

Working Together: Coordinating Agricultural and Prescribed Fire



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Topics

- The Nez Perce Reservation
- Why Do We Make Burn Decisions?
 - History of our Smoke Management Program
 - Federal Air Rules for Indian Reservations
- Why Coordinate?
- Levels of Coordination: tribal, federal, state, local, regional
- Challenges



United States
Environmental Protection Agency

"...to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment..."

Northwest Indian Reservations



0 50 100 200 300 400 Miles

Legend

- Indian Reservation
- State Land

The 1863 Nez Perce Reservation



NPT Smoke Management Program

- Operating on the Reservation since 2002
 - Voluntary prior to the FARR
- Coordination with EPA & State of Idaho
 - Clearwater Airshed MOA (EPA, NPT, IDEQ)
 - Ag Burning MOA (EPA, NPT, IDEQ, ISDA)



Federal Air Rules for Indian Reservations (FARR)

- Effective June 7, 2005
- Set of air quality regulations established under the Clean Air Act
- Make air quality standards on reservations consistent with standards off
- Specific to EPA Region 10
 - Idaho, Oregon and Washington
- Applies to all residents (both tribal and non-tribal members)

Delegation Agreement

- Nez Perce Tribe's Delegation Agreement effective June 27, 2005
 - Rule for Limiting Visible Emissions
 - General Rule for Open Burning (Burn Bans)
 - Rules for General Open, Agricultural and Forestry Burning Permits
 - Rule for Air Pollution Episodes
 - Complaint Response
 - Inspections & Investigations

General Rule for Open Burning & Burn Permit Rules

- Although we recognize burning as an important tool in the landscape, protection of public health and welfare is of utmost importance
- All burning within the Nez Perce Reservation is permitted and burned only during approved burn durations
 - Fires set for traditional or cultural purposes or recreational fires are exempt from the FARR burn permit requirements
- FARR does not exempt/excuse compliance with other applicable laws and ordinances

Why Coordinate?

- To protect public health and welfare
- To avoid cumulative smoke impacts across jurisdictions
- To ensure all types of fire are addressed in an equitable manner
- To meet the needs of all interested parties
- To leverage resources

Levels of Coordination

- Tribal
- Federal
- State
- Local
- Regional

Level of Coordination: Tribal

- Nez Perce Tribe

- Forestry and Fire Management
- Land Services
- Fisheries Enforcement
- Law Enforcement

- Other Tribes

- Coeur d' Alene Tribe
- Kootenai Tribe of Idaho
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

Level of Coordination: Federal

- US EPA
- USDA
 - Forest Service
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Farm Service Agency
- US Parks and Recreation
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Indian Affairs

Level of Coordination: State

■ State of Idaho

- Department of Environmental Quality
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Lands
- Clearwater-Potlatch Timber Protective Association
- University of Idaho

■ State of Washington

- Department of Ecology
- Washington State University

Level of Coordination: State (cont.)

- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
 - Clearwater Airshed MOA
 - Air Quality Advisories and Burn Bans
 - Complaint Response
 - Crop Residue Disposal Program (formerly operated by the Department of Agriculture)

Level of Coordination: State (cont.)

- Wildland Fire Protection Districts
 - 5 districts within 1863 Reservation boundaries
 - Daily contact
 - Helped to establish low-risk agricultural fields
 - Coordinate burn decisions with fire safety restrictions
 - Provide constructive feedback on burn decision process

Level of Coordination: Local

- City Governments
- County/Rural Fire Departments
- County Sheriff Departments
- Hospitals/Clinics
 - Ni Mii Puu Health
 - North Central Idaho Health District

Level of Coordination: Regional

- Montana/Idaho Airshed Group
 - Members include industry and state, local and federal agencies in Idaho and Montana.
 - Coordinates efforts to manage smoke during wildfire and prescribed burning seasons
 - Program coordinator and a meteorologist provide burn recommendations and restriction messages for airsheds with planned burning
 - Work with group to provide on-the-ground feedback related to burn decisions
 - Group always notifies us of burns occurring on or near the 1863 Nez Perce Reservation

Level of Coordination: Regional (cont.)

- Grangeville Interagency Dispatch
 - Wildfire updates
 - Fire weather forecasts
 - Air Quality Advisories
 - News releases
- Western Regional Air Partnership
 - Board Member
 - Fire Emissions Joint Forum
 - Fire Tracking System

Challenges in Coordination

- Increased competition for the airshed
- Different regulations depending upon fuel type
- Different definitions of a 'successful burn'
- Changes in burn practices
- Obtaining multiple permits and approvals
- Willingness to accept change

Contact Information

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