

Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests and Prineville District, Bureau of Land Management

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June 29, 2010

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4th of July Fireworks & Campfire Safety-A Timely Reminder from Smokey Bear

CENTRAL OREGON-As we head towards the 4th of July holiday, it's time to remind everyone who has plans to visit your local National Forest and Bureau of Land Management administered lands about wildfire safety.

“Let's not get complacent about wildfire safety due to the unusually wet spring this year. Fine fuels, such as grasses and forbs, are growing at record heights. Although the fire season may have been delayed a bit due to the extra moisture, as soon as the fine fuels dry out, which happens very quickly, fire danger will immediately increase, “ said Smokey Bear.

There are currently no public use restrictions in place for public lands, however, please be extra careful over this holiday weekend, and make sure all of your campfires are dead out. Never leave a campfire unattended and make sure you properly extinguish your campfire prior to departure, stirring repeatedly with a shovel, water and dirt until it is cool to the back of your hand.

Avoid parking over tall grasses, whether at the trailhead, campsite or your favorite fishing spot. Your weekend adventure could quickly make a turn for the worse if you park over tall grasses and your vehicle's catalytic converter starts a fire. After enjoying a nice hike, we don't want you returning to a burned vehicle and a potentially very large bill for wildfire suppression costs.

It is also important to note this holiday weekend that:

Fireworks are prohibited on all federal and state-protected lands.

The use or possession of fireworks on National Forest lands is subject to confiscation and fines of up to \$5,000 and/or six months in jail. Any person who ignites, possesses or uses fireworks on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, may be fined up to \$1,000 or imprisoned for up to one year, or both.

Remember, you can be held civilly and criminally liable for starting a fire on public lands. Enjoy the beautiful weather and recreation activities but please, be careful and don't forget about the potential for wildfires amidst the excitement of getting outdoors. Smokey Bear thanks you ahead of time for remembering his message during all of your outings this year: “Repeat after me, only you...” To report a wildfire, please call (911).

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The Agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to State and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world.

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