

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT  
HABITAT PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE  
HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL**

Game Branch / HPC Project Number:	15-309
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**PROJECT INFORMATION**

<b>Project Title:</b> Prescott National Forest Black Hills Prescribed Fire - Woodchute	
<b>Region and Game Management Unit:</b> Region 3 GMU 19A	
<b>Local Habitat Partnership Committee (LHPC):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prescott</li> </ul>	<b>Was the project presented to the LHPC?</b> <b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>NO</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Has this project been submitted in previous years?</b> <b>YES</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>If Yes, was it funded?</b> <b>YES</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/> → <b>Funded HPC Project #(s):</b> 13-310, 14-302	
<b>Project Type:</b> Prescribed Burn	
<p><b>Brief Project Summary:</b> The Woodchute Prescribed Burn is part of a large landscape size restoration project located in the central part of GMU 19A. This is an extension of previous and ongoing projects within the Black Hills Vegetation Management Plan Project on Mingus Mountain. Additional burning would continue to extend the benefits that have already been seen from previous large scale prescribed burns in the area. Benefits include increased forage and water yields, more resilient stands of new growth chaparral, greater diversity of age class and species, protection of values at risk, and maintaining fire return intervals.</p> <p>In 2014 and 2015 the Prescott National Forest treated 12,892 acres within the Black Hills with prescribed fire. Assistance and coordination from the Arizona Game and Fish Department’s HPC program has aided in treating 4,895 of these acres.</p>	
<b>Big Game Wildlife Species to Benefit:</b> Mule Deer (80%) Elk (20%) Elk and deer will benefit from increased forage to cover ratio and improved browse and grass forage quality.	

<b>Implementation Schedule</b> (Month/Day/Year):  <u>Project Start Date:</u> March 1, 2016   <u>Project End Date:</u> December 31, 2018	<b>Environmental Compliance:</b> NEPA Completed: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Projected Completion Date: _____  State Historic Preservation Office - Archaeological Clearance: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Projected Completion Date: _____  Arizona Game and Fish Department EA Checklist: N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To be Completed by: _____ Projected Completion Date: _____
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**PROJECT FUNDING**

<b>Special Big Game License Tag Funds Requested:</b>	\$ 57,100 for 1081 acres
<b>Cost Share or Matching Funds:</b>	\$ \$443,680 for 7,997 acres (Completed 2014-2015)

<b>Total Project Costs:</b>		<b>\$ 500,780 for 9,078 acres</b>
<b>PARTICIPANT INFORMATION</b>		
<b>Applicant</b> (please print): Aaron Hulburd	<b>Address:</b> Prescott National Forest 2400 Melville Rd. Prescott, AZ 86301	<b>E-mail:</b> ahulburd@fs.fed.us
<b>Telephone:</b> 928-777-5666		<b>Date:</b> July 20, 2015
<b>AGFD Contact and Phone No.</b> (If applicant is not AGFD personnel): Jake Fousek 928-583-4951		
<b>Project has been coordinated with:</b> Jake Fousek – Wildlife Manager GMU 17AB, Tom Bagley – Wildlife Manager GMU 19A, Darren Tucker – Field Supervisor – Prescott, Todd Willard – Verde District Ranger – Prescott National Forest, Scott Spleiss – Fuels Battalion Chief – Verde Ranger District, Terry Herndon – MDF		

**NEED STATEMENT – PROBLEM ANALYSIS:**

The Black Hills Vegetation Management Plan (BHVMP) responds to goals and objectives of the Prescott National Forest and managing Mingus Mountain and the surrounding area. Comparison of the existing condition of the BHVMP area and the desired conditions from the Forest Plan indicates a need to:

- improve and manage wildlife habitat for a variety of native species, including species determined to be threatened, endangered, or sensitive;
- manage for a diverse and healthy native vegetation component that is resilient, resistant to extreme weather patterns, and would support wildfires that more closely resemble their historic range of size, frequency, and intensities;
- maintain or improve soil stability, soil productivity, and watershed conditions;
- increase water yield within the chaparral component; and
- reduce risk to life, property, and natural resources from high-severity wildfires while increasing the safety to fire suppression resources

**PROJECT OBJECTIVES:**

The purpose of this burn is to improve the forage to cover ratio for wildlife and range, re-establish fire into various biophysical environments, and improve the horizontal age class diversity of the chaparral species. Reducing the over story density should improve watershed conditions by improving herbaceous species growth and density to a more desired level.

