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For Release: Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge plans prescribed fires.

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Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge plans to implement a series of prescribed fire projects in the southcentral section of the Refuge, in the vicinity of the Refuge Headquarters, French Lake, Lost Lake, Boulder Picnic Areas and the Dog Run Hollow trail system. The burns will be located along the Indianhoma Road between Indianhoma Wye and the Refuge Headquarters; from Refuge Headquarters to Boulder Road; then along Boulder Road south to the Ft Sill boundary.

Weather and other conditions permitting, approximately 3,000 acres of Refuge land will be burned in this area. The intent of the burns is to remove hazardous fuels and reduce the threat of wildfire to popular refuge areas and improve wildlife habitat.

Ignition is planned for multiple days in August. While the burn is being conducted smoke will be visible from a great distance. After completion of the burn there may be residual smoke along the roads for a few days. Highway 49 may be impacted by smoke for short periods. The burn is being implemented under a strict set of guidelines and weather parameters to provide for public and firefighter safety and to limit potential smoke impacts in the area. Ignition will take place when winds will avoid sending smoke into populated or smoke sensitive areas. If predicted and actual weather conditions do not meet the prescribed fire plan parameters, the burn will be rescheduled to another date.

To enhance safety, closures of the affected public use area will be implemented the evening before the burn. Major access points will have closure signs and will remain closed throughout the burn operation. Public roads may be closed for short periods during the burns.

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