

**Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests**  
**Office of Communications**

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## **Helicopter Training Exercise Used To Clear Illegal Dump Site**

*PRINEVILLE*—Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service firefighters participating in a June 10 training exercise will use four helicopters to remove tons of appliances, tires, automobile parts and household garbage illegally dumped in a scenic canyon, eight miles southwest of Prineville.

Helicopter firefighting crews from Prineville, Burns, Lakeview and Vale will use Bell 206 helicopters under federal contracts to haul waste dumped east of Millican Road at the Millican Cliffs.

The debris field is on BLM land and visible from the Crooked River National Backcountry Byway. Large amounts of garbage have been thrown into the box canyon from the rim, where three people have died from falls and outdoor parties regularly occur.

BLM managers will establish a temporary closure order in the area June 7-14. Millican Road motorists might be affected by traffic delays four and a half miles south of where the road intersects Highway 126, during the June 10 exercise.

Volunteers and Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge program participants prepared the area by bagging garbage, sorting large pieces of debris and stacking more than 300 tires. Jefferson County Department of Community Justice youth and adult crews also helped with the effort.

The site is typical of the steep, rocky terrain where helicopter crews suppress fires, so incorporating the project into annual training provides new and returning pilots and firefighters realistic drills.

Helicopter crew member instructors will teach students skills such as long-line hook-ups, helicopter base operations, crash rescue techniques and in-flight procedures at six stations the day before the scheduled clean-up.

During the exercise, about 30 students will load debris into cargo nets they will attach to long-line cables equipped with electronically-controlled hooks suspended from aircraft. Pilots will then fly loads weighing up to 800 pounds to bins at a drop point one half mile from the cliff.

Experienced firefighters will also receive in-flight instruction in communicating by radio, locating fires with GPS units and determining firefighting resource needs.

Heavy equipment will be used June 11 to extricate large debris, including nine vehicles and a boat. Trac Towing, Swift & McCormick Inc., Prineville Disposal, Krider Construction and the Crook County Landfill will contribute to the collection and recycling efforts.

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