



United States Department of Agriculture

**Forest Service**

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# News Release

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## Monument Ridge Project Underway

**WESTERN Wyo., September 21, 2021** Phase 2 of The Monument Ridge Vegetation and Recreation Management project is currently underway. The project area is located on the Big Piney Ranger District of the Bridger-Teton National Forest near the town of Bondurant. The habitat/fuels treatment area is within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) where Monument Ridge borders the western edge of the treatment area and the residential area along the Hoback River borders the eastern edge.

The Monument Ridge Vegetation and Recreation Management Project, proposed by the Sublette County Collaborative, is multifaceted. It addresses vegetation management within the wildland urban interface, wildlife habitat enhancement activities, along with safety and access improvements for recreation. These activities are set to improve forest health and promote wildlife populations for elk, mule deer, and sage grouse. This project will provide positive wildlife benefits and recreation opportunities well into the future.

Forest Service Contractors and Fire Crews are falling trees south of Hoback Guard Station and Monument Ridge Look Out on 1000-acres along Monument Ridge (see map) to prepare for a planned prescribed fire in 2023. The implementation is scheduled for completion by October 7th 2021. 2000 acres of similar treatments were conducted last summer north of the Hoback Guard Station and Monument Ridge Look Out (see map). The treatment area from 2020 is scheduled for a prescribed burn in Spring 2022. These treatments remove conifer encroachment in aspen stands and encourage aspen reproduction through the disturbance of prescribed fire. This treatment also removes conifer encroachment from the sage steppe increasing the health of the sage brush ecosystem. This part of the Monument Project is also designed to reduce hazardous fuel loading to reduce the risk of high intensity wildfire.



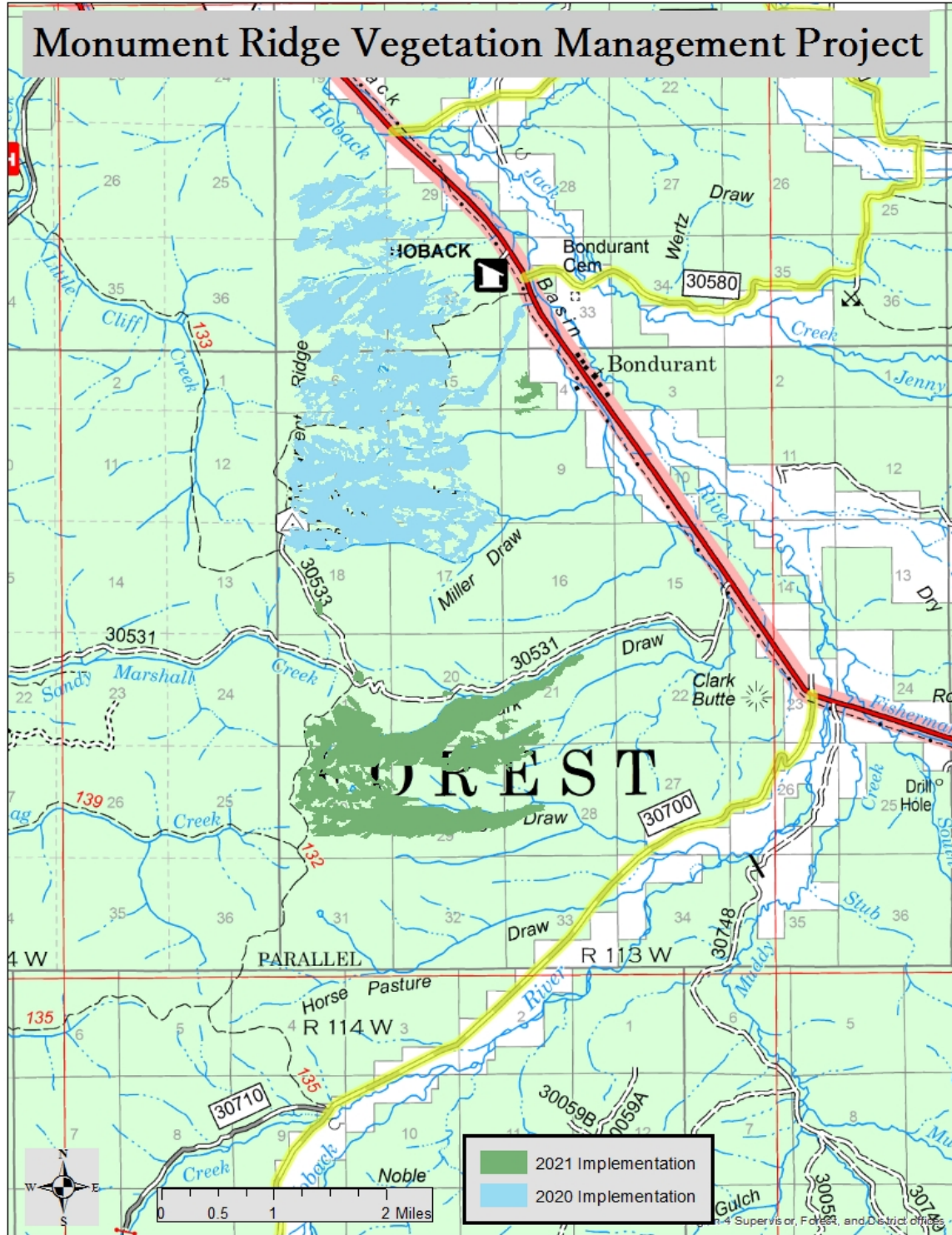
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The slash produced from the tree felling along Monument Ridge will remain for a 2-year period post felling, allowing the slash to cure and become an available fuel bed for prescribe fire. This process allows fire crews to implement the prescribed burn in the spring season. The cured fuel bed allows fire personnel to implement the prescribed burn before fire season while utilizing high fuel moistures in the surrounding vegetation to ensure the prescribed fire stays within established boundaries. USFS designated trails will remain open and clear of vegetation debris throughout this phase of the project.

For more information call Gregory Brooks, Acting Big Piney District Ranger 307-276-5810.





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