

News Release

Umatilla National Forest

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News Contact: Joani Bosworth, Umatilla National Forest (541) 278-3722

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Public Meeting Set to Discuss Proposed Fuels Reduction Activities Near Penland Lake

The Heppner Ranger District of the Umatilla National Forest will host its fourth collaborative public meeting on Thursday, October 28, to discuss proposed fuel reduction and forest stand density projects in the Potamus Fuels Reduction Project area located southeast of Heppner, Oregon near Penland Lake.

In 2001, the Morrow County *Community Wildfire Protection Plan* (CWPP) identified the Penland Lake Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) area as a priority for fuels reduction projects to lessen the impact of wildfire on lives, property, and the landscape.

Two meetings and a field trip were held over the past year to help identify public interest and project ideas. "We felt it was important to discuss and coordinate wildfire risk reduction strategies across land ownerships, so prior to developing the proposed action, we visited with the public and partner agencies in a collaborative process," said Todd Buchholz, District Ranger.

This next meeting is scheduled for **6:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 28** at the Heppner Ranger District Office, 117 South Main Street, Heppner, OR. Discussion topics will include:

- Meet the new Ranger
- Update on past collaborative efforts
- Review of proposed fuels reduction activities
- Needs for access and egress routes into the Penland Lake recreation area
- Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003
- Timelines to complete the planning process and proposed project implementation

For more information about the public meeting or the fuels reduction assessment, please contact Brian Spradlin (Environmental Coordinator) at the Heppner Ranger District 541-676-2127.

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