

*******PRESS RELEASE*******

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CORPS OF ENGINEERS TO BEGIN WORK ON BOSQUE REVITALIZATION

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. -- The Corps of Engineers' Albuquerque District is set to begin work Monday, May 24, to revitalize areas of the bosque that were scorched in last summer's fires. It will also take measures to reduce the threat of future fires, according to Fritz Blake, the Corps' project manager.

The first phase of work will begin from I-40 north along the Rio Grande to Montano Blvd. The Corps will be removing unnecessary jetty jacks, clearing some of the leftover debris, removing stumps from dead trees, and installing mile markers on the levees. It will leave a portion of the debris and stumps to serve as wildlife habitat. AJAC Construction, the Corps' contractor for this initial phase of work, estimates it will take about 75 days to complete.

U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, who provided the authority for the Corps to perform fire prevention and restoration work in the bosque, also worked closely with the Corps' headquarters in Washington, D.C. to obtain the necessary funding for the endeavor. The project is also being coordinated with Albuquerque's Fire Department and Open Space Division, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and other stakeholders. Additional work will be performed in other areas of the bosque through September 2005.