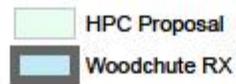
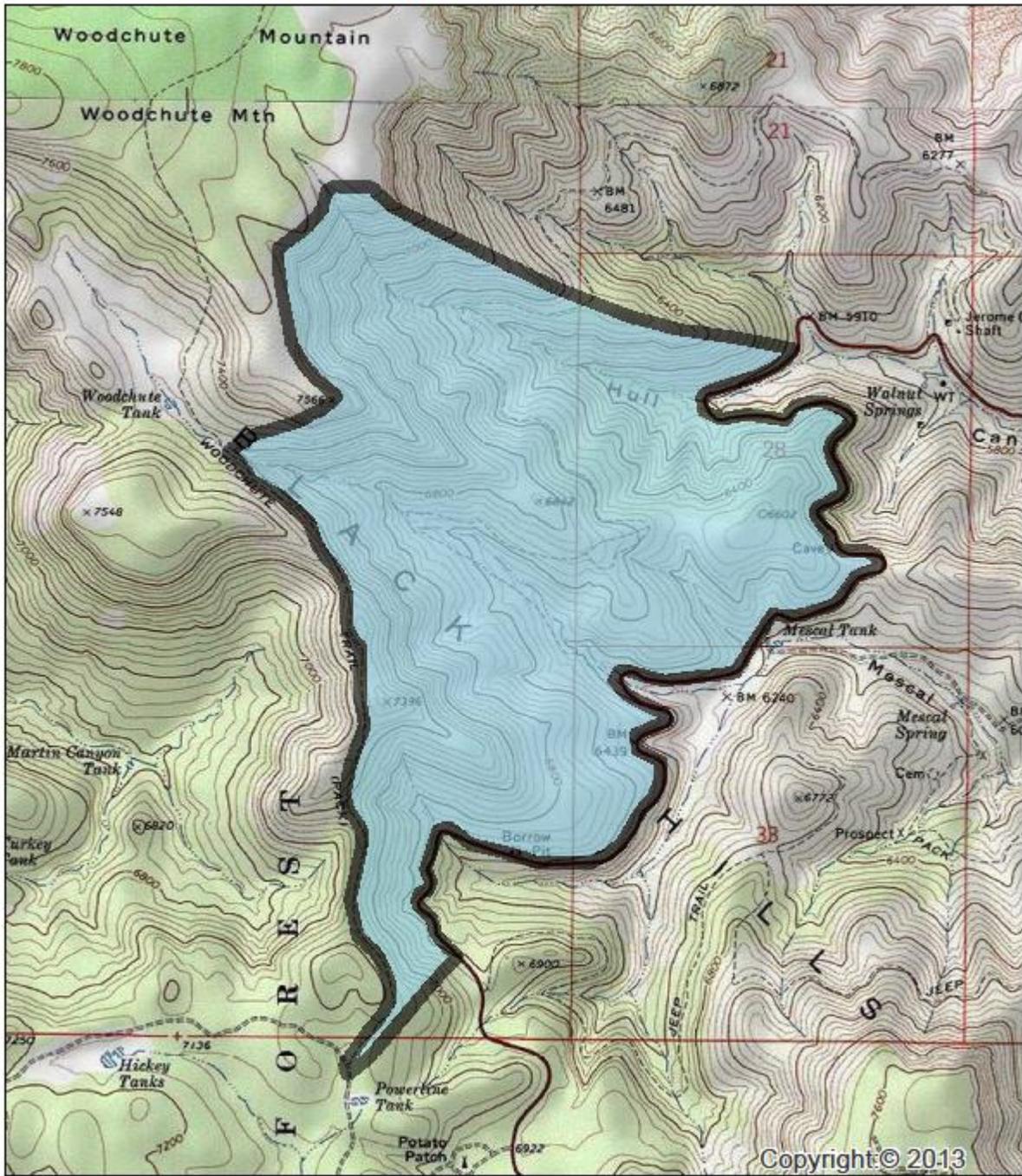
There will be many beneficial aspects of this project relating to food production for wildlife. In addition, the result of mosaics of different vegetation types and age classes with openings will produce a variety of different habitat niches and edge spacing desired by wildlife. This burn should also increase the water supply available for plants and water sources such as stock tanks, springs and ephemeral streams.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND STRATEGIES:** In 2010 the Prescott National Forest (PNF) designed, funded and implemented a 500 foot wide, 6 mile long fuel break around the east and north boundary of the Whitehorse subdivision. This masticated fuel break provided fire managers with a starting point for multiple large scale restoration prescribed fire projects. In 2014-2015, 12,892 acres were treated with prescribed fire. The Woodchute prescribed burn is an extension of these projects and will enhance or benefit several other forest functions. Black line will be established where needed to protect values and the burn perimeter prior to ignition of the main burn. Cultural sites, power lines, and range improvements will be protected by either removing brush or avoiding ignitions in proximity to these improvements. Previous experience in this fuel type using aerial ignitions has proved very successful in producing mosaic burn patterns across the landscape. (See photo below) The use of a helicopter for aerial ignitions is planned for this prescribed burn. This strategy protects soils and drainages from large scale erosion, increases edge effect, protects visual integrity and creates additional protection opportunities for firefighters in the event of an unplanned ignition.



