



Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests

Forest Service News Release

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Baldy Mountain Prescribed Fire Anticipated in April

Montrose, Colorado, April 18, 2024 — Fire management officials from the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) expect conditions to be favorable for conducting a 112-acre prescribed fire in Ouray County as early as the week of April 22. The burn unit consists of National Forest and private lands located approximately 2 miles southeast of Ridgway. Interagency fire crews will ignite the burn using an unmanned aircraft system and hand ignitions.

The prescribed burn is being conducted as part of the [Baldy Mountain Landscape Resiliency and Habitat Improvement Project](#). Planning and implementation have been a collaborative effort between the GMUG National Forests' Ouray Ranger District, BLM-Uncompahgre Field Office, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the West Region Wildfire Council, the Mullin's Ranch and multiple other landowners. The project area includes lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, BLM and private landowners. The National Forest Foundation (NFF) has been a key partner in coordinating the project.

Project objectives are to reduce the severity of wildfires, protect local communities, create higher quality wildlife habitat and improve the health and resiliency of the landscape. Prescribed burning reintroduces and maintains fire within a fire-dependent ecosystem, helping to stabilize and improve the resiliency of forest conditions while increasing public safety. Once ignited, firefighters will monitor and patrol the units until they declare the fire out.

Air quality will be closely monitored to mitigate smoke-related impacts to communities. Residual smoke may be visible in the Ouray, Ridgway, Colona and Montrose communities for several days.

The safety of firefighters and the public is the most important factor considered when planning prescribed fires. Fire managers have developed a detailed prescribed fire plan and obtained smoke permits from the State of Colorado. For more information on how prescribed fire smoke may affect your health, please visit <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health>.

The public is reminded not to call 911 or emergency services if smoke is visible in specific burn areas. For updates on the Baldy Mountain Prescribed burn, visit the Inciweb page [here](#). Prescribed burn updates will also be posted on the [GMUG Fire Info](#) page and www.westslopefireinformation.com.

For information and updates on current fire restrictions, conditions, and recreation opportunities on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, visit the [forest website](#). Connect with us on social media ([Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)).

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The Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre & Gunnison National Forests manage approximately 3 million acres of land in Southwest Colorado within Delta, Garfield, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Mesa, Mineral, Montrose, Ouray, Saguache, San Juan and San Miguel counties.

