



GILPIN COUNTY
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



Common Questions and Best Practices for Roadside Fire Mitigation in Gilpin County

Will roadside fire mitigation impact Mountain Pine Beetle populations?

Dead trees do not contain mountain pine beetles. Therefore, dead trees will be cut, and may be left behind for residents to use for firewood. Slash will be chipped and hauled away.

Any living trees that are cut will be inspected for presence of mountain pine beetles. If a live tree is determined as "hot," meaning infected with beetles, the tree and its slash will be chipped after cutting. Chipping infected trees is the best method to kill any beetles inside a tree.

Will cutting green trees attract Ips beetles and Mountain Pine beetle?

These beetles are already in Gilpin County. Fresh cut green wood can attract Ips Beetles and Mountain Pine Beetles during their flight times (approximately June-Sept). However, the benefit of clearing our roadside fire evacuation routes, outweighs the minimum risk of attracting beetles. Roadside fire mitigation is happening year-round, however, the majority of fire mitigation will be done in the summer when seasonal staff is available and weather conditions are best.

As a best practice to deter any attraction of beetles by cutting green wood, Timberline will be careful not to stack fresh cut green wood under other healthy pine trees. Green wood will be removed as soon as possible after cutting, or stacked away from other pine trees.

Does fire mitigation help to prevent beetle infestations?

A healthy forest is diverse. The three "Ds" of diversity are: encourage Diversity in species, Diversity in age, and Diversity in spacing of your forest trees. By encouraging diverse forests, you will make your forest healthier and less susceptible to future insect and disease outbreaks. Removing dead trees and clearing slash will help native wildflowers, grasses, and shrubs to thrive.

Will clearing Rights of Way along the road cause drainage issues?

If the roadside fire mitigation causes future drainage issues on county-maintained roads, these issues will be address by Gilpin County Public Works.