



2009

Response to Wildland Fire \* Prescribed Treatments \*  
Education \* Dispatch \* Contracts \* Community Relations



# Montrose Interagency



# Fire Management Unit



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## **Montrose Interagency Dispatch Center 2009 Year End Report**

The Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit (MIFMU) experienced another below average fire season during 2009. For the fourth year in a row, fire occurrence and numbers of acres burned were well below annual averages for the unit.

Snowfall in the southwest Colorado mountains was relatively average, but cold spring temperatures accompanied by late spring rains contributed to a slow start to the fire season. Summer conditions were warm and windy, yet fuel conditions remained near average across most of the unit. The monsoon pattern did not fully develop, and diminished thunderstorm activity resulted in significantly less lightning-caused fires across the region.

Most fires remained small, but several fires required an additional commitment of resources beyond initial attack. On July 14th, the Grammar fire erupted from a smoldering lightning strike holdover in the San Miguel River canyon, and rapidly moved through dense pinyon and juniper fuels, threatening numerous homes in the Deer Mesa area near the town of Norwood, and then turned south to threaten a small community in Redvale. A MIFMU Type 3 Incident Management Team (IMT) was deployed, and this fire was successfully contained at 789 acres, while effectively managing suppression costs at the appropriate complexity level. This was the first assignment for the team, since a multi-year fire management initiative was implemented to increase local Type 3 IMT capability on the unit. A Type 2 IMT was ordered and then cancelled after the second burning period.

The Tabeguache Creek fire started on August 29th, and burned 935 acres of remote terrain north of the town of Nucla. Smokejumpers and hotshot crews were assigned to this fire, along with a small Type 3 IMT. This fire was managed for multiple objectives, with suppression efforts concentrated along a private ranch boundary. The fire was allowed to burn through decadent fuels on USFS lands, accomplishing natural resource objectives within the Tabeguache Special Management Area.

The Dry Creek fire, which burned 187 acres west of Montrose was another example of a fire managed for multiple objectives. Resources were committed to suppression actions along a private property boundary, while the fire burned through a mix of grass, sage, and pinyon/juniper fuels on BLM lands to accomplish natural resource objectives.

Due to the late spring, extended prescribed burning windows became available, and these opportunities allowed the fire management zones to accomplish their respective agency prescribed burn targets. During this time, the Ouray Zone helped the NPS implement their very first prescribed fire, on the north rim of the Black Canyon National Park. Fire effects were moderate, but the overall outcome was priceless! Continuing into the middle of summer, weather conditions remained suitable for the Gunnison Zone to conduct prescribed burning operations on the Taylor Canyon project, a high altitude burn designed to improve bighorn sheep habitat.

This year MIFMU and the Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit jointly acquired a Fecon FTX 100-L, which is a track-equipped machine designed to grind and chop brush and small trees, and also has a dozer blade attachment. The machine was used on the MIFMU unit this fall to mechanically prepare BLM and USFS project units for later prescribed burns, and will increase the efficiency and productivity of the prescribed burn program. Logistics involved with moving the machine from one project site to another continue to be a challenge, as the two fire programs have not yet acquired a dedicated truck and trailer for the Fecon machine.

Nationally, the fire season was relatively quiet, and there were very few opportunities for qualified overhead from the MIFMU agencies to assist with larger fires that typically occur across the west. Several fire personnel did participate in engine, helitack, and dispatch detail assignments to assist fire management programs in Nevada, but this was the first year that the Gunnison River Crew did not have a single fire assignment.

# **Fire Program Support to Resources**

**2009**

The Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit (MIFMU) Zone FMOs and AFMOs continued to work directly with resource specialists and agency staff to coordinate the completion of resource projects during the 2009 summer season.

Examples of traditional on-going projects include campground hazard tree removal, fence construction, and recreation facilities maintenance. Fire crews also responded to a late-season wind event, and assisted with emergency tree clearing to open forest roads.

Special projects included tree felling in bighorn sheep corridors, and roof repair and interior renovation at the Gunnison garage/warehouse. A helicopter manager and crewmembers assisted the NPS with transporting personnel and equipment by helicopter into the Black Canyon for a tamarisk removal project. The Montrose Dispatch office provided communications support for the Secret Service during the former President Jimmy Carter raft trip through the Gunnison Gorge.

A fire employee was detailed to a recreation planning position to assist in implementing the new cabin rental program. This employee also worked on Schedule A road maintenance agreements, road use permits, and provided an agency presence at Red Mountain Pass doing backcountry ski patrols.

