



Rio Grande National Forest

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Crestone area tree thinning project finalized

CRESTONE, Colo. – The Saguache Ranger District of the Rio Grande National Forest announced today the decision to proceed with the proposed thinning project east of Crestone along the northern boundary of the Baca subdivision. The work would be done with chainsaws and would encompass approximately 85 acres along Forest Service Road 949 between the Bureau of Land Management boundary to the west and Willow Creek Trailhead to the east.

Designed to reduce the risk of intense wildfires to Crestone and adjacent communities, the thinning will increase the spacing between the trees in the pinyon-juniper woodland by removing individual trees. The lower limbs of remaining trees will be pruned, thereby decreasing the potential for a wildfire to move from the ground into the tree crowns. Woody debris generated from the treatment will be piled by hand and burned when there is adequate snow cover.

Opportunities for firewood collection, with a valid permit, may be available after completion of the thinning. Further information will be provided on firewood collection once implementation has begun.

Saguache District Ranger Tristram Post signed the decision memo on December 2 after completing the National Environmental Policy Act procedures required prior to project implementation. “I want to thank all of the partners and community members that engaged with us on this project to reach this important milestone,” said Post. “Now we can focus our energy on getting the work done.” Post expects work to begin on this project spring of 2020.

Visit the official project page: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=55359>

For more information, contact Sid Hall, Forest Fuels Specialist at 719-852-6205.

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