

Trinidad Lake State Park Draft Environmental Assessment

Notice of Availability

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations that implement the National Environmental Policy Act, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Albuquerque District, completed a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the project titled “Trinidad Lake State Park Fuels Management Project” in Trinidad, Colorado. The purpose of this project is to thin a piñon- juniper forest within the park to enhance wildfire protection, improve wildfire evacuation routes, improve foraging for wildlife, advance forest health, and prevent meadow encroachment by woody species. The project proposes to masticate and hand thin 78 acres of piñon- juniper woodlands.

The proposed treatment area contains primarily piñon-juniper woodlands, intermixed with scrub oak, cottonwoods (Populus sp.), and ponderosa pine (Pinus ponderosa) that are very densely concentrated. Gambel oak (Quercus gambelii) fills space between mature pine and juniper trees, contributing to the existing fuel source. Fuels reduction would result in the creation of small openings in dense woodland areas, a reduction in woodland encroachment into meadows, and removal of excess fuel loads. Standing and downed woody materials would be masticated on site and hand trimming would be used when equipment is unable to reach target trees.

The project is necessary for additional protection of park visitors, staff, firefighters, and nearby communities. With this project’s defensible space and fuels reduction in place, the park would have key locations where firefighters can implement suppression efforts in the event of an approaching wildfire. Thinning, mastication of downed woody debris and slash, and strategic fuels removal within these blocks would lower the risk of catastrophic wildfire, increase defensibility, minimize forest insect and diseases losses, and enhance overall stand health and vigor.

The Draft EA is electronically available for viewing and copying at the Albuquerque District website at:

<http://www.spa.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/EnvironmentalComplianceDocuments.aspx>

Or a hard copy will be sent upon written request to the following address:

*AMEC, Environment & Infrastructure, Inc.
Attn: Melissa Greulich
2000 S. Colorado Blvd., Suite 2-1000
Denver, CO 80222*

Paper copies of this document are also available for review at:

*Carnegie Public Library
202 N. Animas St.
Trinidad, CO 81082*

And

*Trinidad Lake State Park Visitor's Center
32610 Highway 12
Trinidad, CO 81082*

This public review will extend from May 31, 2013 through June 30, 2013. Written comments should be sent to the above address or electronically to melissa.greulich@amec.com. Comments will be accepted until 4:00 P.M. June 30, 2013.