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RECLAMATION

News Release

Oregon/Washington

Vale District

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Vale Bureau of Land Management expanding fire restrictions across Vale District

VALE, Ore. – Despite a late, wet spring, the risk of wildfire is increasing rapidly across eastern Oregon as hot and dry conditions continue.

To reduce the risk of human-caused wildfires, the Bureau of Land Management is expanding fire restrictions to include all of the Vale District starting July 29.

"Fires affect us all and we need the public's help to prevent the next human-caused fire," said Al Crouch, Vale BLM Fire Mitigation Specialist. "This is all about spark management. One less spark means one less wildfire."

Beginning Friday, fire restrictions will take effect on BLM-administered public lands in Baker, Union, Wallowa, Umatilla, and Morrow Counties in Oregon and Asotin County in Washington. These restrictions were enacted last week on BLM-protected lands in Malheur County, including the Owyhee Dam area.

Activities which are prohibited or limited include:

- Campfires and any other type of open fire, including the use of charcoal briquettes, are prohibited.
- Gas-powered generators and portable cooking stoves that use liquefied or bottled-gas fuels are allowed in areas cleared of vegetation for at least 10 feet in diameter.
- Operating a motor vehicle (including motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles) is restricted to roadways. Off-road parking is restricted to areas clear of flammable vegetation.
- Smoking is prohibited outside a vehicle, camp trailer, or building, except within areas free of vegetation for at least 6 feet, or on a boat.
- Using fireworks, sky lanterns, and exploding targets or tracer ammunition is prohibited.
- Using a chainsaw or other equipment with internal combustion engines, blowtorch, or the cutting, grinding, and/or welding of metal is prohibited.

"We urge the public to consider everyone's safety and do the right thing when it comes to restrictions," said Tracy Skerjanec, Vale District Fire Management Officer. "They are meant to help firefighters protect life and property, our communities, our heritage, and our lands."

While enjoying your public lands, carry a fire extinguisher and/or a shovel and extra water in case a fire does start. All wildfire starts on public or private land should be reported immediately by calling 911.

For more information about current fire restrictions within Vale District BLM-protected lands, go to www.blm.gov/office/vale-district-office or call 541-473-3144. For more information about Bureau of Land Management Oregon/Washington seasonal fire restrictions and fire closures, visit <https://www.blm.gov/orwafire>.

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