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News Release

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4FRI thinning project begins on Williams Ranger District

Williams, Ariz., Aug. 19, 2015—For Immediate Release. Tree removal has begun on a 1,646-acre project on the Williams Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest associated with the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI).

The Pomeroy Task Order area is located in the vicinity of KA Hill just south of Scholz Lake and about 5 miles south of Interstate 40. Pomeroy is part of the 4FRI Phase One Stewardship Contract held by Good Earth Power AZ LLC.

As thinning work is implemented, residents and visitors can expect to see heavy equipment and workers in the project area and along haul routes. Log trucks may begin hauling as early as this week. The haul route will be from Forest Road 13 west to FR 109, north on FR 109 to FR 141, and then along FR 141 through McDougal Flat until reaching the Good Earth Power mill located near Bootlegger Crossing.

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.

A portion of the Overland Trail passes through the project area. Although the trail will not be closed, users can expect to see signs posted along the trail advising them of the work being completed. Safety signs have also been posted on roads in the area to inform members of the public about the operations.

Forest managers said they hoped at least 500 acres of thinning could be completed within the 1,646-acre project area before any snow falls.

The objectives of the thinning operations in the Pomeroy Task Order area are to reduce fuel loading and the potential for future high-intensity wildfires and to improve wildlife habitat and overall forest health.

The goal of the 4FRI 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 Kaibab national Forest, visit www.fs.usda.gov/kaibab. For additional information on the 4FRI, visit www.fs.usda.gov/4fri.

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