

Montrose Interagency Dispatch Center

2007 Year End Report

The Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit (MIFMU) experienced a very mild fire season during 2007. Predictions for an active fire season in western Colorado did not materialize, as fuel conditions remained near average, and the hot and dry weather produced fewer than usual thunderstorms. For the second year in a row, fire occurrence and numbers of acres burned were below annual averages for the unit.

In preparation for the 2007 season, a major milestone was accomplished with the approval of Wildland Fire Use (WFU) as a fire management strategy on lands administered by the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forest (GMUG). During the winter months, an inter-disciplinary team developed a proposal to amend the Fire Management Plan to include WFU in areas identified where naturally occurring wildfires would provide resource benefits. A significant effort was made to incorporate existing Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service plans for WFU into a unit-wide project that could be implemented across the entire MIFMU.

The Forest Leadership Team approved the amended Fire Management Plan, and a media information and community outreach program was undertaken to educate and prepare the public for the implementation of Wildland Fire Use as an Appropriate Management Response (AMR). In late June, a lightning strike ignited a small fire in the Cochetopa Hills, and the Lujan Ridge fire became the first WFU on the GMUG National Forest. Over a period of several weeks, the fire made runs of varying size and intensity, resulting in a beneficial mosaic burn pattern on 52 acres of decadent spruce, fir, and bristlecone pine.

The Lujan Ridge fire provided fire management and resource staff an excellent opportunity to implement the WFU program, and this experience was applied to three other WFU candidate fires during the remainder of the season. All of the Ranger Districts on the GMUG, except for Paonia RD, which did not have a candidate fire start, had the opportunity to manage a WFU fire this summer. While there was no subsequent growth on either the Sawmill Mesa or Traver Mesa fire starts, the Hauser WFU fire was a late season event on the Uncompahgre Plateau that achieved excellent fire effects on 41 acres of ponderosa pine, gambel's oak, and serviceberry.

In addition, the Section 28 fire on BLM land southeast of Nucla was successfully managed as WFU incident on 135 acres of pinion pine, juniper, and sagebrush fuels. Incident complexity required additional resource commitment due to adjacent private lands, and high visibility to several nearby communities. An agreement was signed with a landowner that allowed the Section 28 fire to burn onto their property, providing resource benefits to both private and Federal lands.

As the monsoon rains arrived, MIFMU resources were mobilized to assist with the large fires burning in Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota. When the suppression resources returned from these assignments, preparation for the fall prescribed burning season began. Beginning in early September prescribed burns were conducted across the unit, and a good portion of the interagency target was accomplished. The Sand Mountain Rx burn was finally completed, when near-perfect weather and fuels conditions presented an opportunity after several years of uncooperative weather patterns. The cover photo for this report was taken by Jeff Davids, during black-lining operations on Sand Mountain.

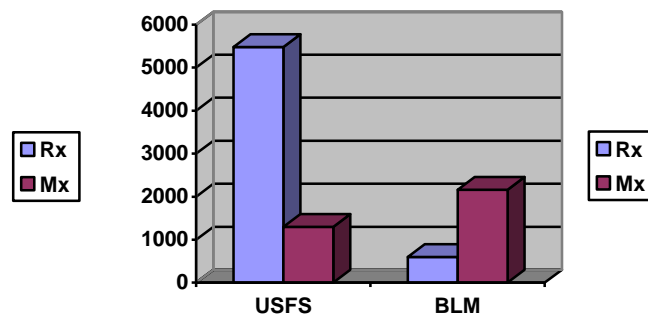
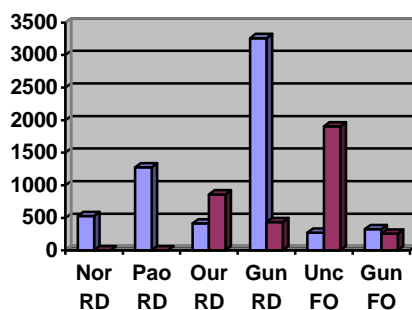
Montrose Interagency Fire Management

Fuels Management Accomplishments

Over 11,000 acres of fuels were treated with Wildland Urban Interface and Hazardous Fuels funding in the Montrose Unit. Both prescribed fire (5,300 acres) and mechanical treatment (6,471 acres) were used across the unit by USFS and BLM. Mechanical treatments ranged from chainsaw/hand piling to fecan flail, hydroaxe and roller chop treatments. Prescribed burning occurred in fuel types as diverse as grass/sage, sage/pinyon-juniper, oakbrush, slash (roller chops), ponderosa pine understory, and piles. Due to significant fall moisture (3-6" in 30 days between 9/16 and 10/16) the fall prescribed burn window was marginal and subsequently not all projects were completed/initiated. In addition, in the Uncompahgre Field Office many of the targeted prescribed burn projects are becoming infested with cheatgrass, partially as a response to significant spring/fall moisture the past 2 years and partly due to the earlier mechanical disturbances.

