

**Nez Perce National Forest
Forest**
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Grangeville, ID 83530
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Clearwater National
12730 Highway 12
Orofino, ID 83544
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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Summer Burning Set to Begin on Clearwater-Nez Perce Fire Zone

Grangeville, ID—While some fire managers are extinguishing unwanted fires in Idaho's backcountry, others plan to ignite prescribed fires in remote, high elevation areas that typically will burn only in hot, dry conditions.

If fuel and weather conditions and smoke dispersion patterns remain favorable, the Clearwater National Forest will ignite a series of prescribed fires beginning Saturday, August 16, through Wednesday, August 20. The burns are designed to reduce forest fuels, restore vegetation and improve wildlife habitat.

Units scheduled for ignition Saturday are within the Lochsa Ranger District's North Lochsa Face project area, and are located near Willow Ridge, Fish Butte and Middle Butte.

As these and other units within the North Lochsa Face area are ignited, several trail closures will be necessary to ensure public safety. Closures will include: Lewis and Clark Trail 25 on Willow Ridge, all of the Sherman Creek Trail 203, Fish Butte Saddle Trail 229, Fish Butte Trail 2230 and part of the Fish Creek Trail 2240.

On Sunday a unit northeast of Weitas Guard Station on the North Fork District will be ignited. While this burn is active, Lean To Ridge Road 555 beyond the bridge over Weitas Creek will be closed to traffic. Trail closures will include Weitas Creek Trail 20 from Weitas Campground to Weitas Guard Station and Bugle Point Trail 580 from its junction with Weitas Creek Trail to Bear Butte.

Also on Sunday, ignition is scheduled to begin on the Powell Ranger District along Toboggan Ridge Road 581 a few miles southwest of Blacklead Mountain. Toboggan

Ridge Road 581 will be closed from Blacklead to Toboggan Hill while this and subsequent burns are active.

If conditions remain favorable, more prescribed fires will be ignited Monday through Wednesday of next week.

During that time, the North Fork Ranger District plans to ignite several units just south of Cayuse Airstrip which will require closure of Lunde Ridge—Rock Garden Trail 534 from just north of Cayuse Airstrip to Lunde Saddle. A unit just southeast of Osier Ridge Lookout will necessitate closure of Osier Ridge Trail 429.

A number of burns may also start north of Beaver Creek Road 247 and Pierce Superior Road 250 from Aquarius campground to Kelly Forks Work Center. No road or trail closures are expected in association with those burns.

While the fires are expected to be of short duration, some may burn actively for some time depending upon weather conditions. All associated road and trail closures will be lifted as soon as it is safe to do so.

The Forests are coordinating with the Montana/Idaho Airshed Group and the Idaho and Montana Departments of Environmental Quality regarding air quality and smoke dispersion.

Additional information regarding the Clearwater National Forest's prescribed fire program along with roads and trails that will be restricted are posted at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater> under the heading "Prescribed Fire."

Questions should be directed to the appropriate Ranger District office, Deputy Fire Staff Officer Bob Lippincott (208-476-8203) or Fire Staff Officer Jim Gray (208-983-4066).

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