



Bureau of Land Management

Utah
News

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Ray Mesa II & Devil Canyon Winter Pile Burns

Ray Mesa and Devil Canyon are home to some of the last old growth ponderosa pine stands within the boundaries of the Utah BLM Canyon Country District. This winter season wildland fire personnel will burn thousands of small piles of cut and thinned pinion and juniper trees on several hundred acres of BLM land. The burning will take place while the ground surface is very saturated or covered in snow.

Fuel break projects designed to protect nearby communities and ponderosa pine stands have been ongoing in the project areas for many years. Dense stands of encroaching pinyon pine and juniper trees growing into the canopies of the ponderosa trees were previously thinned and piled. Completing the pile burning is a critical step to help protect the communities and the ponderosa trees from high intensity wildfires and to restore the pine stands to a more historic natural condition.

Ponderosa pine is a serotinous species; meaning it is naturally fire tolerant and requires fire to propagate. Low intensity fire is a natural and critical component to the health of the species. Fire cleanses the understory vegetative litter, cycles nutrients back into the soil and releases seeds from pine cones. Over time the trees in a healthy ponderosa pine stand appear open and park-like.

The removal of encroaching pinion/juniper and prescribed fire fulfills a twofold effect by creating a fuel break for nearby homes and will help prevent a high intensity fire from burning this significant BLM resource.

For additional info please visit www.utahfireinfo.gov or contact Jason Kirks at 435-259-2184

