



Forest Service News Release

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<https://www.usda.gov/btnf>

Perscribed Burning Treatments Planned for Star Valley Front

Afton, Wyo., October 4, 2022— The Greys River Ranger District of the Bridger-Teton National Forest plans to complete a 2,554-acre perscribed burn within the Star Valley Front Vegetation Treatment Project in the coming weeks. The Star Valley Front Vegetation Treatment Project is located east of Star Valley and consists of a 64,612 acre project area with 31,477 acres of proposed burn units extending from Strawberry Creek south to Cottonwood Creek, from the forest boundary to the top of the Salt River Range. The main purpose for treating vegetation in the Star Valley Front Project Area is to begin restoring a balance of age classes in mountain shrubland, mountain big sagebrush, aspen, and conifer communities.

The benefits of perscribed fire can go beyond creating a health balance of young and mature vegetation. In fact, perscribed fires can support wildlife by creating new habitat or improving existing habitat. In the two to five years following a perscribed fire, burned areas often sustain more grasses and forbs, which offer abundant food for large herbivores like elk and their offspring, which is particularly relevant given the great interest in deer and elk populations in the Star Valley area.

Burning would start in the far northeast corner of the project area in unit # 9 (Strawberry) in a 2,554-acre unit starting in Strawberry Creek and heading south along the Salt River Range. The initial acres to be treated in Strawberry Creek will be between 2000 and 3000 acres.

The goals of the burn are to:

- a) Contribute to a balanced mix of successional stages of major vegetation types.
- b) Reduce the abundance and canopy cover of conifer trees in mountain shrub land, big sagebrush, and aspen types.
- c) Rejuvenate shrubs and aspen trees, especially on mule deer and elk winter range.
- d) Restore fire to its natural role on the landscape.
- e) Reduce fuel loading on the landscape to reduce the extent and severity of future wildfire, both for firefighter safety and for resource protection.

This project is expected to be carried out anytime during the month of October, 2022. Actual ignition dates will be dependent on meeting strict parameters for weather and fire behavior conditions. The communities of Bedford and Turnerville, as well as Forest visitors camping and recreating in the area, may experience shortterm smoky conditions in the vicinity of the burn. Smoke may linger in valleys during the evening and early morning hours, potentially affecting community residents. Roads and trails should remain open to the public, however certain areas may be closed for a short period of time if and when it is determined that public and firefighter safety may be impacted.

This vegetation treatment is an cooperative effort between the U.S. Forest Service, Wyoming Game & Fish Department, Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust, and other partners. You can learn more about the Bridger-Teton and upcoming projects on our website at <https://www.usda.gov/btnf/> or by following us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/BridgerTetonNF> or Twitter <https://twitter.com/BridgerTetonNF>

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