



Forest Service News Release

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Bridger-Teton National Forest Continues Work on Monument Ridge Prescribed Fire

Firefighters and Smoke Will Be Seen in the Area

Bondurant, Wyo., June 25, 2024— The Bridger-Teton National Forest is continuing work on the Monument Ridge prescribed fire near Bondurant, Wyoming. The prescribed fire activities began on June 7, 2024. The Forest firefighters worked their way through the project area burning 3500-acres in total, over 10-days, while the weather and other factors were favorable for the treatment. The purpose of the prescribed fire is to help protect homes and property in the area. Fuel reduction at the interface between natural lands and developments can reduce the intensity of the fires before they enter populated areas. The firefighters began patrolling and mopping up the prescribed fire earlier this week.

Prescribed fire—planned fire conducted by professionals—can reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires by reducing fuels. Prescribed fire seeks to mimic the small, regular-interval fires historically experienced in this ecosystem. Prescribed fires are shorter in duration than wildfires, and are conducted under favorable weather, planned far in advance, and obey the air quality regulations of nearby communities. “We introduce fire to the landscape during specific times when weather, fuel moisture content, available resources, and other factors are all aligned, so we can use the fire to create these buffers to help protect firefighters and property close to the Forest,” said Bridger-Teton National Forest Public Affairs Officer Mary Cernicek. “Prescribed fire is a tool that land managers can use to decrease the risk of severe wildfire near communities and valued resources.”

Firefighters and equipment are continuing to work within the prescribed fire area, patrolling the perimeter of the prescribed burn, and ensuring that the fire stays within the project area. “Passersby may see flames from time to time or even columns of smoke,” Cernicek said. “That is because there are interior pockets of fuel that are continuing to smolder or burn and they can flame up when the weather and wind is

just right,” she said. According to Cernicek, that smoke is expected in this mop up phase of the prescribed burn project. “Firefighters will “mop-up,” or extinguish fire and heat where needed and they will patrol the burn until it has stopped burning, smoking, and emitting heat, which we are planning to do for a few weeks,” she said.

A temporary closure is in effect for the Monument Ridge trail to allow firefighters and equipment to move safely along the corridor as they finish the project https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd1182311.pdf “The firefighters are extremely thorough, and you want them to be,” Cernicek said. “The interior portion of the prescribed fire is still burning in some spots, and you will see our firefighters out there working. For our wildland firefighters, this mopping-up is the hard physical labor process of extinguishing or removing burning material near the prescribed fire lines and cooling ash pits to reduce residual smoke,” she said. “Putting fire on the ground on our terms, instead of battling a wildfire, is our preference, but we know it is taxing to neighbors, especially communities like Bondurant who lived through both the Cliff Creek Wildfire and the Roosevelt Wildfire,” Cernicek continued. “It is an exercise in patience to put up with the added smoke and activity in the area, but working to reduce the chances of another large wildfire in the future, and reducing the intensity of any future fires that do happen to pop up in the area, is end-goal to benefit our neighbors and the Forest’s health in the long-run.”

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