

NEWS RELEASE

Umatilla National Forest

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UMATILLA NATIONAL FOREST FIREWOOD PERMITS AVAILABLE MAY 1 MANY ROADS STILL CLOSED DUE TO SNOW

Pendleton, OR: Personal-use firewood cutting on the Umatilla National Forest will open May 1, according to Kevin Martin, Forest Supervisor. Starting Friday, firewood permits can be purchased at Umatilla National Forest offices in Pendleton, Ukiah, Heppner, Walla Walla, and Pomeroy and at several conveniently located vendors.

Firewood permits will continue to cost \$5.00 per cord with a minimum purchase of four cords for \$20. Though **new this year**, the maximum limit for personal-use firewood on the Umatilla National Forest has been increased from 10-cords to 12-cords-per-household-per-year. "This change was made to accommodate those who wish to purchase their maximum limit from local vendors," said Martin. Vendors can only sell firewood permits in 4-cord packets.

Also **new this year** is the vendor fee. For each 4-cord, \$20 firewood permit you purchase at a local vendor, you will be charged an additional vendor fee up to \$2. "Our vendors provide a great service to the woodcutter by selling firewood permits at times more convenient to the public," said Martin. Most vendors are open early mornings, late evenings and on the weekends. An additional fee is not charged if you purchase a permit at a Forest Service Office.

Though woodcutting season traditionally opens May 1, significant snow levels in the mountains this year will make it difficult to get to the firewood. "It's an unusual spring," said Martin. Much of the Forest, especially to the north, is snowed under and those areas you can get to are saturated from winter melt off and recent rains. "We're concerned that folks will find themselves stuck in the snow or cause significant resource damage trying to get unstuck," said Martin.

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Woodcutters are urged to:

- Contact the local Ranger District office before they head out to make sure the area they're traveling to is accessible.
- Avoid driving off the road and onto wet, unstable ground to load their firewood.
- Be prepared. Pack additional food, water, clothing and other emergency supplies.
- Let someone know your destination and estimated time of return.

Firewood cutting information and restrictions will be updated and posted on a recorded message at **1-877-958-9663**. For more information on firewood cutting, please call the Supervisor's Office at (541) 278-3716 or your local District Office.

- North Fork John Day Ranger District (541) 427-3231
- Heppner Ranger District (541) 676-9187
- Walla Walla Ranger District (509) 522-6290
- Pomeroy Ranger District (509) 843-1891

EDITORS - Please use businesses convenient to your area. Permits are available at all Umatilla National Forest Offices and at the following businesses:

OREGON:

Pendleton, OR
Southgate Mini-Mart

Pilot Rock, OR
Mentzer & Elliott

Dale, OR
Dale Store

Hermiston, OR
Smitty's Ace Hardware

Heppner, OR
Heppner Shell
Green Feed - MCGG

Ukiah, OR
Rhode's Supply
Granny's Store

Milton-Freewater, OR
PGG

Athena, OR
PGG

Tollgate, OR
Tollgate Store

Elgin, OR
S&W Hardware

Spray, Oregon
Lazy Wolf Resort

WASHINGTON:

Pomeroy, WA
Pomeroy Foods
P.F. Express
Last Resort

Dayton, WA
Conoco General Store

Clarkston, WA
Schurman's True Value
Hell's Canyon NRA

Kennewick, WA
Farmer's Exchange

Pasco, WA
Columbia Grain & Feed