



Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands

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Sandia Ranger District Plans Pile Burns

Starting as early February 14th

Albuquerque, NM – February 8, 2022 – Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands fire crews are preparing to proceed with pile burning on the Sandia Ranger District in the vicinity of Sulphur and Hondo Canyon pending suitable conditions.

The Sulphur Canyon Project area is located within and adjacent to the Sulphur and Cienega Picnic Areas accessed by the Sandia Crest Highway/NM Hwy 536. The Hondo Canyon Project Area is located south of Cienega Canyon and adjacent to the Sandia Mountain Wilderness area to the west and residential areas to the east. Sulphur Canyon (136 acres) and Hondo Canyon (170) project areas cover approximately 306 acres of dispersed piles. Visitors should avoid the area during prescribed burn operations for their safety, and the safety of the firefighters. See attached project maps.

Winter is an optimal time to burn piled slash and woody debris from earlier forest restoration work because snow on the ground keeps the fire from spreading to adjacent vegetation. Generally, pile burns produce less smoke and burn with less intensity than broadcast burns across a larger landscape. Fire personnel will monitor the burn pit until it is completely out.

Smoke may be visible in the surrounding areas of Tijeras, Edgewood, Moriarty and Albuquerque between February 14th – March 31st. In some areas, smoke may settle into lower elevations overnight due to fluctuating atmospheric temperatures that produce nighttime inversions.

Each prescribed fire is designed to accomplish specific objectives and is managed with firefighter and public safety as the highest priority.

The Cibola NF & NGs manages prescribed fires in compliance with New Mexico state regulations on air quality and smoke management. Smoke-sensitive individuals and people with respiratory problems or heart disease are encouraged to take precautionary measures. Information on air quality and protecting your health can be found online at the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) [Environmental Public Health Tracking \(EPHT\) website](#).

All fire updates will be posted on the [Cibola NF & NGs website](#), [New Mexico Fire Information website](#) and on the Cibola [Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#) pages.

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