



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

News Release

Southwest District Office, Colorado

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 24, 2023

Contact: Deana Harms, Public Information Officer, 970-501-5665

BLM plans to conduct prescribed fires on West Dolores Rim and Animas City Mountain

DOLORES, Colo. – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) plans to conduct two prescribed fire treatments within the Tres Rios Field Office this spring. If conditions are right, the burns could occur between May 1 and 15. Fire crews would ignite up to twelve burn units using a combination of ground and aerial resources and patrol the burns until extinguished. The plan involves continuing treatment of up to seven units totaling about 1,254 acres in the West Dolores Rim project area east of Dove Creek in Dolores and San Miguel counties. The area is dominated by ponderosa pine and Gambel oak and locally referred to as the “East and North Pines.”

The BLM is also tracking weather and fuel conditions, along with firefighter availability, for conducting a controlled burn of up to five units of the Animas City Mountain project area in Durango, CO. BLM fire specialists estimate that the ignition of up to 494 acres of ponderosa pine and Gambel oak could take two to three days or more and require a brief closure of Animas City Mountain trailheads and access points to ensure public and firefighter safety. The BLM expects to use designated trails as containment lines. To protect nesting peregrine falcons, the two northernmost units would not be part of a spring burn.

“These planned burn projects are designed to improve ecosystem resiliency, enhance wildlife habitat, and reduce the potential for catastrophic fire on BLM-managed public lands in the Durango area,” said acting **Tres Rios Field Manager Derek Padilla**. “The BLM is working collaboratively with our partners to safely implement these important treatments. We ask for the community’s patience as we move forward to increase fire resiliency in southwest Colorado.”

Conducted under appropriate weather and vegetative conditions, prescribed fire mimics natural processes, improves forage for wildlife, increases plant diversity by creating breaks in the understory where grasses and flowers can thrive, and effectively reduces hazardous fuels while enhancing woodland health.

The projects are part of the BLM’s ongoing commitment to protect human health and safety while maintaining or enhancing forest and woodland health and functionality. To make this project a success, the BLM is in close coordination with federal, county, and local government partners, as well as non-governmental organizations, emergency managers, fire departments, public health officials, and state smoke regulators.

Current information on the Animas City Mountain prescribed fire treatment will be posted online at <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/cosjd-animas-city-mountain-prescribed-burn/>. Follow the BLM Southwest Colorado Fire and Aviation Management Unit Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BLMMontroseFireUnit> and Twitter at https://twitter.com/SWD_Fire for the latest information on wildland fire and prescribed burns in the BLM Southwest District.

-BLM-

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 western states, including Alaska, on behalf of the American people. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. Our

mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.