



# Pikes Peak Fire Learning Network

## About Prescribed Fire

- Prescribed fire and pile burning, combined with mechanical and/or hand thinning treatments, are effective land management tools used to reduce the accumulation of hazardous fuels including old and dense vegetation.
- Minimizing hazardous fuels reduces fire intensity and the risk of catastrophic wildfires. In turn, this action minimizes the risk to firefighters and improves public safety. Additional benefits include improved wildlife habitat, healthy and resilient landscapes and watersheds, and a step towards the long-term maintenance of ecosystems.
- When a prescribed fire project is implemented, it is conducted under very specific parameters, which are identified in a detailed prescribed fire plan that is developed as a result of years of planning and utilizing the best science available.
- Daily weather conditions play a key role in whether a prescribed fire project can be accomplished or not. This is one reason why prescribed fires get cancelled and why it is commonly difficult to predict the exact day a burn will be implemented. Fire managers evaluate conditions and forecasted weather to make the best decision as to when to burn.
- There are many activities that take place before any fire is lit. These activities include but are not limited to:
  - Monitoring weather for the area the prescribed fire will take place. These are called spot weather forecasts that tell fire managers what the current and expected weather conditions are for the area they will be burning.
  - Fuel monitoring is where the plant materials of various sizes at the project site are tested to see how dry they are. This helps fire managers determine if it's either too wet or too dry to burn
  - Firefighters put in control lines to contain the fire to the project area
  - Coordinating with neighboring agencies to ensure they are aware of the prescribed fire, utilized any resources they want to participate and address any concerns they may have
  - Outreach to communities and homeowners is done to ensure folks are aware of the prescribed fire and address any concerns
  - Coordinate with Colorado Air Pollution and Control Division on managing potential smoke impacts.





## Pikes Peak Fire Learning Network

- The day of the prescribed fire there are many things going on as well.
  - Gathering up on the resources (engines, lighters, holders, hose, water pumps, etc.)
  - Briefing all those participating. This briefing provides the folks on the prescribed fire the plans for the day, who's doing what, and timeframes for the day
  - The “burn boss” goes through a “Go/No Go” checklist before starting any ignitions
  - After resources are in position and the “burn” is a go, a test fire is set to check if the conditions are right
  - The ignitors put fire on the ground in a way that the fire carries through the project area in a way that firefighters can control.
  - After the prescribed fire is completed, resources patrol the next few days to ensure that the fire stays within the containment or control lines.
- Adequate resources are planned for the prescribed fire project and ensures that resources are at levels that can handle fire response. Fire managers do not pull resources from wildfire incidents to implement prescribed fire projects.
- Pikes Peak Fire Learning Network is a collaborative group established to bring local and regional partners together to collectively identify and implement strategies for the safe, effective and appropriate use of fire for forest management.

