



Oregon

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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"Stewardship in
Forestry"

Fuel Conditions and Fire Danger Prompt Fire Managers to Increase Restrictions on Private Lands

Recent hot and dry weather has increased fire danger in northeast Oregon. The indices that fire managers use to measure seasonal fire severity are indicating extreme fire conditions across the region. Oregon Department of Forestry-Northeast Oregon managers are instituting additional wildfire prevention measures in the Regulated Use Closure.

Effective at 12:01 a.m. July 26, 2017 the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) has added additional restrictions to the Regulated Use Closure for lands within the Northeast Oregon District. The Regulated Use Closure affects private, state, county, municipal, and tribal lands in seven counties: Union, Baker, Wallowa, Umatilla and small portions of Malheur, Grant and Morrow Counties. The Regulated Use Closure is intended to prevent or minimize human-caused wildfires and to protect natural resources and public health and safety.

“The increased restrictions are put into place to help prevent human caused fires. The fuel conditions have reached the point where we need to try and prevent as many fire starts as possible.” said Matt Howard, Wallowa Unit Forester. So far this year, ODF’s Northeast Oregon District has had 7 human-caused fires that have burned 22.6 acres.

The Regulated Use Closure includes the following fire prevention measures:

- Open fires are prohibited, including campfires, charcoal fires, cooking fires and warming fires, except at designated locations. Designated locations within the Regulated Use Closure area includes, but is not limited to, the following Oregon State Parks: Emigrant Springs, Ukiah Dale, Catherine Creek, Hilgard Junction, Red Bridge, Wallowa Lake, Minam and Unity Lake. Portable cooking stoves using liquefied or bottled fuels are allowed.
- Chain saw use is prohibited, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Chain saw use is permitted at all other hours, if the following firefighting equipment is present with each operating saw: one axe, one shovel, and one 8 ounce or larger fire extinguisher. In addition, a fire watch is required at least one hour following the use of each saw.
- Smoking is prohibited while traveling, except in vehicles on improved roads, in boats on the water, or at a cleared area.
- Use of motor vehicles, including motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), is prohibited except on improved roads, except in the commercial culture and harvest of agricultural crops.

- Cutting, grinding and welding of metal is prohibited, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Cutting, grinding and welding of metal is permitted at all other hours, if conducted in a cleared area and if a water supply is present, unless specifically waived by the State Forester.
- Mowing of dried and cured grass with power driven equipment is prohibited between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.
- Use of fireworks is prohibited.
- Any electric fence controller in use shall be: 1) Listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory or be certified by the Department of Consumer Business Services; and 2) Operated in compliance with manufacturer's instructions.
- Possession of the following firefighting equipment is required while traveling except on state highways, county roads and driveways: one shovel and one gallon of water or one 2 ½ pound or larger fire extinguisher.

Aside from these restrictions, also prohibited throughout fire season is debris burning (including burn barrels) and the use of exploding targets and tracer ammunition. Sky lanterns are illegal in Oregon.

Citizens are asked to continue to use caution and adhere to regulations. Possession of the following firefighting equipment is strongly encouraged (except on state highway, county roads and driveways): one shovel and one gallon of water, or one 2 ½ pound or larger fire extinguisher.

The public is also reminded that the Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests, as well as the BLM are currently under public use restrictions. Current fire restrictions for forestlands in Northeast Oregon can be found at www.bmidc.org.

<http://bluemountainfireinfo.blogspot.com/> is your spot for current fire information in the Blue Mountains. Find us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/oregondeptofforestryNEO/>

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

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