

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

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**For immediate release: January 21, 2009**  
**Contact: Virginia Gibbons 541/416-6647**

**Pile Burning Starting Near LaPine**

CENTRAL OREGON—Deschutes National Forest fuels specialists are planning a 100-acre controlled burn on Prineville Bureau of Land Management administered lands near LaPine starting on January 21 around 10:00 a.m. The burn project area is located approximately seven miles south of LaPine and west of Highway 97.

The burning projects will stop earlier in the afternoon than usual in an effort to avoid smoke impacts; however, residual smoke may be visible on Highway 97 in the late evening/early morning hours. Signs will be posted to warn motorists of any smoke intrusions along the highway and flaggers and pilot cars will be utilized if necessary between mileposts 173 and 175. Motorists should reduce speed, turn on head lights and proceed with caution when traveling through smoke-impacted areas.

This area has been treated for hazardous fuels reduction purposes several times in the past. Initially, it was commercially thinned. Then in an effort to create defensible space for the nearby subdivision of Wagon Trail Ranch, crews constructed hand piles of the left over woody material along a 250' buffer zone. The remainder of the area was treated with a masticator (a chipper mounted to a bobcat) to create biomass material. These treatments are a continuing effort by public land management agencies to reduce the accumulation of potentially hazardous fuels on public lands and to improve forest health by opening up crowded and unhealthy stands of trees.

The project is scheduled to begin on today at 10:00 am and is expected to take three days to complete, dependent upon weather. For more information, contact Kevin Carlson at (541) 433-3214.

All controlled burns are weather-dependent and completed in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Forestry smoke management plan. Fire specialists will postpone burning if winds are not forecasted for adequate smoke dispersal.

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