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## Zion National Park News Release

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For Immediate Release

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### Prescribed Fire Planned in Zion National Park

According to Superintendent Jock Whitworth, Zion National Park plans to ignite the 4,400-acre Clear Trap Prescribed Fire during the **last week of September 2004**. The exact date of the ignition will depend on weather conditions. This prescribed fire project is located on the east side of the park, adjacent to the Zion Ponderosa Ranch. Once ignited, the fire will actively burn for 3-5 days and then smolder for an extended period. The fire will be closely monitored by park personnel until declared out. The objectives of the Clear Trap Prescribed Fire are to provide protection for surrounding property and structures, reduce fuel loading and increase the success of remaining ponderosa pine forests to withstand natural fires.

Short-term impacts from the Clear Trap Prescribed Fire will be possible smoky conditions for 3-5 days (depending on weather conditions) and the temporary closure of trails in the vicinity of the burn area. Forecasted weather conditions should provide good smoke dispersal, but there is potential for smoke in the valleys during the nights. The East Rim Trail system (and all trails accessing this system, including Hidden Canyon) will be temporarily closed during the burn and reopened only when conditions are safe. Deertrap and Cable Mountains will also be temporarily closed to public access during the burn.

The goal of the prescribed fire program in Zion is to use management-ignited prescribed fire, where appropriate, for the restoration of fire-dependent ecosystems and species-specific resource management goals. Prescribed fire projects are to be conducted in a manner consistent with land and resource management plans, public health considerations, and approved prescribed fire plans. The park works very closely with other state and federal land management agencies in the planning and management of these fires. The policy of using fire as a tool will help decrease risks to life, property, and resources; prescribed fires will help perpetuate the natural resource values for which Zion National Park was established.

For more information about this or other prescribed fire projects in Zion, call 435-772-3256 or visit our website at [www.nps.gov/zion/Fire/Index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/zion/Fire/Index.htm).