



National Park Service
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Grand Canyon National Park

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Grand Canyon News Release

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Update on North Rim Prescribed Fire Activity

Grand Canyon, Ariz. – Over the weekend, fire managers in Grand Canyon National Park began ignitions on the Range Prescribed Fire (Range Rx), located on the North Rim of the park. In addition, they resumed work on the Bright Angel Prescribed Fire (Bright Angel Rx), also located on the North Rim, which was partially completed earlier this year.

The Range Burn Unit is located due north of the North Rim developed area in between the Range Road (the w1a) and Highway 67 and consists primarily of first-entry, mixed conifer forest. The primary purposes of the Range Rx are to return fire to a fire-adapted ecosystem, reduce a heavy build up of large dead and down fuels and to decrease the risk of extreme fire behavior along Highway 67, the North Rim's primary egress route.

Hand ignitions on the western edge of the Range Rx began on Sunday and continued today. Crews are working in between the Range Road and the Arizona Trail and are having success in reducing large concentrations of heavy fuels. Ignitions are expected to continue for the next few days. However, it is likely that only part of the Range Rx will be completed at this time.

The Bright Angel Burn Unit consists of a series of small-acreage blocks in the near vicinity of the North Rim developed area. The primary purpose of the Bright Angel Rx is to create defensible space in and around the North Rim developed area by reducing accumulations of pine needles, pine cones and small-diameter branches and logs. While some of the Bright Angel Rx blocks were treated in the spring, weather conditions did not allow for the completion of this project prior to the seasonal opening of the North Rim.

Yesterday, fire crews treated one 21 acre block near the North Rim ball field, located approximately ½ mile north of Grand Canyon Lodge which is closed for the season. Within the next few weeks, fire crews may also treat an additional five acre block near the North Rim helibase.

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Yesterday, smoke from these fires lifted and moved to the east and northeast during the day, settling into the canyon and North Rim drainages as temperatures dropped in the evening. This pattern is expected to continue for the next several days with smoke lifting out of the canyon and drainages by about noon each day. Coordination with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality is on-going.

For more on the Range and Bright Angel Prescribed Fires, please contact Grand Canyon Public Affairs Specialist Shannan Marcak at 928-638-7958. To learn more about Grand Canyon National Park's Fire Management program, please visit the park's web site at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm>.

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