



Blue River and Spruce Creek Fuel Reduction Projects

Summit County, Colorado

OVERVIEW

These projects will regenerate an old forest and create a Community Protection Zone on USFS lands adjacent to your community.

- These areas were identified as a strategic area in Summit County’s Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and the U.S. Forest Service’s 2011 Breckenridge Forest Health and Fuels Environmental Assessment.
- These projects are made possible through a partnership between the Colorado State Forest Service and U.S. Forest Service through the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) program.
 - Town of Blue River, Red White & Blue, The Nature Conservancy and Summit County are supporting partners.
- The current forest condition is stagnated, 120+ year old Lodgepole pine. This dense old forest is susceptible to insect and disease outbreaks and catastrophic wildfire. This treatment aims to regenerate this unhealthy forest for future generations and to create a strategic fuel break.
- These projects are being funded by the voter-approved Summit County Strong Future Funds, The Nature Conservancy and U.S. Forest Service.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The goal of these fuels reduction and forest health projects is to strategically connect, strengthen and build upon the series of existing fuel breaks around the Blue River area while regenerating an old forest. The project will reduce the volume and connectivity of fuels within the project area and directly reduce wildfire hazards to your adjacent neighborhood. The cutting of live and dead trees mimics the ecologically beneficial effects of a fire, which the forest is adapted to, and will reduce fire intensity so firefighters will have a greater opportunity to engage safely in fire suppression activities in the event of a wildland fire.

TREATMENT DESIGN

The treatment type of heavy overstory tree removal is an effective, scientifically sound and ecologically conscious way to create a fuel break in this lodgepole pine forest. Generally, all dead trees and live lodgepole pine in the overstory will be treated. Smaller, live lodgepole pine trees that are healthy will be retained, as well as spruce, fir and aspen trees. Science-based treatments like this take into consideration local knowledge and expertise to identify prevailing winds during fire season. For this project, a long, narrow, north-south running treatment design will provide a long-term fuel break to assist in altering fire behavior and reducing fire intensity before it gets to the community.





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PROJECT SPECIFICS

Blue River West

- 110 acres. All handwork (chainsaw) and pile
- Work may start this summer. Project completion by October 2023
- Some woody material will be left lopped and scattered for soil stabilization
- Aspen should expand
- Spruce Creek and Crystal Lakes will remain open
 - Burro trail will have intermittent trail pauses while felling occurs next to the trail
- Work will take place from 7:00am-7:00pm Monday through Saturday
- Piles will be burned by USFS in a following winter when there's adequate snow

Spruce Creek

- 12 acres of mechanical work with removal (some piles of slash)
- Log trucks or chip trucks will use Spruce Creek Road and Crown Drive to access Highway 9
- Hauling is restricted to 7:00am – 7:00pm Monday through Friday (weekends not permitted)
- Approximately a dozen or two trucks for the entire project
- Work will start this summer and be completed by October 2022

Blue River East

- East side of highway 9
- Planned for 2024
- Royal Placer ToB/SCOS land may be included
- May a small portion of removal, but will mostly be hand treated and piled

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