



Malheur National Forest
431 Patterson Bridge Rd
John Day, OR 97845
www.fs.usda.gov/malheur

Umatilla National Forest
72510 Coyote Rd
Pendleton, OR 97801
www.fs.usda.gov/umatilla

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
1550 Dewey Ave, Suite A
Baker City, OR 97814
www.fs.usda.gov/wallowa-whitman

NEWS RELEASE

Contacts

Malheur National Forest: Mary Hamisevicz (508-422-6043)
Umatilla National Forest: Darcy Weseman (541-278-3722)
Wallowa-Whitman National Forest: Peter Fargo (541-523-1231)

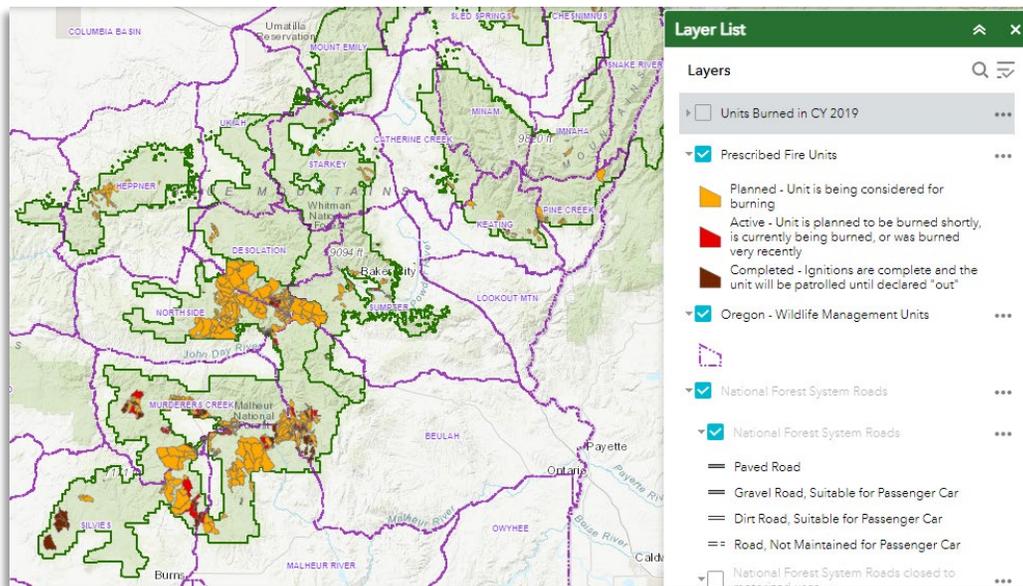
Blue Mountains National Forests prepare for spring burning

*Learn about the benefits of prescribed burning
and follow our progress online this spring on our interactive map*

JOHN DAY, PENDLETON and BAKER CITY, Ore. (April 7, 2021) – Fire management officials on the Malheur, Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests are preparing to implement spring prescribed burning activities. Prescribed fire is an important way to maintain and improve forest conditions with “good fire” as we reduce the risk of severe wildfire in the future.

Prescribed fire information for the Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests is available to the public on our tri-forest [online map](#). The map is labeled and color-coded to show each burn unit’s status: *planned*, *active*, or *completed*. For convenience, forest users can display current and past-year burn units along with National Forest boundaries and State wildlife management boundaries.

[Online Map: Tri-Forest Prescribed Fire Projects](#)



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Fire history studies have shown that fire has long been a dominant natural process in the Blue Mountains — maintaining open, park-like conditions in low- to mid-elevation forests of ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, and larch. Prescribed fire has a wide variety of benefits, including reducing dead and down fuels, thinning understory trees, stimulating natural fire-tolerant plants, enhancing forage, reducing the risk of stand-replacement fires, and creating strategic fuel breaks near urban-interface areas. Forest Service prescribed fire programs allows fire to play its natural role on the landscape under controlled conditions.

Fire managers have been working with County, State, and Regional partners to limit smoke in our communities. This is accomplished by coordinating with smoke forecasters at the Oregon Department of Forestry, so burning occurs under conditions that limit smoke entering local communities. Some smoke is likely to be visible from burn units, although prescribed fire managers minimize smoke in communities by selecting smaller burn units near communities, reducing the amount of smoke produced in a single day. Completing burning early in the afternoon also limits smoke settling overnight. Further, burn units are planned to alternate over time to reduce the likelihood of repeated smoke in a single area.

Please note that where and when burning occurs, and how many acres are treated within a prescribed fire unit, will vary due to weather, fuel conditions, smoke dispersion, and other variables. All areas may not be within prescription this spring, and implementation will likely not occur on every acre as planned. Additionally, some project areas may have acres within prescription that are not detailed in the prescribed fire map.

To learn more about current and planned prescribed fires in the area, please visit:

- [Online prescribed fire map for the Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests](#)
- [Blue Mountain Prescribed Fire Council Blog](#)
- [Blue Mountain Interagency Dispatch Center](#)
- [John Day Interagency Dispatch Center and Burns Interagency Communication Center](#)

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