Fire management also assigned qualified instructors to provide on-the-job training and classroom instruction to agency seasonal and permanent personnel in the areas of ATV rider courses, 4x4 driver training, First Aid/CPR, radio use, and annual fireline refresher training. Aviation safety training, and MTDC chainsaw training was also provided by fire personnel, and prescribed fire training opportunities were available on several prescribed burns.

Fire personnel conducted educational visits to area schools with Smokey Bear presentations, and also supported travel management implementation, and hunter patrols. Additionally, fuels specialists and para-archeologists provided assistance with NEPA planning documents.

A MIFMU employee served as the USFS regional chainsaw coordinator, and worked closely with the BLM to bring the respective agency chainsaw qualification and certification programs closer together.

Fire employees served as representatives on agency safety committees, supported green team initiatives, and participated on local employee associations. Additionally, two employees served on the USFS Special Emphasis Program Management (SEPM) team, responsible for the successful planning of the All-Employee Day held in Delta this summer.

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<b><u>2009 MIFMU Project Hours</u></b>							
Ouray							
<b><u>Project</u></b>	<b><u>Owner ship</u></b>	<b><u>BLM Man-Hours</u></b>	<b><u>USFS Man-Hours</u></b>	<b><u>Total Hours</u></b>			
Owl Creek worm fence	USFS	120	48	168		<b><u>BLM Personnel Man-Hours</u></b>	
Divide Hazard trees	USFS	64	48	112		1403	
Silesca Fence	USFS	128	24	152			
Iron Springs CG Trees	USFS	32	24	56		<b><u>USFS Personnel Man-Hours</u></b>	
Tamarisk Flight	NPS	30	20	50		1569	
Blow Down Road Clearance	USFS	24	32	56			
Courthouse Trail	USFS	24	8	32		<b><u>NPS Project Hours</u></b>	
Spruce Mountain Road	USFS	136	136	272		50	
FS Volunteer MTDC Saw Class	USFS	60	60	120			
Raseberry Cutting	USFS	64	64	128			
Dallas Cutting	BLM	160	160	320			
Beaver Hills Cutting	BLM	121	121	242			
Camp ground Trees	BLM	16	0				
				0			
<b><u>Total Hours</u></b>		<b>979</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>1708</b>			
Norwood							
<b><u>Project</u></b>	<b><u>Owner ship</u></b>	<b><u>BLM Man-Hours</u></b>	<b><u>USFS Man-Hours</u></b>	<b><u>Total Hours</u></b>			
Trail Clearing	USFS	40	80	120			
Trail Work	USFS	64	96	160			
Road Clearing	USFS	80	80	160			
Spruce Mtn.	USFS	168	280	448			
Seedling for Timber	USFS	16	24	40			
Front Office	USFS	0	64	64			
Misc Range help	BLM	16	16	32			
Weed Recon Location of	USFS	0	16	16			
Travel Management	USFS	0	128	128			
Warehouse Water	BLM	32	32	64			
Office Arrangement	USFS	8	8	16			
				0			
<b><u>Total Hours</u></b>		<b>424</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>1248</b>		2956	

# **Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit**

## **2009 Community Assistance/Mitigation and Education Program**

**Community Assistance:** This year the MIFMU distributed a combined total of \$67,500 in Community Assistance (CA) and Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) grants. (Administered 10 assistance agreements)

**Community Assistance (CA): Total = \$25K**

- West Region Fire Council \$25K (covers both field offices)
  - \$25K = for efforts in supporting the 5 County CWPP efforts

**Rural Fire Assistance (RFA): Total = \$42,500**

- Uncompahgre Field Office (\$26,000)
- Gunnison Field Office (\$16,500)

**CWPPs Completed:** Horsefly Fire Protection Association/Cornerstone Association CWPP; San Miguel County county-wide CWPP

**Appointment of Mitigation Education Specialist:** After being vacant for nearly 9 months, the MES position was successfully filled in September.

# Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit

## 2009 Training Summary

For 2009 the Montrose Interagency Fire Management Unit (MIFMU) issued a total of 210 Incident Qualification Cards (red cards). Approximately 30 new position taskbooks were initiated in 2009 covering all facets of the Incident Command System (ICS). A total of 26 taskbooks were completed this season.

