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Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, Wildfire Management Branch

Prescribed burns to restore Cariboo-Chilcotin grassland

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WILLIAMS LAKE - The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations advises that an ecosystem restoration burn is planned south of Riske Creek between April 8 and May 1, 2015, weather conditions permitting.

About 120 hectares south of Riske Creek, around Bald Mountain, will be treated to help restore native grassland ecosystems. This controlled burn is managed under the Ecosystem Restoration Program within the ministry's Range Branch. It will be conducted with the assistance of staff from the Wildfire Management Branch's Cariboo Fire Centre.

Historically, grasslands in the Cariboo-Chilcotin were renewed through frequent, low-intensity ground fires. Such fires prevented tree encroachment, rejuvenated understory plants and helped maintained more open grasslands and forests with large trees.

The reintroduction of managed, low-intensity ground fires to these grasslands is intended to restore and maintain the traditional grassland plant communities that are native to these areas. These managed fires also reduce the amount of combustible material (fuel load), which helps decrease the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

These fires are part of an ongoing ecosystem restoration program administered by the provincial government through the Cariboo-Chilcotin Ecosystem Restoration Committee, in consultation with First Nations, local ranchers, local forest licensees, outdoor organizations, the Fraser Basin Council, the B.C. Wildlife Federation and the Cariboo-Chilcotin Conservation Society.

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