

# News Release

## Umatilla National Forest

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**September 8, 2008**

### **Public Meeting to Discuss Fuels Reduction Strategies in the Tollgate Area**

The Walla Walla Ranger District of the Umatilla National Forest is hosting a public meeting on September 17, to discuss an upcoming assessment for identifying fuels reduction and forest stand density projects in the Tollgate area east of Weston, Oregon.

“We feel it’s important to discuss and coordinate wildfire risk reduction strategies across land ownerships,” said Mike Rassbach, Walla Walla District Ranger. “So, prior to developing any project proposals, we want to visit with those interested about specific interests and project ideas.”

In 2005, the Umatilla County *Community Wildfire Protection Plan* (CWPP) identified the Upper State Highway 204/Tollgate Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) area as a priority for fuels reduction projects to lessen the impact of wildfire on lives, property, and the landscape.

The meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on September 17<sup>th</sup> at the Tollgate Trail Finders Club House (62369 Highway 204.) Presentations will include:

- Role of fire in the ecosystem
- History of fire in the Tollgate area
- Current condition of the forest and rangeland ecosystem
- Discuss wildfire risks
- Private land fire protection
- Umatilla County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

For more information about the public meeting or Fuels Reduction assessment, please contact Mark Johnson (Assistant Fire Management Officer) at the Walla Walla Ranger Station at (509) 522-6283.

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