



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rushmore
National Memorial

13000 Highway 244,
Building 31, Suite 1
Keystone, SD 57751

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 12, 2010

Navnit Singh
605-574-3115

Mount Rushmore National Memorial News Release

Mount Rushmore Finalizes Action Plan to Address Mountain Pine Beetle Infestation

(Keystone, S.D.) In response to the current Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic, Mount Rushmore National Memorial has finalized an action plan that addresses the presence of mountain pine beetle in the Memorial. A National Park Service (NPS) Rapid Resource Assessment Team (RRAT) assessed the situation at the Memorial and worked with area specialists and agencies to develop a plan that would protect the memorial from wild fire, and would slow, and hopefully mitigate the spread of the pine beetle, while protecting some of the old growth forest of the memorial.

The plan recommends an immediate response to the current insect outbreak in order to take action prior to this year's summer flight of pine beetle. The plan prescribes thinning the forest to a prescription consistent with the memorial's Fire Management Plan, protecting high value scenic vista trees, applying low intensity prescribed fire, and treating green infested trees to contain the spread of the insect, and make the memorial more fire resistant.

Public comments spanned a range of suggestions including take no action, and thin most of the large trees of the forest. The final plan strikes a balance between these two extremes. The final plan was developed in consideration of public comment, and is available on the NPS Park Planning website, <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>.

Through the National Park Service's Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) federal funding, Mount Rushmore will be able to implement the plan within the next few months. Mount Rushmore also received project funding through the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Health Management Fund. Forest thinning and preventative spraying of high value trees should begin in June and July.

- NPS -
www.nps.gov/moru