Office Totals	Prescribed	Mechanical	Total Acres
Gunnison Ranger District	2614	1277	3891
Norwood Ranger District	463	460	923
Paonia Ranger District	1174	0	1174
Ouray Ranger District	220	2506	2726
Uncompahgre Field Office	568	1589	2157
Gunnison Field Office	261	639	900
Unit Totals:	5300	6471	11771
Agency Totals			
US Forest Service	4471	4243	8714
Bureau of Land Management	829	2228	3057
Unit Totals:	5300	6471	11771

Within the Unit 2-3 new Firing Bosses were qualified through the taskbook process, maintaining the total number of Ignition Specialists at approximately 15. 3-4 personnel became single resource qualified and will now be able to serve as Holding Specialists and Firing Boss Trainees in FY07. The qualified firing Bosses received significant amounts of experience and 3 of them are now pursuing Burn Boss qualifications.



**Community Assistance/Mitigation and Education Program
Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit
2007**

Community Assistance:

The MIFU distributed \$60,000 in community assistance to the West Region Fire Council under the leadership of Jennifer Dinsmore/San Miguel County.

Delta County	\$10,000
Ouray County	\$5,000
San Miguel County	\$25,000
Telluride FPD	<u>\$20,000</u>
	\$60,000

The major accomplishments in Community Assistance for the year were to begin work on four CWPPs, all of which are near completion: Delta County: Hotchkiss Fire District, Ouray County: Horsefly Fire Protection Association, Cornerstone Association, and Four Communities in Ouray County (Lake Lenore, Whispering Pines, Panoramic Heights, Dexter/Cutler). Delta County completed the GPS and structure evaluations in the Cedaredge area and are now working to complete another section of Delta County. Montrose County is still trying to start their GPS and structure evaluations. San Miguel County has revised their County Fire Plan and is preparing to contract to have a county-wide CWPP written. The Telluride Fire Protection District is installing 5 dry hydrants in outlying areas surrounding Telluride. Another accomplishment was to help film, edit and produce a video on CWPP planning in conjunction with Ouray County/Horsefly.

Education/Outreach:

The major accomplishments for the year were to complete the “Why the Smoke” prescribed fire brochures, write 2 Snapshot articles, and handle some media stories

- 3 “Why the Smoke” Brochures for Ouray/Norwood/Gunnison Zones
- 2 Snapshot articles (CWPP video/fuels treatments on Section 28 fire)
- KVNf talk show/DCI article/Telluride Watch article
- 2 meeting with Telluride Institute/SMWC educational coordinators to share PLT teaching materials and discuss Fire Ecology Institute

Collaboration:

The major accomplishment for the year was to develop a Joint Fire Science Project (JFSP) pre-proposal with Chris Stalling/Rocky Mountain Research Station to do research on public input for the Uncompahgre Plateau Project planning process. Another accomplishment was to present on collaboration at the M-580 (FIEM) class.

- Met with UP technical committee to propose the research project
- Worked with Chris to write the pre-proposal
- Worked with Jimmy Chew/RMRS to provide data to them to model in SIMPPLLE

Fire Planning:

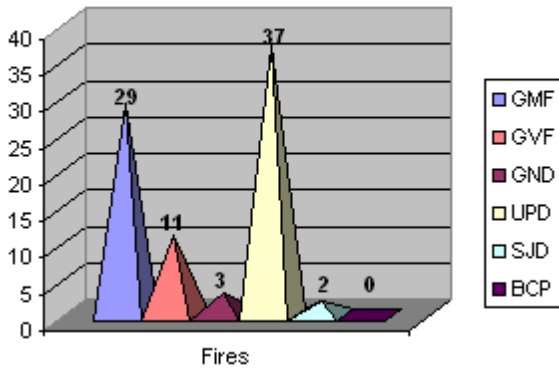
The major accomplishments for the year were to assist the GMUG in developing a Forest Plan Amendment to allow for WFU and writing a section of the Environmental Assessment. Additional accomplishments included revising the maps and FMU write-ups for the Grand Valley Ranger District and participating at the national level in revising the BLM Fire Management Plan Handbook and providing input on the Interagency Fire Management Template.

