



NEWS RELEASE

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
Carson Ranger District
1536 S. Carson Street
Carson City NV 89701

Contact: Maureen Easton, 775-882-2766

For Immediate Release on February 26, 2009 - Stop Date is April 1, 2009

Forest Service Reduces Fuels and Improves Wildlife Habitat

Carson City, Nevada...The Forest Service recently completed the first phase of a 300-acre fuels reduction and wildlife improvement project in the Jack's Valley Wildlife Management Area south of Carson City. The Wildlife area is managed by the Forest Service and the Nevada Department of Wildlife as critical winter range for mule deer.

The Jack's Valley Management Area is an increasingly important winter refuge for deer as along the Carson Front, which is challenged by urban development and wildfires. The area is composed primarily of dense stands of bitterbrush and sagebrush; both are important forage and cover for mule deer. To improve habitat for deer, small interior sections of brush were thinned throughout the Wildlife area.

"The area's vegetation has grown old and lost a lot of the nutritional value that mule deer depend upon during the winter months," said Maureen Easton, Carson Ranger District Wildlife Biologist. Jack's Valley is considered critical mule deer habitat. The landscape was thinned in a mosaic pattern to provide adequate protective cover, while stimulating resprouting to improve foraging capability.

The overgrown vegetation had also created a fuels hazard to Jack's Valley and the properties that surround the Wildlife area, including Alpine View and Indian Hills' residential areas. "The treatments were located behind homes to create a fuelbreak," stated Steve Howell, Carson Ranger District Fuels Specialist. The project's fuel reduction actions will likely reduce the intensity of potential fires, slow the movement of future fires, and provide fire crews with a safe area to defend homes by:

- Thinning brush on Forest Service lands adjacent to the community;
- Removing brush along the road corridors within the Wildlife area; and,
- Maintaining fuelbreaks every three-to-five years, including adjacent past fuels treatment areas.

Cheatgrass prevention was addressed by seeding the areas with native grasses prior to brush removal. Volunteers, both local residents and Mule Deer Foundation members, helped hand-seed these areas last fall. The Forest Service is asking citizens to follow the temporary traffic closures to allow the grasses to grow, as well as to reduce disturbance to mule deer. Mule deer exert more energy to retreat from vehicles; this increases their stress during the cold winter months.

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“We have seen a lot of motorcycles drive through the project area,” said Genny Wilson, Carson District Ranger. She continued, “When people drive off road through these newly treated areas, our efforts are negated.”

The community continues to provide many positive comments as they see the work being completed. Project work will resume this spring and will include:

- Tilling and seeding approximately 20 acres of compacted soil;
- Reinforcing closure areas by replacing fences and gates; and,
- Placing barriers in areas where illegal use is occurring.

The Jack’s Valley Wildlife Management Area is currently closed to motorized use from November 1 through April 30 of each year to protect wintering mule deer. To allow for newly seeded areas to germinate and become established, a temporary, year-round closure order to motorized vehicles will be in effect beginning May 1.

For more information on this release, contact Maureen Easton at 775-882-2766.

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Upper Washoe Pile Burn
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
Carson Ranger District

Reno



Treatment Area

31

95

Treatment Area

Washoe Lake

Carson City

