

Fire Season begins in central Oregon for lands protected by Oregon Department of Forestry

[Prineville, Ore.] Oregon Department of Forestry's (ODF) Central Oregon District (COD) is implementing fire season at 12:01 am on June 7, 2017. Good winter snowpack delayed the on-set of fire season compared to recent years, however limited spring precipitation and seasonable temperatures have dried wildland fuels. Adam Barnes, Prineville Assistant Unit Forester explains, "Following a relatively dry May we are seeing fires becoming resistant to control efforts and requiring additional resources to contain." Larger fuels are less susceptible to rain showers and will continue to dry with warmer temperatures, making it more difficult for firefighters to gain a handle on any new fire starts.

Landowners are encouraged to check burn piles/areas which were burned earlier this spring or late last fall for any hold-over heat. With implementation of fire season, burn permits issued earlier this spring may not be valid, check with your local ODF office before burning. Industrial slash and debris burning will no longer be allowed on ODF protected lands. In addition to these restrictions, logging and other industrial operations must meet requirements for fire prevention, such as fire tools, water supply, and watchman service when those operations are occurring on lands protected by ODF. Recent changes to these requirements are available at www.oregon.gov/ODF/Fire/pages/FirePrevention.aspx. Contact your local stewardship forester for more information.

Recreationists are asked to put fire prevention into practice and be deliberate with your actions. Make sure campfires are DEAD OUT! Never leave a fire unattended. Clear the area around your campfire, removing flammable material outside the campfire. Fully extinguish cigarettes and properly dispose of them. The public is also reminded that the use of tracer ammunition or exploding targets is illegal within the District during fire season. As of January 1, 2017 sky lanterns and other luminaries are prohibited in Oregon.

In 2016 human caused fires accounted for 75% of the fires in the Central Oregon District. Following fire season restrictions and prevention tips can reduce these ignitions and causing less damage to our natural resources including air, water, and soil. For additional information on ODF's Central Oregon District, including contact information and unit offices, please visit www.ODFcentraloregon.com.