FIRES BY AGENCY

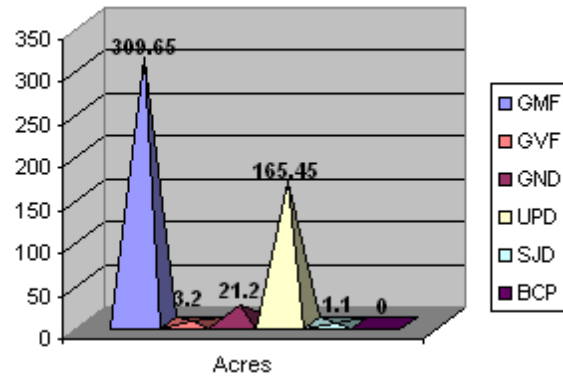
Agency	HUMAN		LIGHTNING		WFU		TOTAL	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
GMF	5	1.4	20	213.3	4	94.95	29	309.65
GVF	0	0	9	3	2	0.2	11	3.2
GND	2	21.1	1	0.1	0	0	3	21.2
UPD	3	32.2	32	13.65	2	119.6	37	165.45
SJD	1	0.1	1	1	0	0	2	1.1
BCP			1	0.1			1	0.1
CCP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

TOTAL	11	54.8	64	231.15	8	214.75	83	500.7
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TOTAL # OF FIRES BY AGENCY



TOTAL # OF ACRES BY AGENCY



MIFMU FIRES BY ZONE

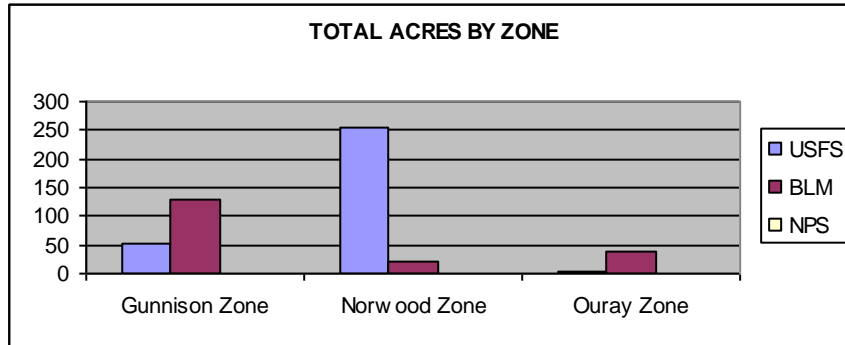
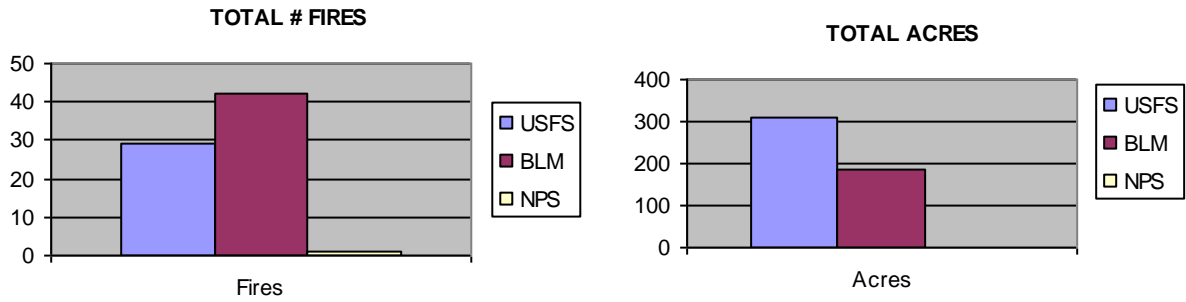
Agency	Gunnison Zone		Norwood Zone		Ouray Zone		TOTAL	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
FS	5	52.4	14	253.7	10	3.45	29	309.65
BLM	3	21.2	26	129.55	13	37	42	187.75
NPS	0	0	0	0	1	0.1	1	0.1

TOTAL	8	73.6	40	383.25	24	40.55	72	497.4
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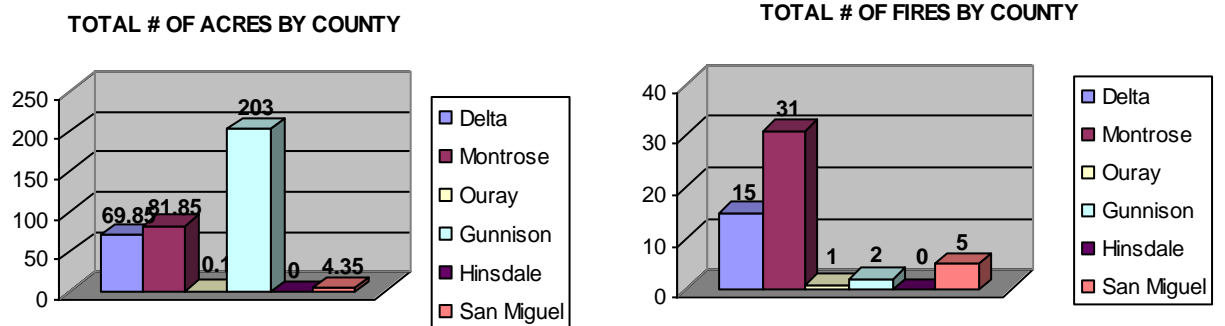
**Fires from top chart not included in Zones (GVF):*

