



Zion National Park News Release

September 4, 2007

For Immediate Release

Ron Terry 435 772-0160

David Eaker 435 772-7811

07-25

Zion National Park Asks for Comments on an Environmental Assessment

Zion National Park is seeking comments on an Environmental Assessment (EA) that assesses the impacts of the aerial application of herbicide on the area burned in the Dakota Hill Complex Fire. The lightning caused fires started on July 15, 2007 and burned 5,858 acres within the park. The EA also analyzes the impacts of an herbicide re-treatment on a portion of the Kolob Fire that burned in 2006.

The proposed aerial application of herbicide would include up to 3,161 acres for the Dakota Hill Complex and re-treatment of up to 6,739 acres for the Kolob Fire. Treatment for the Dakota Hill Complex is proposed for late fall 2007. Re-treatment for Kolob is proposed to begin after December 2007. Because of the remote and rough terrain in the burn area, helicopter application of the herbicide is proposed. Sensitive areas would not be sprayed including: 300-feet either side of riparian corridors and surface water; within ½-mile of Mexican spotted owl protected area centers; and in areas where control plots would be established to monitor the effectiveness of the spray treatments.

The treatment is intended to interrupt the grass-fire cycle that is perpetuated by cheatgrass, a non-native, highly flammable grass. Cheatgrass increases in abundance and density after fire. As cheatgrass continues to invade and increase after each fire, the time between fires becomes shorter.

This environmental assessment will be available for public review and comment until October 5, 2007. The document is available for review: online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>; at public libraries in Springdale, Hurricane, St. George, and Kanab; or by calling the park at 435-772-0211. If you wish to comment on the environmental assessment, you may mail comments to: Zion National Park, Attn: Post-Fire Aerial Herbicide EA, Springdale, UT 84767 or post comments online at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment - including your personal identifying information - may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

-NPS-