

Several prescribed burnings scheduled in Central Oregon next week

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

CENTRAL OREGON -- With temperatures predicted in the 80s next week, several project areas on public lands identified for prescribed burning are coming into prescription and fuels technicians are preparing their drip torches for ignitions starting as early as Monday next week. These burns are planned on National Forest or BLM lands near the communities of Bend, Sunriver, Sisters and La Pine.

The Kiwi Pine and Klak burns are 145 and 246 acres, respectively, and both are on the Deschutes National Forest. The Kiwi Pine burn is located close to Century Drive approximately two miles southwest of the Inn of the Seventh Mountain and seven miles west of Bend. The Klak burn is located approximately four miles southwest of Sunriver, just west of Big River Day Use Area and north of Bates Butte along Forest Road 4220. The burn

objective is to reduce hazardous fuels; the Kiwi Pine burn is adjacent to the Bend Community Wildfire Protection Plan and the Klak burn is located inside the Upper Deschutes Coalition Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

The Redmond Hotshots may assist with this burn as available. The ignition date is expected to occur on Monday, April 21. The project will take from one to four days to complete with mop up and patrols. Smoke may be visible from the City of Bend and may impact Century Drive (46), and Forest Roads 41 and 4220. Nearby communities and subdivisions that may be impacted include Bend (seven miles), Sunriver (six miles) and River Meadows (two miles). Residual smoke is expected to last in this area for several weeks.

The Highway 20 burn on the Sisters Ranger District of the Deschutes National Forest, is a 143-acre burn located three miles NW of Indian Ford Ranch and ¼ to ½ mile northeast and southeast of Highway 20. Burn objectives are to reduce tree stand densities and fuel loads and to mimic the historic role of frequent and low intensity fire into the area. The area was previously treated by thinning and handpile burning; this is a first entry underburn to be conducted by Sisters Ranger District fire personnel, Sisters Oregon Department of Forestry personnel and other fire personnel from Central Oregon Fire Management Services.

Nearby subdivisions include Indian Ford Ranch three miles to the southeast and scattered private residences one to four miles to the northeast. Ignition is expected on Monday, April 20, or Tuesday, April 21. Project duration is one day, with mop up continuing for two-three days. Patrols will continue overnight and through the weekend as necessary. Flaggers will be utilized as needed along Highway 20; however, burn bosses will attempt to minimize any impacts to the highway.

The Little Deschutes Tract on the Prineville District BLM is a 300-acre planned burn located next to the Little Deschutes River in La Pine, four miles east of La Pine State Park and north of the State Rec Road. The burn area is in a large wet meadow with encroaching lodge pole pine. The objective of this burn is to rejuvenate the sedge, rush and grass habitats in the meadow and reduce the amount of trees encroaching into the meadow. Nearby subdivisions (Sun Country Estates and Whispering Pines subdivision) are located within ½ mile of this burn. Smoke is expected to be visible on Highway 97 and the State Rec Road and is

anticipated to settle along the river during the evening hours. This project is expected to take one day for ignition and two-three days for mop up and patrolling.

Motorists should reduce speed, turn on head lights and proceed with caution when traveling through smoke-impacted areas. Potentially affected subdivision residents are advised to close doors and windows to prevent smoke from entering dwellings. Forest visitors should avoid traveling through burn project areas, as any trees weakened by the burn may fall and burning stump holes can cause significant burns to those who step into them.

Prescribed burning is implemented during optimal weather conditions at times that favor the best smoke dispersal possible, in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Forestry Smoke Management Program.

For further information on the Little Deschutes Tract Burn, contact Dennis Fiore at (541) 647-9010; for the Highway 20 burn, contact Amanda Rau at (541) 549-7860; for the Kiwi Pine and Klak burns contact Shannon Evans at (541) 383-4706.

Detailed maps showing all the project areas on public lands identified for fuels treatment in FY09. The maps will be available soon on the Deschutes & Ochoco National Forest website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/centraloregon>

Several prescribed burnings scheduled in Central Oregon next week by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources