



Zion National Park News Release

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For Immediate Release
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Clear Trap Prescribed Fire Planned in Zion National Park

Zion National Park Fire Management Officials plan to ignite the 654 acre Clear Trap Prescribed Fire (Rx) sometime during the period of **September 26 - October 15, 2011**. The exact date of the ignition will depend on weather and fuel conditions and the availability of firefighting resources. This prescribed fire project is located along the eastern boundary of the park, adjacent to the Zion Ponderosa Ranch. The objectives of the prescribed fire are to provide protection for surrounding property and structures by reducing the fire hazard along the park boundary and to restore fire to its natural role in the ponderosa pine forest ecosystem.

This second entry burn (the area was last burned in the fall of 2004) will begin with a hand-ignited blacklining operation along the parks boundary to create a buffer zone and reduce the chances for the fire to cross control lines. The remaining portion of the burn unit will then be ignited by using hand ignition techniques. Once ignited, the fire will actively burn for 5-7 days and then smolder for several more days. The fire will be closely monitored until declared out. Numerous interagency resources will be on scene to implement the Rx including firefighters, wildland engines and a water tender. In addition, a Type 3 helicopter may be available if needed.

Short-term impacts include smoky conditions possible for 5-7 days and the temporary closure of trails in the vicinity of the burn area. Forecasted weather conditions should provide good smoke dispersal, but there is potential for smoke in the valleys during the nights and early mornings. During ignition, the East Rim Trail system (including Deertrap Mountain Trail, Cable Mountain Trail, and Stave Spring Trailhead) will be closed. The trail system will remain closed until fire personnel have inspected the area and can ensure the safety of the public and park personnel.

The region around the Clear Trap Rx has been identified by state and federal land management agency administrators as one of six Wildland/Urban Interface Focus Areas requiring priority fuels treatment in the Color County Interagency Fire Management Area. This region, known as the East Zion Focus Area, incorporates private and federal lands, and is administered by the State of Utah Division of Forestry Fire & State Lands, Cedar City District Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Zion National Park (NPS).

For more information about this or other prescribed fire projects in Zion, call 435-772-7811 or visit our website at www.nps.gov/zion/naturescience/fire-management-homepage.htm