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News Release

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Kaibab National Forest continues forest restoration project north of Parks; log truck traffic to increase this month along Forest Road 141

Williams, Ariz., April 3, 2018—For Immediate Release. With the return of spring weather, log trucks will again be able to access and remove trees, chips and other material from the 1,039-acre Community Tank Timber Sale area north of the Parks community where forest restoration work has been occurring since last fall.

The Community Tank project is located about 11 miles north of Parks just south of Forest Road 171 and west of Kendrick Mountain Wilderness near Pumpkin Center on the Williams Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest. Harvesting operations began last September, with about 800 acres having been treated to date. The forest restoration work is expected to continue through July, barring weather or other delays.

Residents of Parks and visitors recreating in the area can expect to see an increasing number of log trucks traveling along the haul route to and from the project beginning this month. Approximately 14 trucks per day may be visiting the site in order to remove downed trees and other restoration byproducts.

The major haul route is from Forest Road 151 and FR 194 to FR 141, which travels through the Parks community, and then on to Interstate 40. It is possible that there could be a significant number of trucks hauling timber through this area until project completion.

By May, foresters with the Kaibab National Forest anticipate an increase in tree felling operations at the site in order to complete the remaining acres of restoration work within the 1,039-acre project area. As this thinning work is implemented, residents and visitors can expect to see heavy, mechanized equipment and workers on site and a continued presence of log trucks along the haul route.

Members of the public are urged to use extreme caution near timber removal and hauling operations. Besides the presence of heavy equipment and log trucks, there will also be trees being felled and stacked into log decks, which can be unstable. Visitors to the area should not camp near nor climb on them, as they often shift and have the possibility of collapse. Motorists should be aware of the likelihood of encountering a log truck along haul routes and are encouraged to drive with safety in mind at all times.

The objectives of the Community Tank Timber Sale are to reduce fuel loading and the potential for future high-intensity wildfires and to improve forest health and watershed conditions. Another important component of the effort is to work toward restoration of historic grasslands and meadows, which support

a variety of wildlife species including pronghorn antelope. As a result of historical livestock grazing, fire suppression, changes in wildlife populations, climate change, and other factors, grasslands and meadows have experienced substantial encroachment and infilling by woody species over the last century.

“Much of this area was open meadow historically. The restoration work we are doing at Community Tank is improving habitat quality and connectivity,” said Tom Dauenhauer, timber sale administrator, Kaibab National Forest. “We are already seeing much more frequent visitation to and use of the area by pronghorn since we started this project. That is a great benefit to be added to all of the other community protection and forest health benefits of this work.”

The tree harvesting efforts occurring on the Williams Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest are part of the overarching restoration work associated with the Four Forest Restoration Initiative. The goal of the Four Forest Restoration Initiative is to accelerate the pace and scale of restoration within 2.4 million acres of ponderosa pine forest in northern Arizona to increase resilience and proper functioning. Restoring this fire-adapted ecosystem is accomplished with a suite of restoration activities, from watershed maintenance and habitat improvements to prescribed burning and thinning.

For additional information on the Four Forest Restoration Initiative, visit www.fs.usda.gov/4fri. Members of the public can find additional information on the Kaibab National Forest through the following sources:

- Twitter: www.twitter.com/KaibabNF (Text ‘follow kaibabnf’ to 40404 to receive text messages.)
- Kaibab website: www.fs.usda.gov/kaibab
- Kaibab Facebook: www.facebook.com/KaibabNF

A map of the Community Tank Timber Sale project location is included below.

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