



Forest Service

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News Release



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Bridger-Teton National Forest Plans Prescribed Burns near Pinedale, WY

PINEDALE, Wyo., May 16, 2017 –The Bridger-Teton National Forest is planning to conduct a prescribed burn near the Sylvan Bay Summer Home Area on the Pinedale Ranger District at the end of May or beginning of June.

The Sylvan Bay Road prescribed burn is a 126-acre unit consisting of light slash, which is branches and tree limbs, and ground fuels, which is low lying shrubs and vegetation, in a Douglas fir stand. The area is located just east of the Fremont Lake Campground and south of Sylvan Bay Summer Homes.

Fuels will be hand ignited using drip torches with crews working along the road and engines will be shuttling water from the boat launch area to water tanks at the burn site. There will be no closures but traffic along the Sylvan Bay road may have wait times to provide for firefighter safety. Fire Managers expect to have most of the ignition operations completed in one or two days.

The Sylvan Bay Road prescribed burn, part of the Skyline Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Project, is a combination of hand thinning treatments and broadcast burning. The unit was hand thinned by a timber sale harvest several years ago to remove Douglas fir bark beetle infested trees. Thinning has improved the Douglas fir stand health and reduced the threat of torching and crown fire. Torching is when a tree completely ignites, flaming like a matchstick. Crown fires are when the fire gets up into the tree-tops and quickly spreads from tree to tree. The slash that was created from the timber sale is the targeted fuel for this burn. A low intensity fire will reduce ground fuel loading while limiting mortality to over-story trees and thus create a resilient landscape and help protect the surrounding communities.

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The project was designed to provide greater defensible space and lower the risk from wildfire to homes and private property by removing hazardous fuel loads in the Sylvan Bay Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). This effort will help moderate fire behavior during a wildfire and increase firefighter and public safety.

Actual ignitions for the prescribed burn will depend on meeting strict parameters for weather, fuel moisture, and fire behavior conditions. Smoke will be visible from Pinedale and surrounding area during ignition operations and for a short time after lighting has been completed.

For more information on prescribed fire, fuels reduction projects, and defensible space, visit www.tetonfires.com or call the Pinedale Ranger District at 307-367-4326.

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