

NEWS RELEASE

Kaibab National Forest



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Fire managers to burn piles as winter weather moves into area

WILLIAMS, Ariz. – Kaibab National Forest fire managers plan to begin burning slash piles in multiple locations across both the Williams and Tusayan Ranger Districts as an approaching weather system is forecast to bring rain, snow and cooler temperatures to northern Arizona over the weekend. Piles are the result of past forest health and restoration treatments and are primarily composed of small-diameter trees, branches, twigs, pine needles and other remaining tree slash. The goal of pile burning is to remove fuels in the forest, lessening the potential for spread of future wildland fires and improving overall forest health conditions. In order to limit the chances of fire from a pile burn spreading into nearby trees or other fuels, fire managers often ignite piles just prior to or during snow or rain events.

Williams Ranger District

There are six areas of slash piles on the Williams Ranger District that fire managers plan to ignite this winter.

- As early as today, fire managers are looking to burn 56 acres of piles on the south side of Davenport Hill north of Forest Road 140. Smoke from the pile burn may be visible in the Sherwood Forest Estates subdivision and from Interstate 40.
- There are about 85 acres of piles near the Elephant Rocks Golf Course in Williams that are scheduled to be burned once snow flies. When these piles are ignited, residents of the Highland Meadows subdivision may notice some lingering smoke overnight.
- The large slash pile at Moonset Pit in Parks will need to be burned once sufficient snow is on the ground. During much of the year, the Forest Service allows local residents to use the pit to dispose of woody debris from private property as a way to encourage creating defensible space. Each winter, the pit needs to be burned in order to allow that community service to continue. When the Moonset Pit pile is burned, smoke will be visible for several days due to its large size.
- About 26 acres of piles are scheduled to be burned in the Brannigan Park area east of Parks. Minimal smoke impacts are anticipated.
- There are 197 acres of piles in the McCracken project area that will be burned when conditions are appropriate. These piles are located near the junction of County Highway 73 and Forest Road 110 about 9 miles south of Williams. When the piles are burned, localized smoke impacts are likely, but these will dissipate rapidly.
- Fire managers hope to burn 124 acres of piles on High School Hill just east of Williams once there is sufficient snow. Depending on conditions, the piles may be burned in segments over multiple days or all on a single day. Smoke from this pile burn will be visible from Williams and Interstate 40.

Tusayan Ranger District

Fire managers plan to burn two areas of slash piles on the Tusayan Ranger District as soon as conditions are appropriate.

- There are 100 acres of piles just west of Grand Canyon Airport. Fire managers will look for the opportunity to burn the piles when there is an east wind, which will push smoke away from the airport and the Town of Tusayan. Given that east winds are predicted Monday, fire managers hope to begin ignitions then.
- About 12 miles east of Tusayan near Russell Tank, there are another 100 acres of piles that need to be burned. Given the location of these piles, impacts to Tusayan are not anticipated.

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