



# FACT SHEET



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## Making a Difference Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests BLM's Uncompahgre Field Office (UFO) Colorado

In October 2003, the BLM Uncompahgre Field Office (UFO) completed their environmental assessment using the new Council of Environmental Quality guidance under the Healthy Forests Initiative (HFI) for the Dry Creek/Spring Creek Vegetation Management Strategy. On November 7, 2003 (FY-04), the Uncompahgre Plateau Project (UP) included fuels reduction treatment along Western Area Power Administration's (Western) 345 kV line and Tri State Power's 115 kV power line.

This plan and first treatment of the project area represents a major milestone for the UP partners, as they are the first collaborative plan and on-the-ground treatment accomplished under the auspices of UP. Using categorical exclusions, the GMUG National Forest was able to speed up the NEPA process using tools provided by the HFI to complete the planning to treat the remaining lands adjacent to the power lines on the National Forest. The power lines serve users all the way south to Phoenix, Ariz.

UP is a coalition of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Forest Service (USFS), Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW), and the Public Lands Partnership (PLP), a citizen group representing diverse interest groups from Ouray, Montrose, Delta, and San Miguel counties. The partnership was formed about three years ago to coordinate planning and management on roughly 1.5 million acres on the Uncompahgre Plateau. Other major partners such as Western and Tri State are coordinating efforts with the coalition.

The area of analysis consists of approximately 255,712 acres, which includes 124,030 acres of private land, 92,976 acres of BLM, 38,340 acres of Forest Service, and 366 acres of State land managed by CDOW. Under the overall plan, fuel levels will be reduced on approximately 14,000 acres of BLM land and 6,800 acres of USFS land over the next 10 to 15 years. A variety of vegetation treatment tools will be used, including prescribed fire, mechanical treatment, seeding, chemical treatment, and protection from disturbance to allow some areas of vegetation to mature. This Vegetation Management Strategy is the first of several interagency, watershed-level plans intended within the UP Project area.

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