



Saguaro National Park News Release

For Immediate Release

June 21, 2010

Contact: Fire Information Hotline (520) 733-5150

Prescribed Fire Planned in Rincon Mountains

Tucson, AZ – Saguaro National Park is planning to conduct a 423 acre prescribed burn on Mica Mountain in the Rincon Mountain District of the park in late June 2010. Ignition may begin as soon as June 24 and may continue for approximately four to five days. Ignition will occur only when environmental factors such as wind, temperature, and relative humidity are favorable.

The following temporary backcountry closures in the Rincon Mountain District will be effective beginning June 23, 2010. Trail closures will include Italian Spring (south of Park boundary), Cowhead Saddle, North Slope, Fire Loop, Spud Rock, Switchback, Mica Mountain, Mica Meadow, Bonita, Devils Bathtub, East Slope, Deerhead Spring, Turkey Creek (west of Park boundary), Heartbreak Ridge (north of Happy Valley Lookout), and Manning Camp (east of Douglas Springs intersection). Campground closures include Manning Camp, Grass Shack and Spud Rock. All off-trail areas within Saguaro National Park east of Douglas Springs and Manning Camp Trails are also closed.

Smoke will be visible from Redington Pass, Benson, and Happy Valley. Due to the location of the burn on the highest peak of the Rincon Mountains, smoke may be visible at times from parts of the Tucson Basin. Smoke may temporarily drift downhill overnight in the Redington, Rincon Creek, and San Pedro River Valley drainages.

Vegetation in the area is predominately ponderosa pine. Elevation in the area ranges from about 7,950 to 8,670 feet. Lightning-ignited fires have historically burned through the high elevation ponderosa pine forests of southeastern Arizona, but past fire suppression has created unnatural conditions with build-ups of downed trees and dense underbrush in many places. Fire managers use low to moderate intensity prescribed fires to maintain healthy forests in the Rincon Mountains and to prevent large intense wildfires.

For additional information, please call the park's fire information hotline at (520) 733-5150 or visit www.nps.gov/fire.