



Santa Fe National Forest

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News Release

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Santa Fe National Forest Expects to Conduct Prescribed Burn in Santa Fe Watershed This Week

SANTA FE, NM – Oct. 11, 2016 – For Immediate Release. After a comprehensive review of expected conditions, including weather, winds and ventilation, the Santa Fe National Forest plans to begin the previously announced prescribed burn in the Santa Fe Watershed tomorrow, Oct. 12, with blacklining and hand ignitions, followed by aerial ignitions on Thursday, Oct. 13.

The decision to proceed with the 2,435-acre treatment area was made in consultation with the City of Santa Fe, New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) and New Mexico Department of Health. Smoke monitors on Upper Canyon Road and at the Harold L. Runnels Building at 1190 S. St. Francis Drive will help officials assess impacts and determine whether there is a need to issue health alerts throughout the duration of the prescribed burn.

The planning area, located just north of McClure Reservoir, was initially treated with mechanical thinning, mastication and prescribed fire from 2006 through 2009. The burn planned for this week is a maintenance burn under the *Santa Fe Municipal Watershed Plan 2010-2029*, a collaboration between the USDA Forest Service, City of Santa Fe, Santa Fe Watershed Association and The Nature Conservancy that provides guidelines for forest restoration, water management and public education.

Prescribed fires are one of the most effective tools available to resource managers for restoring fire-adapted ecosystems. Cooler weather and residual monsoonal moisture make the fall season a historically good time to conduct prescribed burns. The Santa Fe Watershed prescribed burn is designed to improve and protect the Santa Fe Watershed, a primary water source for the City of Santa Fe, by removing dead fuels from the forest floor and reducing the risk of high-intensity wildfire. Prescribed fires are managed with firefighter and public safety as the first priority.

Smoke from the prescribed burn in the Watershed will likely be visible from Santa Fe, Tesuque, Glorieta, Pecos Canyon, El Dorado and I-25. Although the National Weather Service is forecasting surface winds in the 10- to 15-mph range this week, which should push the smoke out of Santa Fe, smoke may linger in the Santa Fe and Tesuque areas on Thursday and Friday mornings following ignitions on Wednesday and Thursday.



Smoke-sensitive individuals, including young children and the elderly, and people with respiratory problems are encouraged to take precautionary measures. Information on air quality and protecting your health can be found online at the New Mexico Department of Health's website at <https://nmtracking.org/fire>.

For additional information about this prescribed burn, please contact the Española Ranger Station at 505-753-7331.

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