



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Florissant Fossil Beds
National Monument

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Florissant Fossil Beds News Release

Release date: Immediate
Release code: o801
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Date: 10/01/07

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument to Conduct Prescribed Burn on Northern Boundary of Monument

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument is planning to conduct a prescribed burn on the northern boundary of the Monument. The planned burn will cover up to 154 acres east of Teller County Road 1 in the vicinity of the Florissant Cemetery and Upper Twin Rock Road. The prescribed fire may take place as early as October 16th, 2007, or when weather and fuel conditions are favorable during October and the early part of November. It is difficult to project exact dates far in advance, as weather conditions dictate when burning can be conducted. Once started, the burning may last several days.

This prescribed fire is part of the Monument's ongoing fuel mitigation plan which has included thinning and pile burning in the past 5 years. The purpose of prescribed burning is to protect the Monument's neighbors from potentially large, high intensity fires by reducing hazardous fuels through low intensity prescribed fire.

National Park Service Fire Effects Monitors will be monitoring smoke output during all periods of burning and crews will limit the burn to no more than 40 acres per day to minimize the impacts from smoke to the surrounding community. No road closures are expected. Smoke will be visible from most areas in and around the Monument including Highway 24. Signs will be posted along roads if necessary with fire staff available to provide assistance and vehicle escorts if smoke impacts visibility. For safety purposes, park visitors will not be permitted to stop along the roadway or enter the area while burning operations are being conducted. Since these are scheduled events, it is not necessary to report these fires to Monument staff or the Sheriff's Office.

Exclusion of fire for the past century has resulted in unnaturally thick vegetation in some areas of the Monument, which increases the risks from wildfire. During the past 5 years, excess vegetation has been cut and piled by fire crews along the boundary and burned in the winter creating a reduced fuel zone around the Monument's boundaries. This prescribed fire will be a low intensity fire within this reduced fuel zone. These projects will help fire managers to restore the natural role of fire to the ecosystem and reduce the threat of fire moving from the Monument onto private lands.

These projects are being conducted in partnership with Rocky Mountain National Park and in association with the Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership, an interagency program with the Colorado State Forest Service and United States Forest Service, designed to reduce wildland fire risk through sustained fuel treatments along the Colorado Front Range

Safety factors, weather conditions, air quality and environmental regulations are continually monitored as part of any fire management operation. If you are interested in learning more about the Monument's fuel mitigation plans, please contact Jeff Wolin or Rick Wilson at Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument at 719-748-3253.