



Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands

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Crews Begin Winter Pile Burning on the Sandia Ranger District

Starting as early as January 17 through March

ALBUQUERQUE, NM – Jan. 16, 2024 – Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands fire crews are preparing to implement prescribed fire as early as January 17 through March on 60 acres of piles within the previously announced Sulphur unit of the Sandia Piles RX Plan. The pile burn area is located in the Sandia east mountains, north of I-40, west of NM-14 and south of NM-536. **See map attached.** Smoke may be visible from Albuquerque, Tijeras and Edgewood.

Ignition will depend upon agency administrator approval and conditions within the ranges outlined in the prescribed burn plan. Each prescribed fire is designed to accomplish specific objectives and is managed with firefighter and public safety as the highest priority. Fire managers use prescribed fire to improve forest health, remove hazardous fuels, increase firefighter safety, enhance wildlife habitat, and protect communities and watersheds.

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. The Cibola NF & NGs manages all prescribed fires in compliance with New Mexico state air quality and smoke management regulations. However, smoke may settle into drainages and lower elevations at night but is expected to dissipate as daytime temperatures increase.

Information on air quality and protecting your health can be found online at the www.airnow.gov/. 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](#).

Implementation announcements and updates on prescribed fire projects will be posted on [New Mexico Fire Information](#) and on the [Cibola NF & NGs website](#), [Cibola Facebook](#) and [Cibola Twitter](#) sites.

For more information on the Sulphur Canyon prescribed fire pile burn, contact the Sandia Ranger District Office: 505-281-3304 or Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands Supervisor's Office: 505-346-3900.

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