



NEWS RELEASE

US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR ■ BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
TAOS FIELD OFFICE ■ 226 CRUZ ALTA RD ■ TAOS NM 87571-5983

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For Additional Information

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Prescribed Burn Planned for Taos County

TAOS – Fire. At its worst, it ravages and destroys. But fire also nourishes soil, renews plants and shrubs, and even helps some trees reproduce. Fire helps the land stay healthy.

Where fire is shut out, the land and its inhabitants often suffer. Vegetation may become so dense that wildlife cannot graze, or so overgrown that the thick fuels feed fires until they become unusually large, dangerous, and threaten people, property and natural resources.

This is when land managers plan or “prescribe” a fire for a certain area. Under carefully planned weather and fuel conditions, managers use different methods to light fires. Drip torches, special cans firefighters use to tickle droplets of flaming fuel onto vegetation, are one such method.

A prescribed burn that includes 1200 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-managed land and approximately 1800 acres of private land has been planned by the BLM - Taos Field Office, and local landowners. The location of the prescribed burn is off of Highway 64, approximately 5 miles east of Tres Piedras and 9 miles west of Rio Grande Gorge, according to Ron Huntsinger, field manager of the BLM field office in Taos.

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The Torres Ranch Prescribed Burn is tentatively planned before July 15th. Pat Pacheco, Fire Management Officer at the Taos Field Office, stated that the prescription calls for hot dry weather conditions before this fire can be lit. Pacheco added, "It is possible we will never achieve the weather conditions needed for this prescription and will have to cancel." The Torres Ranch Prescribed Burn is intended to improve mule deer habitat, range and watershed health, and increase herbaceous growth.

Extra fire suppression will be on-hand to ensure an added buffer of security. Prescribed burns of this type usually call for one fire engine and 10 people for suppression. During this prescribed burn, there will be 3 fire engines and approximately 15-20 people.

The BLM manages about 264 million acres of public lands and provides fire protection for 388 million acres. The agency is responsible for managing public lands and resources to ensure multiple use and yield based on long-term needs for renewable and non-renewable resources.

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