

## **NEWS RELEASE**



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### **PRESCRIBED FIRE OPERATIONS CONTINUE IN YELLOWSTONE CANYON**

Roosevelt, Utah ... The Roosevelt/Duchesne District on the Ashley National Forest will continue prescribed fire operations in Yellowstone Canyon. The project area includes targeted locations within the entire extent of Yellowstone Canyon from the Forest Boundary to the Wilderness Boundary.

Yellowstone Canyon is in Township 2 North, Range 4 West, Uintah Special Meridian.

Initially the project will focus on burning in ponderosa pine forests on the East side of Yellowstone Canyon, but as fuel conditions dry out prescribed fire may also be introduced to sagebrush on both sides of the river. The burn area is located along Forest Service Road, (FSR), 124.



The projects goal is to burn approximately 700 acres before the end of September and up to 700 acres before the end of the year if conditions permit. This is part of a multi-year effort, with burning planned to resume again next spring and fall, and continuing in subsequent years, until we treat the full project area of approximately 5000 acres. Treatments began last fall with mechanical thinning and pile burning of approximately 400 acres around private lands to create a fuel break prior to prescribed burning.

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The project's resource objectives are to reduce hazardous fuels, restore fire as a natural process in a fire adapted ecosystem, and improve wildlife habitat. Suppression of fires over the past several decades has allowed fuels to accumulate to unnatural levels in many areas, resulting in the potential for severe fire behavior. Prescribed burning under favorable weather and fuel conditions will allow us to reduce much of this accumulated fuel with low-intensity fire.

Mature ponderosa pine develop thick bark which allows them to survive frequent ground fires under natural conditions, but heavy fuel accumulations and ladder fuels can result in stand-replacing fires that kill all of the mature trees. By removing the heavy ground fuels and ladder fuels under prescribed conditions we can minimize damage to mature trees and increase the likelihood that future fires in the area will burn with less intensity and play their natural role in the ecosystem.

Fire rejuvenates many fire-adapted species (including aspen, shrubs, and grasses), provides structural diversity on the landscape, and plays an important role in nutrient cycling, resulting in more diverse and productive wildlife habitat.