



## Weaver Mountain Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project Fact Sheet

### The President's Healthy Forests Initiative

In August 2002, President Bush announced the Healthy Forests Initiative, directing the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to develop administrative and legislative measures that will help reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire to America's forests and rangelands. The initiative builds on a historic ten-year plan for reducing wildfire risks adopted last spring by federal agencies in cooperation with western and southern governors, county commissioners, state foresters and tribal officials.

The Healthy Forests Initiative will implement core components of the National Fire Plan's 10-year Comprehensive Strategy and Implementation Plan. This historic plan, which was adopted this spring by federal agencies and western governors, in collaboration with county commissioners, state foresters, and tribal officials, calls for more active forest and rangeland management. It establishes a framework for protecting communities and the environment through local collaboration on thinning, planned burns and forest restoration projects.

In December of 2002, the President announced work on the Model Environmental Assessment (EA) component of the Healthy Forests Initiative. The focus of the current EA Guidance is on Forest Health Projects. This included direction from the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) that provides a framework for administratively streamlining the process to allow for more efficient management of fuels reduction efforts and fire-adapted ecosystem restoration projects. In total, the two agencies will undertake fifteen pilot projects to establish the effectiveness of these expedited procedures.

### Weaver Mountain Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project

The Weaver Mountain Fuels Treatment Project, located in the Bradshaw-Harquahala Resource **Management Planning** Area, Phoenix Field Office. This fuels treatment project was one of fifteen in the nation to be chosen and the only one in Arizona to be part of the Forest Health Initiative process.

The proposed project area is located in Yavapai County **seventeen miles north of the community of Wickenburg**, Arizona. The southern boundary is directly north of the Hassayampa Wilderness area.

The purpose of this initiative is to reduce hazardous fuel accumulations and improve rangeland and wildlife habitat conditions in this fire-adapted ecosystem. Management-ignited fire will be used to reduce canopy cover, change the age structure of woody vegetation, increase production of native perennial grasses and forbs, and increase diversity. Management-ignited fire has proven to be beneficial to break up vegetative fuel continuity, reduce future fire severity, and reduce the negative effects of wildfires.

The need for this action is to manage fuel loads, reduce hazardous fuels, and restore fire to this fire-dependent community on BLM administered lands within the Phoenix Field Office boundaries. Fire is an integral ecosystem component, and a viable treatment to restore and maintain healthy interior chaparral communities, and to increase the safety for wildland firefighters and the public.

The Phoenix Field Office BLM proposes approximately 1,000–3,000 acres will be treated annually. Conducting multiple treatments over a 5–10 year period will minimize potential impacts to the watershed from overland flow. The treatments will mimic natural fire by creating a diverse mixed-age stand of interior chaparral over the next 10–20 years.

Weaver Mountain Hazardous Fuels Project-Healthy Forest Initiative

Weaver Analysis Area  
Phoenix Field Office

