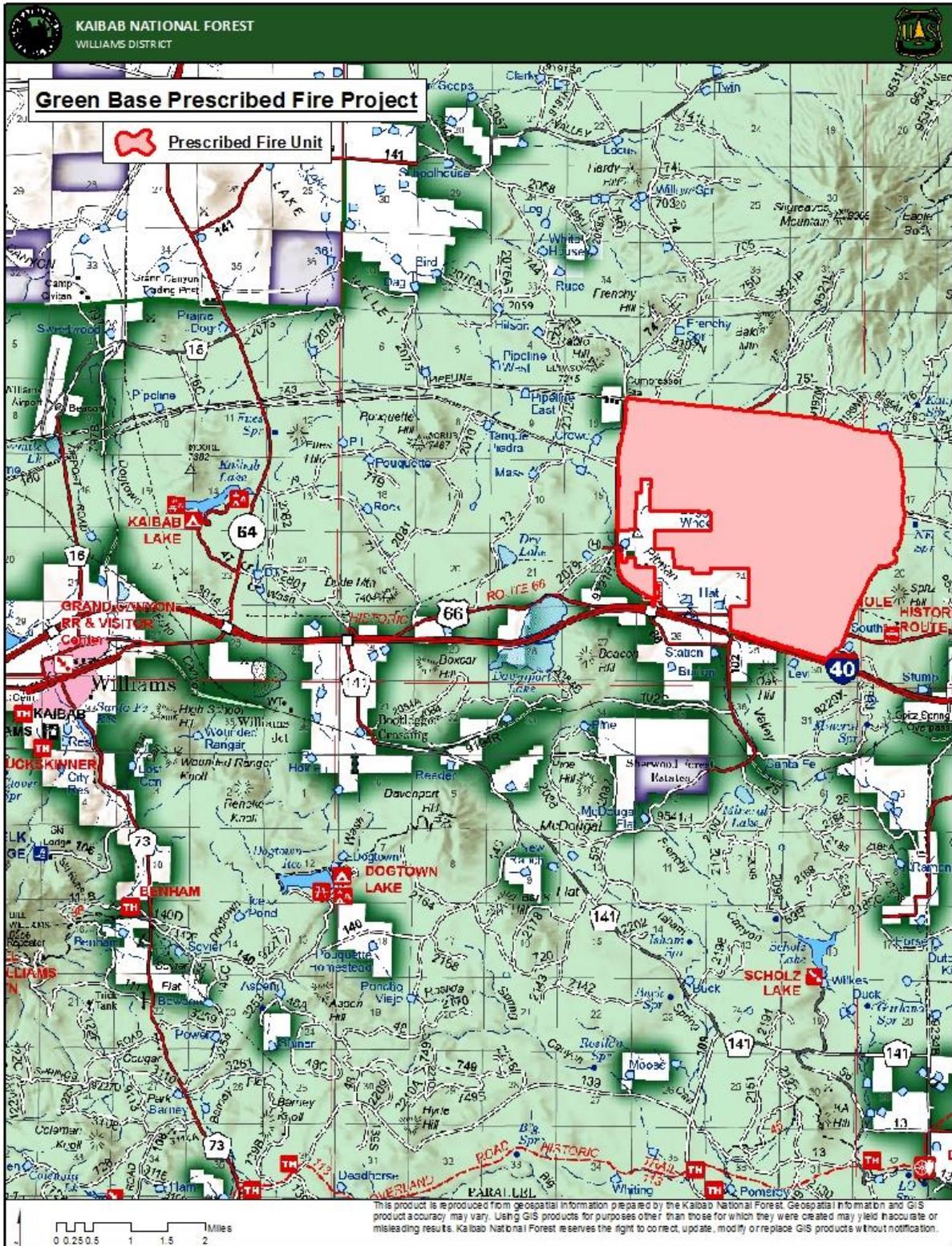
Additional fire information for the Kaibab National Forest can be obtained through the following sources: InciWeb <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4112/#>; Kaibab National Forest Fire Information Phone Line (928) 635-8311; Text Message – text ‘follow kaibabnf’ to 40404.

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Map showing location of the McCracken Prescribed Fire Project on the Williams Ranger District.

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Map showing location of the Green Base Prescribed Fire Project on the Williams Ranger District.

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