



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

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News Release

Oregon/Washington

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Vale District BLM Lowering Fire Restrictions

VALE, Ore. – Effective September 28, 2017, the Vale District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will be reducing fire restrictions on all BLM-administered lands district-wide.

"The recent wet weather has improved fire conditions locally and regionally," said Al Crouch, mitigation/education specialist. "However, this does not mean that fire season is over and the general fire prevention order still applies. As you travel and recreate on your public lands this fall, we urge you to take caution as wildfires can still occur. This is especially true on warm, dry and windy fall days."

Help protect and preserve our public lands. Know before you go and be careful with fire. If you have a campfire, never leave it unattended and have the necessary tools to keep it under control and extinguish it. If hauling a trailer, check to ensure the safety chains are not dragging and wheels, bearings and brakes are in good condition, and loads are secured. Check your off-road machines and vehicles to ensure spark arrestors are functioning properly and undercarriages are free of debris. Keep hot exhaust systems from contacting dry grass. When target shooting, avoid steel core ammunition and hard targets such as metal, glass and rock. Check your spark arrestor on your chainsaw and avoid striking rocks when operating. Remember, one less spark equals one less wildfire.

The general fire prevention order in effect prohibits the use of fireworks, target shooting with exploding targets, and the firing of a tracer or incendiary device on all BLM-managed public lands throughout Oregon and Washington.

"The moisture we received recently was heavy in many places, but wasn't as wide-spread as we had hoped," said Jason Simmons, Assistant Fire Management Officer (Fuels). "The lands administered by the Vale District cover a very large area. There are areas on the District that are still very dry. We urge the public to be vigilant."

Those who ignite fireworks, exploding targets, or incendiary devices on BLM-managed lands can be fined up to \$1,000, receive a prison term of up to one year, or both. An incendiary device is defined as any firebomb, and any device designed or specially adapted to cause physical harm to persons or property by means of fire, and consisting of an incendiary substance or agency and a means to ignite it. Examples include but are not limited to a flamethrower, Molotov cocktail, or accelerant. In addition, individuals responsible for starting wildland fires on federal lands can be billed for the cost of fire suppression.

The BLM cooperates with the [Pacific Northwest Wildfire Coordinating Group](#) to fight wildland fires in the Pacific Northwest. The [Geographic Area Coordination Center](#) offers updates on the fire potential regionally and nationally and the [NW Coordination Center](#) provides updates in the Pacific Northwest.

For more information regarding fire restrictions across Eastern Oregon, go the Blue Mountain Interagency Dispatch Center website at <http://bmidc.org/restrictions.shtml>

For additional information, call the Vale District Office at 541-473-3144. To report a wildfire, dial 911 or contact the Vale BLM Dispatch Center at 541-473-6295.

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The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's mission is to manage and conserve the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations under our mandate of multiple-use and sustained yield. In Fiscal Year 2015, the BLM generated \$4.1 billion in receipts from activities occurring on public lands.