



**Pima County
Natural Resources,
Parks and Recreation**

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For Immediate Release

Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation is working with a group of agencies and plant scientists to conduct a test on ways to control buffelgrass, an exotic invasive plant, in rugged, steep desert terrain utilizing helicopters. This test was authorized by the Pima County Board of Supervisors in August 2009 after several public meetings and Board hearings.

The one time application of a control herbicide to research study plots is currently scheduled to be conducted early two mornings the week of August 16, 2010. The target dates are August 18 and 19, weather permitting. The test will involve aerial application of a common, low toxicity herbicide, glyphosate, by helicopter on 12 test plots that are infested with buffelgrass and are located on steep slopes within the park. The test will utilize a computer controlled GPS precision spray application method. The study plots and control plots will then be monitored over time to measure differences in buffelgrass infestation, effectiveness of control method and native plant diversity.

The herbicide to be utilized has a short active life, dries on the grass within minutes in the summer heat, will not permanently leach into the soil, be transported by rainfall or through natural water systems. The herbicide is very effective in controlling grass species and will not harm wildlife or humans. The chemical being applied has been used for years by all local jurisdictions, federal land management agencies and individuals to control buffelgrass and other weeds along roads, around occupied buildings and in vacant areas.

Precautions are built into the test procedures and design to ensure public safety and that all applicable rules and regulations are followed. During the test period, several trails into Tucson Mountain Park will be posted closed to entry for a few hours and a helicopter flying low over the park may be seen in an area north of Ajo Highway and west of Kennedy Park. The Pima County 36th Street trailhead will be closed to public entry for periods between August 17, 2010 and August 20, 2010. The public is asked to follow any posted notices and requests from any Parks and Recreation staff.

Additional information on buffelgrass and the project can be found at www.buffelgrass.com.

For more information contact:

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