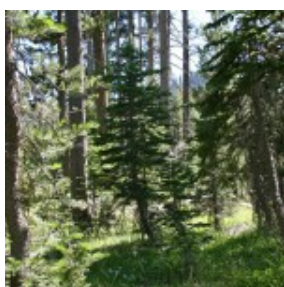


# Tree removal at Big Meadow part of USFS restoration project

The Forest Service will soon begin removing conifers (cone-bearing trees) from meadow, aspen groves and upland forest areas along Scotts Lake Trail, off Big Meadow Trailhead near Luther Pass on Highway 89.

The project should not affect access to the trail, but the Forest Service is asking that users remain on the trail at all times. A contractor will use crews with chain saws for the thinning project, which is likely to begin this week.



Big Meadow  
before  
thinning.

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The tree-thinning is part of a larger project, the Big Meadow Creek Watershed Fire Regime Restoration project. Prior to the recent history of active fire suppression, ground fires occurred naturally.

Past logging and grazing have also affected the area's vegetation. Ultimately, excessive conifer growth can reduce or eliminate aspen stands and meadows and lead to forest die-off from insect infestation, drought or fire.

During this portion of the project, 55 acres of meadow, aspen and forest upland habitat will be treated. In all, the project aims to treat as many as 640 acres. Crews will pile material for burning. Piles generally must cure for about two to three years before they're dry enough to burn. Once forest thinning and pile burning are complete, the Forest Service will begin meadow burns that more closely simulate the natural role fire once played in the ecosystem.



Big Meadow  
after  
thinning.

The Forest Service has designed the project to reduce or avoid impacts to air quality, wildlife habitat, stream environment zones, recreation and other resources.

The project is funded by the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act. For a complete project description, go online. Go to the links on the left and navigate to land and resource management and then projects and plans.