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**(Neb.)-Slash Pile Burning Planned North Of Harrison**



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 04/15/2013 07:33 AM

(HARRISON)-If northwest Nebraskans see or smell smoke north of Harrison early this week, it's likely the result of a Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) effort to improve the forest in the area.

NGPC biologist Greg Schenbeck said preparations have been made to burn small slash piles at the Gilbert-Baker Wildlife Management Area north of Harrison, if conditions are favorable. The burning is expected to begin as early as Monday or Tuesday (April 15-16).

The commission has an approved burn plan for the project and a permit from the Harrison Volunteer Fire Department. Schenbeck said the burning will occur only if weather and ground conditions at the site meet certain criteria.

The piles are about five miles north of Harrison along Monroe Canyon Road. They are left over from thinning and ladder fuel reduction projects completed in 2011 and 2012 along the road. The projects reduced potential fuels for wildfires and helped create more sustainable ponderosa pine habitat for wildlife in the area.

Questions about the burning can be directed to the NGPC Ponderosa Wildlife Management Area Field Office at 308-665-2924 or 308-430-3852, or the NGPC District Office at Alliance at 308-763-2940.

--Justin Haag, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission