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Bureau of Land Management  
Fillmore Field Office  
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File Code: 1900  
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Dear Interested Public Land User,

On August 22, 2002, President Bush announced the Healthy Forests Initiative (HFI) for Wildfire Prevention and Stronger Communities. The **Pahvant Interagency Fuels Reduction Project** is one of the demonstration projects for the President's Healthy Forests Initiative. This initiative calls for administrative improvements to ensure more timely decisions, greater efficiency and better results in projects that reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires and restore forest health. More information about the Healthy Forest Initiative can be viewed at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/projects/HFI.shtml>.

We have completed the Environmental Assessment (EA), Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), and Decision Record and Decision Notice for the Pahvant Interagency Fuels Reduction Project, Healthy Forest Initiative – Fuels Reduction 2003 project. The EA, FONSI, Decision Record, Decision Notice, and associated environmental analysis documents can be viewed on the project website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/rifc/pahvant/pahvant.htm>.

### **The Decision**

The Fillmore Field Office Manager and the Fillmore District Ranger have decided to implement hazardous fuels reduction activities on approximately 14,300 acres along the west side of the Pahvant Mountain Range, in the vicinity of Scipio, Holden, Fillmore and Meadow, Utah. Vegetation will be cut by hand, and burned by hand or helicopter, on approximately 7,300 acres of National Forest System lands, and approximately 7,000 acres of BLM lands. Sagebrush-grasslands, pinyon-juniper, and Gambel oak will be treated in seven treatment units, ranging from approximately 500 to 4,900 acres in size. Treatments will begin in 2003 and are anticipated to be completed by 2008. The purpose of the proposed action is to change fire behavior conditions near these communities to reduce the risk of uncharacteristically intense and severe wildfire and secondary effects, such as flooding, to these communities and the environment while providing for firefighter safety.

### **Background**

The communities of the Pahvant Front, including Scipio, Holden, Fillmore and Meadow are within a wildland urban interface, the highest priority for treatment as identified in the National Fire Plan ([www.fireplan.gov](http://www.fireplan.gov)). The National Fire Plan is an interagency effort between the Forest Service, the Department of the Interior and the National Association of State Foresters to manage impacts of wildland fire on communities. This is a long-term effort of working collaboratively on the issues of hazardous fuels reduction, fire fighting, rehabilitation and restoration, community assistance and accountability.

The Pahvant Interagency Fuels Reduction Project falls under the hazardous fuels reduction program of the National Fire Plan. The hazardous fuels program provides direction to reduce the impacts of unwanted wildland fires on communities, natural resources, and cultural resources. Past disruptions of natural fire cycles, as well as other management practices, have resulted in wildfires of increasing intensity and severity. Treatment of hazardous fuels would help reduce the impacts of wildfires on communities and restore health to fire-adapted ecosystems.

The BLM Fillmore Field Office began analyzing fuels reduction activities along the Pahvant Front in 1991. Several Environmental Assessments (EA) were completed including the Holden Springs EA (1991), Section 31 EA (1996), Frampton Heights EA (1996), and Meadow Creek EA (1998). These EAs and associated Decision Records analyzed and approved fuels reduction involving cutting, but not prescribed burning. The Pahvant Interagency Fuels Reduction Project EA discloses the effects of prescribed burning vegetation already cut, or planned for cutting, as described in these BLM EAs.

### **Administrative Review and Appeal Opportunities**

These decisions are subject to appeal. Detailed instructions for submitting an appeal of the BLM and/or Forest Service decision are included in the Decision Record and Decision Notice, respectively. If you have any questions or would like a copy of the EA, FONSI, Decision Record or Decision Notice sent to you, please contact Diane Freeman, Team Leader, 115 East 900 North, Richfield, UT 84701 or call (435) 896-9233. The opportunity to comment ends 45 days following publication of the legal notice in the *Richfield Reaper*.

Sincerely,

/s/ Robert S. Gardner

/s/ Rex Rowley

ROBERT S. GARDNER  
District Ranger  
Fillmore Ranger District

REX ROWLEY  
Field Manager  
Fillmore Field Office