



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>

Contact: Lynn Ballard, 208-313-7737 (U.S. Forest Service) or Deidre Forster, 307-772-5253 (153rd AW)

Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) Training in Colorado and Wyoming

(Cheyenne, WY. - April 30, 2013) – The U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Military's annual air tanker Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) training will be held May 6-10. Flight operations will be based at the Cheyenne Air National Guard Station (ANGS) in Cheyenne, Wyo.

The four-day long training, sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service, includes classroom sessions, flight training and recertification for military flight crews, civilian lead plane pilots and various support personnel. It also involves MAFFS support specialists and aviators from the military and federal agencies.

Military C-130s equipped with U.S. Forest Service slide-in MAFFS units can drop up to 3,000 gallons of retardant or water to aid in wildfire suppression. These trained military personnel along with the MAFFS equipment are activated to supplement the civilian air tanker program during periods of high wildfire activity throughout the nation. They were deployed in Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho and California during the 2012 fire season.

During the annual training and re-certification, the MAFFS training aircrews will drop potable water on remote target sites in the Laramie and Douglas Ranger Districts of the Medicine Bow National Forest and the Canyon Lakes Ranger District on the Roosevelt National Forest, as well as military ranges. On the Laramie Ranger District, drops will be one mile south of Highway 210 and Yellow Pine Campground on Pole Mountain; on the Douglas Ranger District around Laramie Peak. For the Canyon Lakes Ranger District drops will be in the Deadman area northwest of Red Feather Lakes. Area residents may see low flying C-130s during the day.

Military personnel involved in the training include air and ground personnel from the 153rd Airlift Wing from Cheyenne ANGS (host unit) and the 145th Airlift Wing from Charlotte, ANGS, N.C.

The military authority for the MAFFS program was created in the early 1970s to support wildland firefighting through an agreement with the U.S. Forest Service. The military aircraft are requested by the National Interagency Fire Center and activated through the U.S. Northern Command, based on an agreement with the Department of Defense.

###