

Centennial Valley Fire Learning Network
Centennial Sandhills Field Trip and Workshop
Tuesday September 22, 2009

9:00 Meet at west end of burn (see directions below)

9:30 BLM Sandhills Burn: Hike through the area burned in 2008 to discuss:

- logistics of late-season burning in sagebrush habitat
- mosaic of burn effects and post-fire vegetation responses
- patterns and effects of livestock grazing in 2009
- interactions of fire and grazing

12:00 Lunch at Sandhills Preserve Headquarters provided by Centennial FLN

12:30 Review monitoring data for Sandhills pre- and post-burn

- Habitat structure and composition – Brad Bauer
- Rare plant and cheatgrass surveys – Brian Hockett
- Tiger beetle study – Winton Ross
- Bird point counts and small mammal trapping – Nathan Korb

1:30 Review and next steps for management and monitoring

- How did the interactive effects of a late-season fire and grazing change habitat mosaic?
- What do we need to better understand for future management of these unique habitats?
- What opportunities and challenges exist for re-introducing fire to other administrative units of the sandhills, such as TNC Preserve, Red Rock Lakes NWR, and DNRC?
- How may climate change and invasive species affect the long-term resilience or dynamics of the Centennial Sandhills?

3:30 Wrap-up and departure



Participants will include fire managers, biologists, land managers, researchers, and range ecologists from the BLM Dillon Field Office, USFWS Red Rock Lakes NWR, Montana State University, Montana Natural Heritage Program, J Bar L Ranch, and The Nature Conservancy.

Directions:

From I-15, go east from Monida 10 miles to first left turn (sign for “Hole in the Wall”), then north approx. three miles, cross Red Rock River and veer right across river. Drive east along the Northside Centennial Valley Road approximately 15 miles and you will see the Sandhills HQ on the left (22685 N. Valley Rd., old Staudenmeyer Place with two log cabins and a red barn); continue approximately one mile to the fork in the road and park.

From Ennis, drive south on Hwy 287 approximately 52 miles and turn right onto Hwy 87; travel south approximately seven miles past Montana-Idaho line to the first paved road on the right and turn right (there is a sign for Lakeview and also a historical marker); follow the road around Henry’s Lake as it turns to gravel; then go over Red Rock Pass back into Montana. After 10 miles turn right (north) at the sign for Elk Lake, travel three miles and turn left on the North Valley Rd (sign for Landon Camp). Drive east about 15 miles, pass the burned area on your right, and the meeting place is the fork at the west end of the burn. If you see the Sandhills HQ on your right (22685 N. Valley Rd., old Staudenmeyer Place with two log cabins and a red barn) you have gone one mile too far.

Good luck and please call if you have any questions!

Nathan Korb
406-925-1144