

NEWS Release

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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CONTACT:
Lisa Clark (541) 280-9560

BLM
Prineville District Office

Prineville BLM Begins Pile Burning in La Pine Area Today

La Pine, Ore.- Prineville District Bureau of Land Management fire specialists started a multiple-day pile burning project near La Pine today. The pile burning project is located on 300 acres of BLM-administered lands in three areas including the Burgess and Huntington Road area, the Wagontrail subdivision, and the Doe subdivision. Almost 100 acres of the project were completed today, with fuels specialists hoping to complete the project by Thursday.

This is a final entry for areas that were originally thinned to reduce hazardous fuels and the threat of catastrophic wildfire to homes in the area. The BLM, in an effort to reduce the amount of material that needed to be burned, offered much of the slash as biomass. “After these areas were thinned, the leftover material was removed for firewood and to be chipped for pressboard,” said Dennis Fiore, fuels specialist with the Prineville BLM. “The material that we’re burning is the small dead and downed debris that wasn’t good for firewood or viable for the biomass market at this time.” Fuels specialists are taking advantage of the recent weather system that brought snow into the area. Piles are burned in the winter when snow limits the ability of the fire to spread.

Residents in the area can expect to see smoke over the next several days; however, the BLM anticipates the majority of smoke will dissipate with the weather pattern currently predicted for the rest of the week. All controlled burns are weather-dependent and completed in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Forestry smoke management plan, which governs controlled burns and attempts to minimize impacts to visibility and public health.

No road closures are expected due to smoke, and the BLM fuels specialists will monitor the piles while they are burning. Signs will be posted identifying burn areas for residents and motorists. If smoke drifts onto roadways in nearby subdivisions or on Highway 97, motorists should reduce speeds and turn on headlights. The project may be postponed to a later date if weather conditions become unfavorable. For more information, contact Prineville District, BLM at (541) 416-6700.

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The Bureau of Land Management manages more land – 258 million surface acres – than any other Federal agency. Most of this public land is located in 12 Western States, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1.8 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The Bureau of Land Management’s multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, and cultural resources on the public lands.

