

Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests and  
Prineville District, Bureau of Land Management  
Office of Communications  
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News and Information  
For Immediate Release  
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Pile Burning/Fuels Reduction Near Newberry Estates

LAPINE—A Prineville Bureau of Land Management fuels treatment crew is scheduled to start pile burning on approximately 20 acres of forested land on Friday, November 21. The burning is expected to last 1-2 days, with an additional two days of patrolling and mopping up, depending on weather conditions. Firefighters will light piles within a 20-acre area located between Highway 97 and the Newberry Estates Subdivision. Although only minimal smoke is expected as a result of the pile burning, signs will be posted along Rosland Road to advise residents and travelers to drive with caution in the vicinity of the project area.

The piles are the result of ongoing stewardship thinning contracts designed to reduce hazardous fuels concentrations near homes and improve forest health. The thinning and removal of the trees will reduce the density of the stand, thus reducing the current fire hazard and stimulating the health of the remaining trees. The visual character of the stand will change from a dense thicket of small trees to a more open forest of larger trees.

The total project area is approximately 2,500 acres and is expected to take three to five years to complete. The treatment area is within close proximity of several subdivisions, the town of LaPine and Highway 97 on BLM land that is bounded on the north by Forest Road 21, on the east by the Deschutes National Forest boundary, on the south by Finley Butte Road and on the west by Highway 97. Pile burning will occur in the area each fall until the project is completed.

In the process of thinning, the stewardship contractors will also remove leaning or diseased trees and cut brush within 150' of homes. Residual woody debris will be piled, chipped, scattered or removed and unnecessary firewood roads will be closed.

Other objectives for the project include salvaging dead and dying timber, completing successful reforestation and increasing subsequent growth of commercial tree species. If any threatened or endangered species, raptor nests or cultural resource artifacts are found, work will stop immediately pending evaluation by trained personnel. In order to preserve wildlife habitat, snags and downed wood will be left in place. For more information, contact Steve Castillo at (541) 416-6765.

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