



Forest Service News Release

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Slash pile burning planned this fall and winter on San Juan National Forest

Pile burning operations will begin in November 2023 and extend into spring 2024

Durango, Colo., November 7, 2023— The San Juan National Forest plans to burn slash piles this fall and winter generated from forest thinning and timber sales. Thinning projects improve forest health and wildlife habitat and reduce the risk of wildfire near private residences and infrastructure. Slash from these projects is piled and burned to remove the debris that could fuel wildfire.

Pile burning will begin as early as this month when there is sufficient snow or rain present to prevent fire spread and will continue as long as conditions allow, possibly through April 2024. Firefighters will ignite and monitor pile burning activities while heat is present. These activities should not affect public access or use of the forest.

Dolores Ranger District plans to burn slash piles near the following locations: Chicken Creek area (340 acres, 2500 piles) near Forest Service Roads (FSR) 385 and 559 near Joe Moore Reservoir; Haycamp Mesa area (600 acres, 1600 piles) near FSRs 556 and 492, south of Beef Pasture Reservoir; in the Taylor Mesa area (150 acres, 50 piles) near FSRs 545 and 692; in the Salter area (575 acres, 600 acres) near FSRs 514, 504, 519 and 293, northwest of Salter Y; and in the Lake Canyon area (2100 acres, 800 piles) near FSRs 506, 504, 508, 514, 215, and 216 near Cow Canyon. Smoke may be visible from State Highway 184, State Highway 145, and U.S. Route 491.

Pagosa Ranger District plans to burn slash piles near the following locations: The lower portion of Turkey springs Road (FSR 629) near the powerlines, Turkey Springs Road near the Turkey Springs Guard Station, Brockover Road (FSR 919), Buckles Lake Road (FSR 633) and in the Huerto Creek timber sale between Piedra Road (FSR 621) and Poison Park Road (FSR 644). The piles are a mix of small hand constructed piles and machine piles resulting from timber sales. Piles will only be ignited when sufficient snow or rain to prevent creep.

Columbine Ranger District plans to burn slash piles near the following locations: Saul's Creek (110 acres, 1800 piles) near FS roads 755, 755.A, 131, and 131.C. Junction Creek (90 acres, 75 piles) near FS road 171, in the Log Chutes trail area. Fossett Gulch (40 acres, 100 piles) near FS roads 613 and 841. Baldy Mountain (623 acres, 60 slash piles) off of Beaver Meadows Road.

Burning will only occur when all conditions of the state-issued smoke permit are met. Learn how smoke from wildfires, prescribed burns and pile burns may affect your health by visiting the Colorado Department of Public Health website: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health>.

For additional information on this the San Juan National Forest prescribed fire program, visit [InciWeb](#). For information on current conditions and recreation opportunities on the San Juan National Forest, call (970) 247-4874, visit the [forest website](#), or follow us on social media ([Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)).

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