



News Release

Medford District Office
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Bureau of Land Management Medford District issues emergency fire closures

Medford, Oregon – As a result of extreme fire activity, the Bureau of Land Management Medford District has temporarily closed all BLM-administered public lands south of Grants Pass, Interstate 5, and U.S. Route 199 to the border of the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest. In addition, the BLM has closed all public lands near the South Obenchain Fire outside of White City and the Slater Fire along the California state line.

The South Obenchain Fire closure includes all public lands south of Highway 62, north of Highway 140, east of Range 01W (approximately 2.5 miles west of Shady Cove) and west of Range 02E (approximately 2 miles east of Butte Falls).

Maps of the closure areas are available on the Bureau of Land Management’s website: <https://www.blm.gov/programs/public-safety-and-fire/fire-and-aviation/regional-info/oregon-washington/fire-restrictions>

Members of the public may not enter closed areas, and all uses—including hunting and dispersed camping—are prohibited.

Public and firefighter safety are the highest priority. The extreme fire danger and behavior have prompted the closure of these sites while fire suppression crews respond to the incidents. As it becomes safe to do so, firefighters will begin to assess the fires and their impacts in alignment with sound risk management practices.

Multiple new fires started on Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and private lands in the region have prompted Level 3 “Go” evacuations. Moderate to heavy smoke impacts from the fires are expected to continue.

Personal safety is paramount. Stay informed on air quality ratings and more by visiting the Oregon Smoke Blog at <http://oregonsmoke.blogspot.com/>. Learn how to stay safe from wildfire smoke at <https://www.cdc.gov/air/wildfire-smoke/default.htm>.

Weather and fuel conditions remain favorable for continued fire spread. Nearby residents and visitors to the area are encouraged to check with local emergency officials for the latest information on evacuations.

For the latest road and weather condition updates, visit <https://www.tripcheck.com/>.

Additional fire information is available on Inciweb:

- South Obenchain Fire: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/article/7185/55531/>
- Slater Fire: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7173/>

Please call 911 to report any signs of new fires.

Please avoid outdoor recreation during these times and observe public use restrictions to help us limit potential new starts during this time:

- **Campfires or any other type of open fire, including the use of charcoal briquettes, is prohibited on BLM-managed land.**
- **Power-driven machinery is prohibited in forested areas.** This restriction includes power saws; equipment used for the cutting, grinding, or welding of metal; mowing of dry, cured grass with power equipment; and the use of any other spark-emitting equipment using an internal combustion engine.
- **Smoking** is only allowed while inside a vehicle or while stopped in an area at least three (3) feet in diameter that is clear of flammable vegetation.
- **Operating a motor vehicle and parking off road** (including motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles) is only allowed on roadways clear of flammable vegetation.
- **Using fireworks, exploding targets, or tracer ammunition** is prohibited.
- **Using a chainsaw or other equipment with internal combustion engines** for felling, bucking, skidding, woodcutting, or any other operation is prohibited.
- **Welding or operating a torch with an open flame** is prohibited.

Visitors to lands managed by the BLM are also required to carry tools with them to ensure small fires can be put out quickly, including a shovel, axe, and at least one gallon of water or a 2.5-pound fire extinguisher.

A list of personal use restrictions, as well as closure orders, are available at <https://www.blm.gov/programs/public-safety-and-fire/fire-and-aviation/regional-info/oregon-washington/fire-restrictions>. You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter @BLMOregon.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in the 11 Western states and Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. In fiscal year 2018, the diverse activities authorized on BLM-managed lands generated \$105 billion in economic output across the country. This economic activity supported 471,000 jobs and contributed substantial revenue to the U.S. Treasury and state governments, mostly through royalties on minerals.