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⁸⁸ Greybull Wildfire Mitigation Plan approved, inmates to help

By **KARLA POMEROY**

Big Horn County Commissioners approved the Greybull Wildfire Mitigation Plan Tuesday afternoon after a conference call with County Firewise Coordinator Chris Weydeveld.

He said there is 25 acres around the Greybull bridge on Highway 16-20 that is dense with Russian olives and other vegetation, creating a fire hazard. In the plan, he states, "The Town of Greybull has been threatened by wildfire originating in the vegetation along the Big Horn River within the city limits of Greybull. One wildfire of note occurred in October 2007 and started near the north end of town."

County Fire Warden Brent Godfrey said he supported the plan and said if there had not been the resources available for the Dike Fire in 2007, there would have been severe damage to the north end of Greybull.

The plan proposes the use of a 20-man crew of inmates from the Wyoming Honor Farm in Riverton. Weydeveld said a similar crew worked in the county about three years ago and they travel to and from Riverton

each day.

He said the plan needs approval of the county (which they did Tuesday), the Town of Greybull (Weydeveld said Mayor Frank Houk is in support of the plan) and the State Forestry Division. He said he hopes a crew could begin the first phase of reducing fire fuel in eight to 10 acres on both the north and south sides of the bridge.

The objectives in the plan are listed as:

- Completely eradicate Russian olive and tamarisk (salt cedar). Thin sagebrush, greasewood and rabbitbrush to a minimum of one crown width in distance between plants.
- Stumps of removed Russian olive and salt cedar will be treated with an appropriate herbicide within 15 minutes of cutting. Big Horn County Weed and Pest will be contacted for assistance.
- All woody vegetation will be removed from the site or chipped and scattered on the ground on site.
- The treated areas will be monitored annually to maintain a forest floor clear of down and dead woody vegetation and to remove any Russian olive and salt cedar that becomes re-established.