



## NEWS RELEASE

### Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests & Thunder Basin National Grassland

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**Date: April 29, 2009**

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#### **Opportunity to Comment** **Laramie District South Wildland Urban Interface Project**

(Laramie, April 29, 2009) – – The U.S. Forest Service proposes to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire by removing dead and dying trees near private lands. The Laramie District South Wildland-urban Interface (WUI) is located approximately 30 miles southwest of Laramie, Wyoming on the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests.

The WUI is within the larger *Shellrock Bark Beetle and Fuels Reduction Project* analysis area. The District Ranger decided to complete this project first because of public concerns about the dead and dying trees from the beetle epidemic fueling fires adjacent to the WUIs. The WUIs include: 1) Wold Tract; 2) Miller Lake; 3) Ox Yoke; 4) Gramm/SU Cabin Group; 5) Bear Creek-Beehive SU Cabin; 6) Fox Park; and 7) Chimney Park Boy Scout Camp.

Approximately 554 acres of beetle-infected trees would be cut to reduce the amount and continuity of fuels near the WUIs. Dead and dying trees, underbrush, and limbs that could carry fire up to tree crowns would be removed, as appropriate. In some immature lodgepole pine stands less desirable trees would be cut to thin the stand, improving stand health and allowing timber trees to grow. Construction of 0.8 miles of temporary road and use of 1.5 miles of existing non-system roads are needed to

implement the project, but would be closed after operations. Implementation would take two to three years starting as early as the summer of 2009.

The *Laramie District South Wildland-urban Interface* scoping document is available at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/mbr/projects/fuels/index.shtml>. As a Healthy Forests Restoration Act project, this analysis is subject to a predecisional objection process (36 CFR 218) where only those who submit “specific written comments” on the proposed project during this 30-day comment period will be eligible to file an objection after the completion of the Environmental Assessment. ***This comment period represents the only opportunity for the public to comment on this proposal prior to the objection process.*** The opportunity to comment ends 30 days following the date of publication of a legal notice (§215.6(a)(2)) in the Laramie Boomerang, anticipated to be April 30, 2009. Please contact Melissa Martin of the Laramie Ranger District at (307) 745-2371 for additional information.

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