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News Release

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Flaming Gorge –Vernal Ranger District Prepares for Spring Prescribed Burning

Vernal, Utah ... This spring the Flaming Gorge-Vernal Ranger District will be burning several thousand acres around the Red Canyon Visitor Center.

Prescribed burning requires the right environmental conditions to ensure the proper affect to the vegetation and the soils. Forest staff will monitor the project area and initiate this project when environmental conditions are met.

Local forest fire staff will execute the prescribed burning.

Ponderosa pine forests are adapted to frequent fire. The average natural fire return interval in the ponderosa pine forests on the Flaming Gorge-Vernal Ranger District of the Ashley National Forest is around 20 years.

The thick bark of mature ponderosa pine trees allows most of them to survive and thrive with frequent surface fire, which keeps forests healthy by reducing fuels, increasing species diversity, and creating a mosaic of vegetative structures that is also a benefit to wildlife.

In the absence of frequent fire, ponderosa pine seedling establishment and survival decrease and fuels build up to levels that cause high-intensity wildfires that can result in heavy mortality across entire ponderosa pine stands.

Conducting prescribed burns at regular intervals benefit ponderosa pine ecosystems and create healthier, more resilient forests.

