



Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands

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Wildfire Preparedness is Year-Round: *Don't be Afraid, Take Preventive Action!*

Albuquerque, NM – October 12, 2021– With fall comes the start of another season – prescribed fire season. As we begin smelling smoke, the Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands, the Fire Adapted New Mexico learning network and in cooperation with partners want to remind residents and visitors of the important role that fire plays in our forests. Continuing with our **“Wildfire Preparedness is Year-Round”** campaign, our message for October and Halloween is **“Don't be Afraid, Take Preventive Action.”**

Fire-adapted forests across New Mexico historically experienced low-severity wildfire in a way that protected them from widespread mortality and land-type conversion across large acreages. While it is essential that we suppress fires to protect homes and communities, our effectiveness at suppressing all fires over the last 100-plus years has largely removed an important natural disturbance from fire-adapted ecosystems. A healthy forest is a resilient forest that undergoes fire occurrences on a regular basis.

To reintroduce low-severity fire to fire-adapted forests, land managers across New Mexico use prescribed fire under carefully planned conditions that typically align with spring and fall weather. Prescribed fire may be preceded by thinning to reduce tree densities and ensure low-severity fire behavior. Thinning in combination with low-severity prescribed fire is effective at reducing forest fuels and protecting forests and communities from the negative effects of high-severity wildfire.

Prescribed fire, including both pile burning and broadcast burning, achieves a wide range of management objectives, including reducing wildfire risk, improving the growth of native plants in the understory, creating wildlife habitat and protecting water sources. Prescribed fire season is an important time for land managers and private landowners to make progress on the shared goal of creating communities that are better adapted to wildfire.

New Mexico wildland fire management agencies generally post information about upcoming prescribed burns on [NM Fire Information](#) and on their Facebook and Twitter (@nmfireinfo) pages. To learn more about prescribed fire:

- Review the [Prescribed Burning Act](#) passed by the New Mexico State Legislature in 2021
- Find out more about [prescribed fire on private land](#) in New Mexico
- Get involved with the [New Mexico Prescribed Fire Council](#)

The Cibola NF & NGs is working with the [Carson](#) and [Santa Fe](#) National Forests, [New Mexico Forestry Division](#), [Forest Stewards Guild](#), [Fire Adapted NM](#), the [National Park Service](#) and [Bureau of Land Management New Mexico State Office](#) to build a 2021 wildfire preparedness calendar and share the message across multiple platforms, including social media, webinars and community events. Bookmark the [wildfire preparedness webpage](#) to follow the campaign throughout the year.

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