



Interagency News Release

USDI Bureau of Land Management, Medford District
<http://www.blm.gov/or/districts/medford/index.htm>

USDA Forest Service, Rogue River - Siskiyou National Forest
www.fs.fed.us/r6/rogue-siskiyou

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Agencies Fall Prescribed Burning Programs Get Underway

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Medford, OR, October 24, 2006 – This season's fall prescribed burning programs are active and underway on lands administered by the Medford BLM District and Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest. Prescribed burn projects planned for October 2006 thru February 2007 total about 13,721 acres between the two agencies.

These burns closely mimic Mother Nature's lightning strikes in southern Oregon and are done intermittently by the federal agencies during the fall and winter as the site's weather condition and fuel moisture content allow for safe and successful burning operations. The agencies try to burn when wind and temperature conditions minimize smoke impacts to residential areas.

The burns are low-intensity burns designed to provide an additional level of safety from wildfires for nearby residents by protecting natural resources and protecting private property and residences in and around communities. Prescribed burns also promote better habitat for wildlife and reduce competition for nutrients among the remaining trees and vegetation, creating a healthier forest. They reduce activity-created fuels and natural fuels such as forest vegetation on the ground.

Most of the Medford BLM's and Forest Service's prescribed burning programs are in wildland urban interface areas that have been identified as high priority for treatment due to the risk of wildfire occurrence to these residential areas. The agencies are addressing priority needs of the area by treating public lands that are in close proximity to residential and commercial areas.

Strict prescribed burning plans are designed with objectives that include meeting specific meteorological conditions on the day of ignition to lessen smoke impacts. The goals are for favorable winds to disperse smoke away from populated areas and communities during the day.

The Forest Service and BLM follow all state regulations for smoke management which ensures that weather conditions are appropriate for smoke ventilation. Several conditions must be met before prescribed burns can be carried out, including proper humidity, wind speed and direction, temperature and fuel moisture. The State of Oregon Smoke Management Office indicates suitable weather conditions for smoke dispersal.

The BLM plans nearly 10,500 acres of burning with about 8,358 acres of piled fuels and under burns on approximately 1,647 acres in the following areas:

- ***Applegate/Thomas Creek/Squires Peak/Gales Creek:*** Broadcast burning is planned on about 700 acres. This includes about 100 acres in Thompson Creek area and 300 acres on Squires Peak and an additional 300 acres in the Little Applegate drainage. Hand-pile burning will occur on 2,000 acres mainly in the Applegate/Galls Creek areas and about 300 acres near Howard / Hyatt Lakes.
- ***Butte Falls:*** About 426 acres of pile burning will be burned in the Seven Basins area. Smoke could be visible from the City of Rogue River and the Sams Valley areas. A total of 932 acres of pile burning will occur around Lost Creek Lake. The smoke from these burns will be very visible from all recreation sites around Lost Creek and Highway 62. In addition, 502 acres will be burned in Trail Creek and in areas around the Crowfoot Road. Smoke could be visible in Trail Creek and Shady Cove from these burns.
- ***Wolf Creek/Sunny Valley/Quines Creek:*** About 35 acres of underburning is planned south of Speaker Road. Hand pile-burning is planned on about 2,400 acres in various locations and smoke could be visible from the I-5 corridor at Wolf Creek, Sunny Valley and Quines Creek areas.
- ***Grants Pass/Merlin:*** Underburning is planned on 500 acres in the Merlin and Galice areas. Pile-burning is planned on about 1,800 acres around the Grants Pass, Merlin and Galice areas.
- ***Illinois Valley:*** Approximately 312 acres of burning north of Cave Junction and east of Selma areas.

The Forest Service is planning burns on about 3,716 acres with 2,839 acres of hand piled burns and under burns on approximately 877 acres in the following locations:

- ***Galice and Illinois Valley Ranger Districts:*** – A number of prescribed fires are planned totaling approximately 1,909 acres. These prescribed fires will include about 1,048 acres of hand piles and 861 acres of broadcast burns.
Galice Ranger District: Chrome Ridge, Flattop, Squaw Mountain, Briggs Valley, Waters Creek, Butcherknife Creek, Horse Mountain, Clear Creek areas.
Illinois Valley Ranger District : Illinois Valley Ranger District Facility, Oregon Caves, Days and McGuire Gulches, Oak Flat, Six Mike, Little Grayback Creek, Upper Grayback Creek, Upper Sucker Creek, Althouse Creek, Elder Mountain, French Peak, Hogue Meadow (south of Takilma) areas.
- ***Prospect and Butte Falls Ranger Districts:***
Butte Falls Ranger District - About 382 acres of hand pile-burning within the Big Butte Springs Watershed (Butte Falls District).
Prospect Ranger District: Approximately 595 acres of hand pile-burning within the Upper Rogue Watershed.
- ***Chetco & Gold Beach Ranger Districts:*** Plans are to burn about 150 acres total this year , primarily in the following geographical locations:
Gold Beach Ranger District- Mountain Wells, Adams Prairie, Wildhorse Ridge, Lower Shasta Costa Creek.
Chetco Ranger District - Miller Prairie, Long Ridge
- ***Ashland and Applegate Ranger Districts:***
Ashland Ranger District: For the Ashland Watershed Protection Project there is 161 acres of pile burns and three prescribed burns totaling 123 acres to complete.
Applegate Ranger District: There is 253 acres of pile burning and an 18 acre prescribed burn to complete in the areas of Elliott Ridge and Squaw Lakes.
- ***Powers Ranger District:*** There is approximately 50 acres of hand-pile burns.

Daily updates on an Interagency Prescribed Fire Information Line that provides the public information for the Medford BLM District and the Rogue River portion of the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest is available. Please call (541) 618-2354 or 1 (800) 267-3126 for information. Please do not call 911 for burn information as it could interfere with emergency calls.

Forest Service prescribed burn information can be obtained by calling your local Forest Service office.