



United States Department of Agriculture

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

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News Release

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Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Uses Sheep to Reduce Hazardous Fuels near the Arrowcreek Community in Reno

Carson City, NV., April 30, 2020 – As part of the Carson Ranger District's Hazardous Fuels Reduction Program, the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest will release sheep on Sunday, May 3 in the Arrowhawk Fuels Reduction Project area just west of the Arrowcreek Community in Reno, Nevada. These sheep will be consuming cheatgrass and other non-native vegetation within the Thomas Creek and Whites Creek watersheds north of Timberline Road.

"Cheatgrass is an aggressive non-native species outcompeting our native vegetation," said Fuels Specialist Steve Howell. "It eventually pushes out our native grasses and shrubs from their natural habitat. Cheatgrass plants also create an exceptional fuel bed for wildfire spread and can be a threat to communities."

The Forest has contracted the Borda Land & Sheep Company out of Gardnerville, Nevada, to perform the grazing project. Approximately 800 ewes will be released and monitored by herders and livestock guard dogs.

"This program is an important collaboration to help keep the Arrowcreek and surrounding communities safe from destructive wildfire," said Carson District Ranger Matt Zumstein. "Grazing sheep is a cost-effective, low-impact, and natural way to efficiently reduce the spread of this invasive species."

The Arrowhawk Fuels Reduction Project area is also a popular place for people to hike with their dogs. However, this popularity has resulted in an increased number of incidents where off-leash dogs are harassing the sheep.

Continuation of the sheep grazing program is dependent upon keeping both the sheep and dogs safe from harm. Both uses can coexist as long as the public abides by both the Washoe County's animal ordinances on county lands and Forest Order (04-17-20-05) on National Forest System lands, which require dogs to be leashed in the Arrowhawk Fuels Reduction Project area,

"I cannot stress enough how important it is to keep all dogs leashed while hiking through the area where sheep are grazing," said Howell. "No matter how well trained a dog is, their instinct to chase could put them and the sheep in danger."



For more information on local leash regulations, please visit:

- **Washoe County Animal Services** - https://www.washoecounty.us/animal/faq/leash_law.php
- **Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest** - <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/htnf/alerts-notices/?cid=fseprd573309>

For more information on the Carson Ranger District Hazardous Fuels Reduction Program, contact Steve Howell at 775-884-8114.

For additional information on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, please visit www.fs.usda.gov/htnf or participate in the conversation at <https://twitter.com/HumboldtToiyabe> and <https://www.facebook.com/HumboldtToiyabeNF/>.