The following is a breakdown of taskbook totals by unit:

	Active Taskbooks	Certified Taskbooks
BLM	24	13
USFS	24	11
NPS	5	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>26</b>

MIFMU has a very active training program; including on-the-job and local, state, regional and national classroom settings. Over 100 nominations were processed for training for 2009. MIFMU sponsors, coordinates and instructs numerous courses throughout the Rocky Mountain Region each year.

The Interagency Qualifications Review Committee met to review taskbooks of Single Resource Bosses, Unit Leaders and above to determine personnel qualifications and taskbook completions. The committee reviews the Incident Qualifications Card System (IQCS) cards each year for validity. After this review, unit shortage categories are determined and positions within these categories are focused on for training and further qualification.

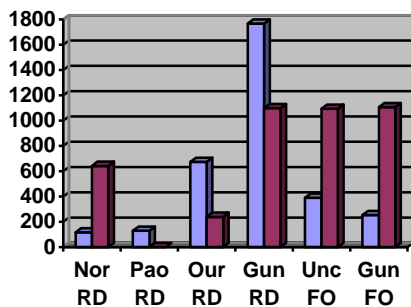
# Montrose Interagency Fire Management

## Fuels Management Accomplishments

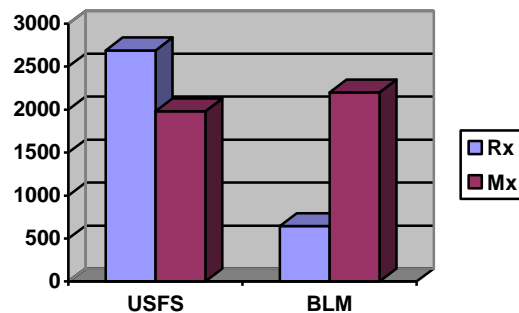
Over 8,800 acres of fuels were treated with Wildland Urban Interface and Hazardous Fuels funding in the Montrose Unit. Both prescribed fire (~3,375 acres) and mechanical treatment (~4338 acres) were used across the unit by USFS and BLM. Additionally, 1,136 acres of managed wildfire were utilized to help meet resource management objectives; all of the managed fire acres were located on the Norwood District of the USFS. 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.

Office Totals	Prescribed	Managed Fire	Mechanical	Total Acres
Gunnison Ranger District	1767	0	1099	2866
Norwood Ranger District	118	1136	642	1896
Paonia Ranger District	130	0	0	130
Ouray Ranger District	673	0	240	913
Uncompahgre Field Office	518		842	1360
Gunnison Field Office	169		1515	1684
<b>Unit Totals:</b>	<b>3375</b>		<b>4338</b>	<b>8849</b>
Agency Totals				
US Forest Service	2688	1136	1981	5805
Bureau of Land Management	687		2357	3044
<b>Unit Totals:</b>	<b>3375</b>		<b>4338</b>	<b>8849</b>

Within the Unit 2 Burn Bosses trainees got significant experience and are close to being qualified as Burn Bosses. Several fire staff gained experience as Firing Bosses and Holding Specialists as well. Each of these individuals contributes to a highly qualified and available cadre of prescribed burn resources.



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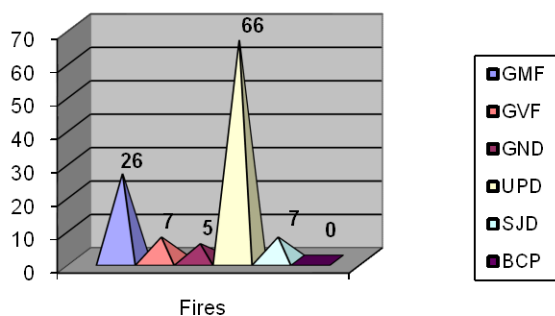


Rx  
Mx

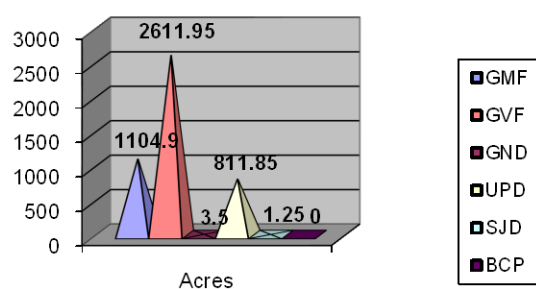
## FIRES BY AGENCY

Agency	HUMAN		LIGHTNING		Resource Benefit		TOTAL	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
GMF	8	0.8	14	948.1	4	156	26	1104.9
GVF	1	0.1	2	1.35	4	2610.5	7	2611.95
GND	2	0.2	3	3.3	0	0	5	3.5
UPD	3	1.1	60	782.85	3	27.9	66	811.85
SJD	0	0	7	1.25	0	0	7	1.25
BCP	0	0	1	0.1	0	0	1	0.1
CCP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>1736.95</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2794.4</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>4533.55</b>

TOTAL # OF FIRES BY AGENCY



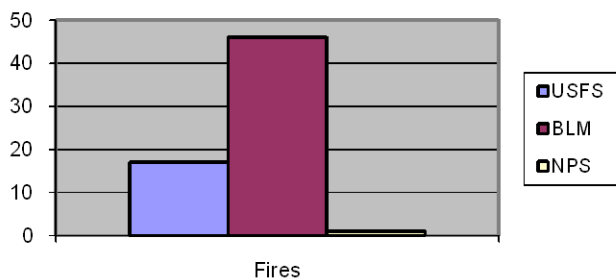
TOTAL # OF ACRES BY AGENCY



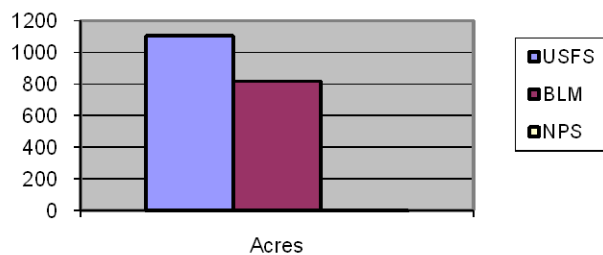
## MIFMU FIRES BY ZONE

Agency	Gunnison Zone		Norwood Zone		Ouray Zone		TOTAL	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
FS	6	2.35	13	1099.75	7	2.8	17	1104.9
BLM	5	3.5	56	586.1	17	227	46	816.6
NPS	0	0	0	0	1	0.1	1	0.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5.85</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>1685.85</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>229.9</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>1921.6</b>
<i>*Fires from top chart not included in Zones (GVF):</i>							<b>7</b>	<b>2611.95</b>