**PROJECT LOCATION:** The proposed project borders the north side of Highway 89A south of the Woodchute Wilderness on the Prescott National Forest. This is in the west foothills of Mingus Mountain approximately 2 miles from the Forest boundary. See attached project map.

## Woodchute Prescribed Fire



### LAND OWNERSHIP AT THE PROJECT SITE(S):

(if the project area is private property, please state specifically and provide the landowner's name)

- Prescott National Forest

**HABITAT DESCRIPTION:**

The burn area consists of interior chaparral (high load, dry climate shrub) in the lower elevations and Ponderosa Pine in the upper elevations. Chaparral species include turbinella oak, mountain mahogany and manzanita. The primary carrier of fire will be needle cast in the Ponderosa Pine and woody shrubs and grass within the chaparral. Grass is interspersed throughout the burn unit. Species include sideoats grama, blue grama, squirrel tail, three awn and tobosa. There are other annual grasses and forbs that will contribute to fire behavior and rates of spread. Juniper is scattered throughout the burn units to varying degrees but is not expected to be a major influence on fire behavior or effects.



**ITEMIZED USE OF FUNDS:**

Special Big Game License Tag Funds

<b>COOPERATOR AND PROJECT COMPONENT</b>	<b>COST-SHARE DOLLARS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>HPC FUNDS REQUESTED</b>
Implementation of Black Hills Prescribe Fire Project 2014-2015	\$399,850 \$50 per Acre 7997 Acres	\$57,100 \$53 per Acre 1081 Acres
Line Preparation of Burn Unit \$20 per Acre	\$19,480	
Archeological Clearance and Site ID \$25 per Acre	\$24,350	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$443,680</b>	<b>\$57,100</b>
Cost Share Ratio HPC:PNF = 1:7.7		
Total Project Cost = \$500,780		

Cost Share or Matching Funds (for volunteer labor rates please refer to the worksheet below)

**LIST COOPERATORS AND DESCRIBE POTENTIAL PARTICIPATION:**

**WOULD IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROJECT ASSIST IN PROVIDING, MAINTAINING, OR FACILITATING RECREATIONAL ACCESS?**

YES NO N/A

Project will improve access by clearing vegetation bordering existing roads. Access will allow maintenance of existing water features and create more opportunity for hunters and other recreation.

**PROJECT MONITORING PLAN:**

In order to meet monitoring objectives the forest will initiate its Level 1 monitoring plan.

Level 1- General Landscape and Environment Monitoring

This level provides managers with a quick general photo of an area or landscape to demonstrate a change in conditions on a broad scale. Analysis is limited to ocular estimates and subjective assessments usually by qualified fire effects monitors or fuels technicians. These photo plots may or may not have permanent markers to indicate the location of the photos; however the location of the plot center (latitude and longitude), the camera, and the direction of photo should be noted. If change over time is an objective, photos should be taken at established and recorded locations to allow for return visits.

**PROJECT MAINTENANCE:**

As this area shifts toward the desired condition, natural disturbances such as wildfire can be better utilized and managed easier to maintain the project area. The interpolation of on-site post treatment monitoring data will be utilized to indicate the need for maintenance in the project area. If the monitoring data indicates a

change, re-entry with prescribed fire or other management tools will be identified and implemented when feasible.

**PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT TO BE FILED BY:**

A project completion report will be filed by the Prescott Forest Fuels Specialist, Aaron Hulburd or his Acting, in collaboration with the Verde Ranger District Fire Management Officer, the Prescott National Forest Deputy Fire Staff, and Forest Wildlife Biologist. Aaron Hulburd will maintain contact with wildlife managers through the project to provide informal and formal status updates.

**WATER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS** (*please use the worksheet below*):

N/A

**TREE CLEARING/REMOVAL PROJECTS** (*please use the worksheet below*):

N/A

## Black Hills NEPA Boundary

