



## News Release

BLM Wyoming Rawlins Field Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 26, 2016

Contact: Tony Brown, 307-352-0215

### **Wildfire Out on Ferris Mountain**

The Ferris Mountain wildfire was declared out on August 25, 2016. The Ferris wildfire started naturally by lightning strike on August 8<sup>th</sup> on the north side in Pete Creek drainage. An initial attack crew initially established a minimal control line to limit fire spread; however, due to steep rocky terrain and poor escape routes the 3-person crew disengaged from the fire and determined the best course of action was to monitor it. No further suppression actions took place. The fire did not get out of that initial control line and burned 0.25 acre.

The Ferris Fire was within an area that has been and continues to be considered for future prescribed burns and the management of natural wildfire for resource benefits. Ferris Mountain is a designated Wilderness Study Area (WSA) where management actions must maintain wilderness characteristics. Additionally, the area was analyzed for an ongoing series of prescribed and natural wildfire treatments through a NEPA process that was completed and approved in 2011. The current fire location lies within an area that is scheduled for a large scale prescribed burn within the next several years, as weather and prescription conditions allow.

BLM HDD Fire Management and resource specialists from the Rawlins Field Office discussed the management strategy for this fire immediately following its initial reporting and size-up. The area is extremely difficult to access and public and firefighter safety is always the first priority; however, as detailed previously, Ferris Mountain does have an overall strategy is to let natural fires run their course. This fire's location, in a relatively protected bowl, under regrowth timber with few ladder fuels, truly limited the natural start's ability to spread outside of the immediate area.

The decision on whether to manage a fire is rather complicated and requires a large amount of coordination, involving fire management, resource specialists, county and local fire departments, and surrounding and adjacent landowners and permittees. The time of year, moisture and weather conditions, and the availability of resources, and socio-political impacts are just some of the key considerations that are weighed to make a management determination. Every natural event (fire) on Ferris Mountain will be evaluated to determine whether to let Mother Nature take

its course or not, and the High Desert District Fire Management will do it's very best to keep all values and interests protected.

For additional information please contact the BLM Fire Management Officer, Frank Keeler, at 307-352-0256.

Please report all wildfires immediately to the Rawlins Dispatch Center at 1-800-295-9953 or to emergency 911.

*The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2015, the BLM generated \$4.1 billion in receipts from activities occurring on public lands.*

--BLM--