



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fremont-Winema National Forest
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Public Use

Restrictions updated for Fremont-Winema National Forest; Campfires no longer allowed in wilderness areas starting Wednesday

LAKEVIEW, Ore. – The Public Use Restrictions for the Fremont-Winema National Forest are being updated effective this Wednesday, July 7, now prohibiting campfires on the Forest in the Mountain Lakes, Sky Lakes and Mount Thielsen Wilderness Areas.

“Recent hot, dry weather has affected fuel conditions, even at higher elevations, with low fuel moisture levels typically seen later in the season,” said Interagency Fire Management Officer Jeb Koons. “This increases the risk for wildfire in wilderness areas where initial attack is challenging and the potential for rapid fire growth is high.”

The Gearhart Wilderness on the Bly Ranger District was already excluded due to concerns about fire and fuel conditions.

Management of the Mount Thielsen and Sky Lakes Wilderness Areas are shared with nearby national forests, including the Deschutes, Rogue River-Siskiyou and Umpqua. While efforts are made for consistent rules in these areas, forest visitors are responsible for ensuring they are following the regulations for the landscape they are recreating on, including current Public Use Restrictions.

“The wilderness areas are popular places for recreation and there are frequently developed recreation sites nearby,” Koons said. “Removing campfires from the wilderness starting this week is important for public safety in these areas by preventing wildfires so Forest visitors can continue to enjoy their summer hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, fishing and camping trips.”

Campfires are now only allowed in the designated campgrounds and recreation sites listed in Exhibit A of the closure order. This is in place until November 30 or conditions improve, whichever occurs first.

Petroleum-fueled stoves, lanterns or heating devices are permitted. However, caution should still be used to prevent a wildfire.

The order is formally referenced as Closure Order Number 06-02-21-02. Violations of the prohibitions are punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000 for an individual or \$10,000 for an organization, or imprisonment for not more than 6 months, or both.

For more information on the federal agency Public Use Restrictions and Fire Prevention Orders for the agencies of the South Central Oregon Fire Management Partnership, please visit <https://scofmp.org/restrictions.shtml>.

South Central Oregon is already seeing an active and early fire season. Area residents and visitors are asked to use extreme caution with anything that could spark a wildfire. In the places where they are permitted, campfires should never be left unattended, even in a fire ring. Drown the campfire, stir, and repeat until fire is dead out and cold to the touch before leaving. Suspected wildfires should be reported immediately to 911.

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South Central Oregon Fire Management Partnership provides comprehensive wildland fire services to more than eight million acres of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management Lakeview District; Fremont-Winema National Forest; Oregon Department of Forestry Klamath-Lake District; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Klamath Basin and Sheldon-Hart Mountain National Wildlife Refuge Complexes; and Crater Lake National Park. The area encompasses federal, state, and private lands within south central Oregon and northwest Nevada.