



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Forestry

Northeast Oregon District

611 20th Street

La Grande, OR 97850

Phone: (541) 963-3168

FAX: (541) 962-1058

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jamie Knight, (541) 786-2039



"Stewardship in
Forestry"

Oregon Department of Forestry declares an end to fire season

La Grande, OR--As of 12:01 am, October 17, 2020, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) will terminate fire season for forestlands protected by the Northeast Oregon District. This includes over 2 million acres of private, state, county, municipal and tribal lands protected by Oregon Department of Forestry. The Northeast Oregon District includes lands in the following counties: Union, Baker, Umatilla, Wallowa and small portions of Grant, Morrow and Malheur counties.

The Northeast Oregon District has responded to a total of 66 fires, to date, burning on ODF protected lands in 2020. There have been 40 lightning fires for a total of 127.5 acres. Another 26 fires were human caused and burned a total of 126 acres.

"The last few days have brought quite a bit of precipitation across the region. While the district is comfortable with removing the general fire season restrictions, it is important to remember that weather patterns could change and conditions could return to dry and windy. This probably isn't the right time to burn slash or large debris piles. Waiting for more moisture and a sustained fall weather pattern is key." Said Matt Howard, Wallowa Unit Forester.

With the termination of fire season, landowners can begin burning in burn barrels or yard debris piles. Terminating fire season does not relieve landowners or forest operators of lawful responsibilities concerning the safe burning of debris or slash piles.

"With the exposure to wildfire smoke for an extended period this summer, as well as the COVID-19 concerns, following smoke management forecasts is very important." Howard stated. "Landowners are encouraged to follow the forecast and burn in a manner that keeps smoke out of the Smoke Sensitive Receptor Areas (SSRAs). SSRAs for the Northeast Oregon District are Pendleton, La Grande, Baker City, and Enterprise."

Specific Smoke Management/Burning Advisory Information:

- If you are under the protection of a rural or city fire department, please call and ask what their burning restrictions are. Burn permits for burn barrels or small amounts of yard debris are not required on lands protected by the Oregon Department of Forestry. In addition, burning within the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) requires a permit from CTUIR. You must follow all requirements as outlined in the permit.

- Burning slash from forestry and logging activities requires a Notification of Operation/PDM from ODF. In addition to this permit, the local ODF office must be contacted prior to ignition. Before burning in northeast Oregon, it is important to check weather conditions relative to smoke management. For smoke management forecasts call your local ODF office or visit the following website:
http://www.odf.state.or.us/DIVISIONS/protection/fire_protection/Daily/neo.htm
- Slash burns must be registered with the local ODF office at least 7 days prior to burning and burning accomplishments must be reported within 7 days following the burn. Please remember that our offices are closed to walk-in public. Phone your local office prior to visiting to make an appointment.

The Northeast Oregon District of the Oregon Department of Forestry would like to thank all of our landowners, forest operators, the public and interagency partners for their efforts in fire prevention, detection and suppression activities this season.

For further information, call your local ODF office:

La Grande Unit (541)963-3168
Baker City Sub-Unit (541)523-5831
Wallowa Unit (541)886-2881
Pendleton Unit (541)276-3491

To report a fire, call the Blue Mountain Interagency Dispatch Center at (541)963-7171, or dial 9-1-1.

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