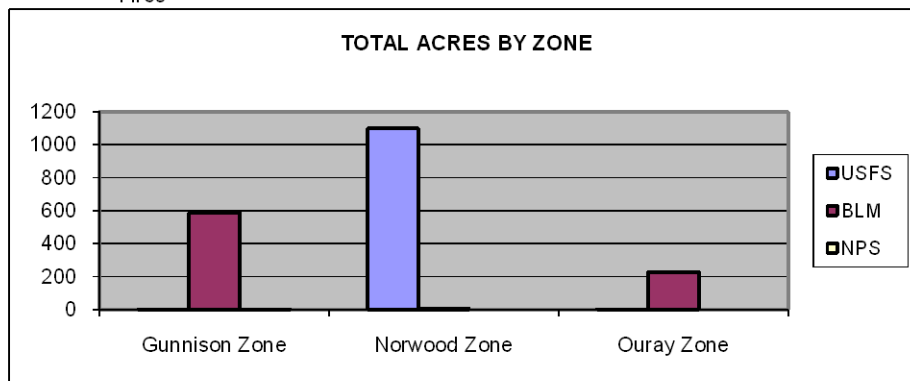
TOTAL # FIRES



TOTAL ACRES



TOTAL ACRES BY ZONE

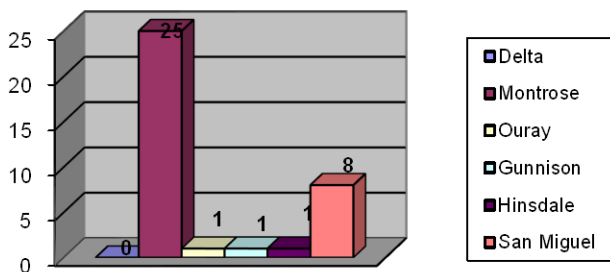




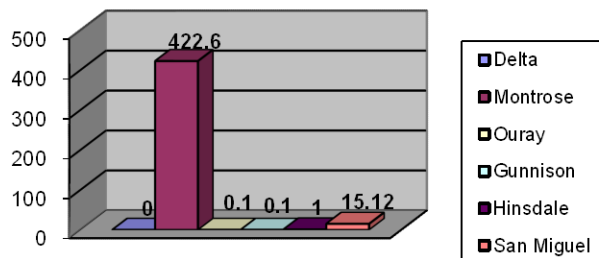
## FIRES BY COUNTY

County	DEPARTMENT	HUMAN		LIGHTNING		TOTAL	
		Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
<b>DTX</b>	Cedaredge FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Crawford FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Delta FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hotchkiss FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Paonia FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>MRX</b>	Montrose FPD	13	417	0	0	13	417
	Olathe FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Nucla/Naturita VFD	0	0	10	1.15	10	1.15
	Paradox VFD	1	3.6	1	0.25	2	3.85
	Sheriff/Posse	0	0	2	0.6	2	0.6
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>420.6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>422.6</b>
<b>OUX</b>	Horsefly FA	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Log Hill Mesa FPD	0	0	1	0.1	1	0.1
	Ouray VFD	0	0	1	0.1	0	0
	Ridgway FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>GUX</b>	Arrowhead	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Crested Butte FPD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Gunnison FPD	0	0	1	0.1	1	0.1
	Pitkin VFD	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>HIX</b>	Lake City FPD	0	0	1	0.1	1	0.1
<b>SLX</b>	Egnar/Slickrock	0	0	1	0.25	2	3.1
	Norwood VFD	3	10.2	1	0.1	4	10.3
	Telluride FPD	2	1.72	0	0	2	1.72
	Sheriff	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11.92</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0.35</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15.12</b>
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>432.52</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2.55</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>435.07</b>

TOTAL # OF FIRES BY COUNTY



TOTAL # OF ACRES BY COUNTY

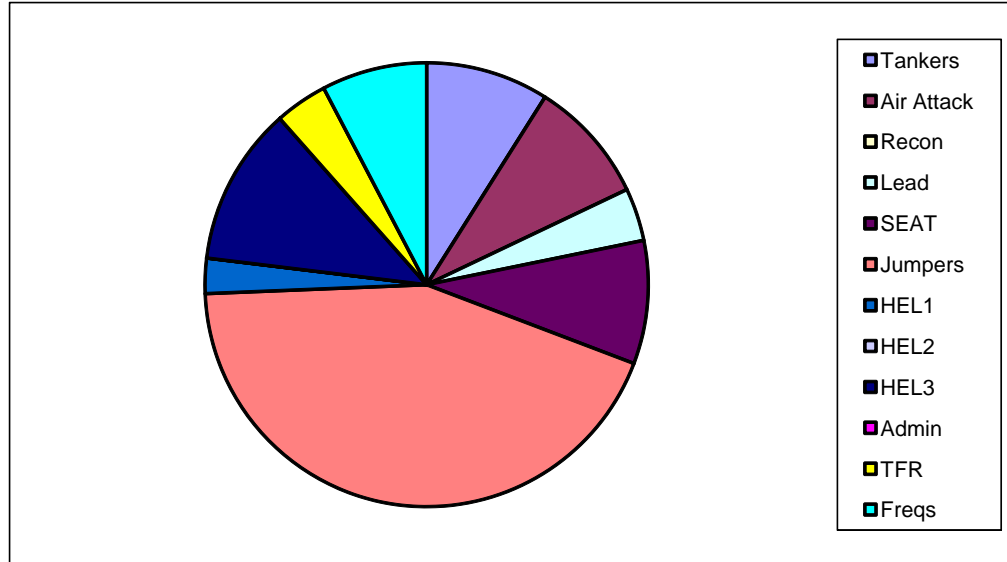


### RESOURCE ORDERS

RESOURCE TYPE	# Incidents	# Requests
Overhead	31	98
Crews	6	13
Equipment	10	68
Aircraft	10	41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>220</b>

### AIRCRAFT ORDERS

Tankers 7  
 Air Attack 7  
 Recon 0  
 Lead 3  
 SEAT 7  
 Jumpers 34  
 HEL1 2  
 HEL2 0  
 HEL3 9  
 Admin 0  
 TFR 3  
 Freqs 6



### GUNNISON RIVER CREW MOBILIZATION

DATE	INCIDENT NAME	STATE	UNIT ID
2009	No Incidents	-	-

### MIFMU FIVE YEAR AVERAGE - FIRES

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Average	+/- AVG
# Fires	98	110	72	65	105	90	15
# Acres	1,783	628	497	2,232	1,922	1,412	510

### MTC FIVE YEAR AVERAGE - RESOURCE ORDERS

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Average	+/- AVG
Overhead	254	168	165	185	98	174	-76
Crew	12	8	7	5	13	9	4
Equipment	121	16	20	78	68	60.6	7.4
Aircraft	78	22	12	11	41	32.8	8.2