	11	3.3
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MIFMU ZONE STATISTIC CHARTS



COUNTY STATISTIC CHARTS



FIRES BY COUNTY

County	DEPARTMENT	HUMAN		LIGHTNING		TOTAL	
		Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
DTX	Cedaredge FPD	3	2.75	4	38.5	7	41.25
	Crawford FPD	2	0.6	1	0.5	3	1.1
	Delta FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hotchkiss FPD	2	11.5	1	2	3	13.5
	Paonia FPD	2	14	0	0	2	14
	TOTAL	9	28.85	6	41	15	69.85
MRX	Montrose FPD	15	31.15	6	0.9	21	32.05
	Olathe FPD	10	49.8	0	0	10	49.8
	Nucla/Naturita VFD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Paradox VFD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Sheriff/Posse	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	25	80.95	6	0.9	31	81.85
OUX	Horsefly FA	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Log Hill Mesa FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Ouray VFD	0	0	1	0.1	1	0.1
	Ridgway FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	0	0	1	0.1	1	0.1
GUX	Arrowhead FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Crested Butte FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Gunnison FPD	2	203	0	0	2	203
	Ragged Mtn. FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	2	203	0	0	2	203
HIX	Lake City FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SLX	Egnar/Slickrock VFD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Norwood VFD	0	0	3	3.6	3	3.6
	Telluride FPD	1	0.25	1	0.5	2	0.75
	Sheriff	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	1	0.25	10	4.1	5	4.35

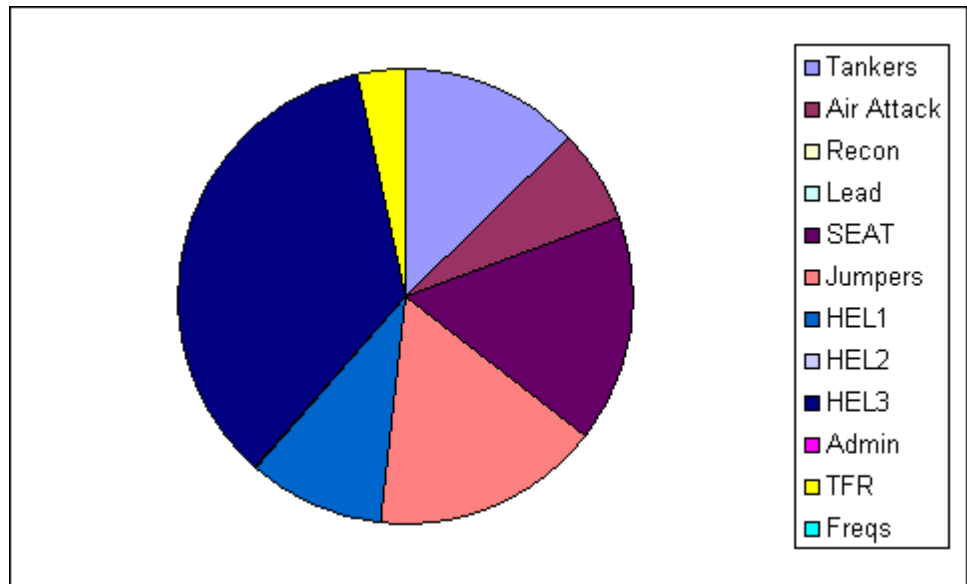
GRAND TOTALS		37	313.05	23	46.1	54	359.15
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RESOURCE ORDERS

RESOURCE TYPE	# Incidents	# Requests
Overhead	94	165
Crews	7	7
Equipment	15	20
Aircraft	12	27
TOTAL	119	206

AIRCRAFT ORDERS

Tankers	4
Air Attack	2
Recon	0
Lead	0
SEAT	5
Jumpers	5
HEL1	3
HEL2	0
HEL3	11
Admin	0
TFR	1
Freqs	0



GUNNISON RIVER CREW MOBILIZATION

DATE	INCIDENT NAME	STATE	UNIT ID
6/29/2007	Alabama Severity 07	AL	ALF

MIFMU FIVE YEAR AVERAGE - FIRES

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Average	+/- AVG
# Fires	224	161	98	110	72	133	-61
# Acres	3,106	6,008	1,783	628	497	2,404	-1,907

MTC FIVE YEAR AVERAGE - RESOURCE ORDERS

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Average	+/- AVG
Overhead	261	554	254	168	156	278.6	-122.6
Crew	26	30	12	8	7	16.6	-9.6
Equipment	142	443	121	16	20	148.4	-128.4
Aircraft	70	150	78	22	12	66.4	-54.4