

Forest Service prepares for pile burning opportunities in western Boulder and Gilpin counties

BOULDER, Colo. (Jan. 12, 2022) – As winter conditions settle in across Colorado's northern Front Range, the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests will work to burn slash piles resulting from fuels reduction and hazardous tree removal projects across the area. This season's pile burning will begin as early as next week, and will continue through the spring, depending on weather and conditions.

Fuels reduction projects involve mechanical or hand thinning forested areas to improve species diversity and wildlife habitat while reducing the risk of severe wildfire impacts to watersheds. While larger logs are removed for commercial use when possible, unmarketable limbs, saplings, and brush are piled up for burning in winter conditions. Hand piles result from crews using chainsaws to thin the forest and then piling the sawn material; machine piles result from using logging equipment and primarily consist of tree limbs left behind after marketable material is removed.

Piles are only ignited when fire managers are confident that the project can be undertaken safely and successfully. Snow cover, fuel moisture, precipitation, wind, temperature, and available firefighter staffing are all considered before beginning a pile burn. Piles which are ready for burning are prioritized based on elevation, aspect, access, and proximity to homes. Smoke, flames, and glowing embers are often visible, and are a normal part of pile burning operations. Snow helps contain the piles and firefighters monitor the area during and after the burn. Public and firefighter safety is always the number-one priority in burning operations.

Prescribed fire smoke may affect your health; for more information see <http://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/wood-smoke-and-health/>.

To get the latest updates on when and where burning will occur, follow us on Twitter and Facebook @usfsarp. To receive our updates, send an e-mail to katherine.armstrong@usda.gov and provide the general area you are interested in (i.e. Boulder, Gilpin, Clear Creek, Grand). For a complete list of locations where burning will occur this season, visit our InciWeb page at <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4648>.

Areas in Boulder and Gilpin counties where pile burning may occur this winter and spring:

- **Yankee Hill 14-17, 20, 24:** 300 machine piles **General Location:** Near Pickle Gulch and Cold Springs campgrounds on west side of Highway 119
- **Lump Gulch 18:** 1,500 hand piles **General Location:** Gilpin County a half-mile north of Rollinsville on Westside of Hwy 119 Peak to Peak
- **Lump Gulch 29, 30:** 150 hand piles **General Location:** Gilpin County west side of Lump Gulch Road, 1.5 miles south of Rollinsville on west side of Highway 119
- **Lump Gulch 35:** 500 hand piles **General Location:** Gilpin County South Side of Gilpin Rd, 3 miles south of Rollinsville on west side of Hwy 119 Peak to Peak
- **Lump Gulch 35:** 150 machine piles **General Location:** Gilpin County south side of Gilpin Road, 3 miles south of Rollinsville on west side of Highway 119
- **Lump Gulch 38:** 500 hand piles **General Location:** Gilpin County off South Beaver Rd (South Side) mile east of Highway 119

- **James Creek RFB Unit 1:** 800 hand piles **General Location:** 1.5 miles northwest of Jamestown, west of CR87
- **James Creek RFB Units 6, 8:** 5,000 hand piles **General location:** Half mile south of Jamestown or quarter mile east of Bar K Ranch
- **James Creek Unit RFB Unit 10:** 1,500 hand piles **General location:** 2 miles east of Peak to Peak Highway on CR52
- **James Creek RFB 17:** 1,425 hand piles **General Location:** Half-mile north Cal-Wood Education Center
- **James Creek Unit M1701:** 8,000 hand piles **General Location:** East of Hwy 72 near Peaceful Valley
- **St Vrain 12A, 12B, 12d:** 50 piles **General Location:** In the town of Meeker Park
- **St Vrain Units 15a, 15b:** 6,000 hand piles **General Location:** 5 miles west of Lyons, north side of Ralph Price Reservoir (Button Rock)
- **Forsythe II Units 38, 45:** 500 hand piles **General Location:** 1.5 miles northwest of Wondervu, west side of Gross Reservoir