



## Forest Service News Release

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### Prescribed Fire Operations Update

**John Day, Prairie City and Hines, OR.** – (June 28, 2021) Malheur National Forest Fire staff continue monitoring conditions across the Forest, including temperature, relative humidity, and fuel moisture.

There are no prescribed fire units on the Malheur National Forest currently planned for active prescribed fire ignition over the next week.

Blue Mountain, Prairie City, and Emigrant Creek Ranger Districts will monitor conditions and reassess for the following week for additional ignitions.

All 3 districts will have resources patrolling previously burned units. Public can expect to see smoke and low to moderate fire activity in Murderers Creek 6, Soda Bear 4, and Galena 30 on the Blue Mountain Ranger District. Smoke will be visible from the Elk 16 units on the Prairie City district, and on the Emigrant Creek district, in Silvies units 7 and 12.

Murderers creek unit 6 will continue to consume unburned fuel along the north aspects of the unit boundaries. The photos display light smoke from the Murderers Creek 6 unit viewed from Flagtail Lookout and an example of the terrain and fuel conditions where one may see smoke and flame. The white ash is where a downed log was consumed completely due to its lack of moisture. The log to the right is smoldering due to presence of moisture within it. As the hot and dry conditions continue, the log will continue to lose moisture and it will slowly burn up. As any smoldering fire is exposed to the sun and heat, that activity could increase. Potential for slight increases in flame length which would result in additional smoke creation is likely to occur. The majority of unburned islands are well interior of the boundary of the unit. Mosaically burned areas along any boundaries (of all units) will be patrolled on a regular basis. Public can expect to see fire resources in the unit areas we've burned this spring.

For the safety of firefighters and the public, roads and areas of prescribed fire activity will be signed. Please avoid these areas so as not to interfere with ongoing operations. For safety, roads, trails and areas may need to close temporarily as firefighter operations are taking place. Smoky conditions may also reduce visibility to a level that would require additional temporary closures. During prescribed fire operations, there is potential for impacts to camping and hunting. Hunters are advised to plan ahead, for their safety they should not camp in or near an area of prescribed fire activity.

Spring operations reduce surface fuels, increase height of some canopy, reduce small tree densities, and help promote fire resilient trees, thereby improving our ability to protect communities from wildfire. Additionally, these prescribed fires improve wildlife habitat, promote long-term ecosystem integrity and sustainability by reducing the risk of high-severity wildland fire.

All prescribed burn activity is weather and condition dependent. With the potential for smoke to settle in certain areas during active operations, the public can monitor the smoke and air quality in our area and across the state by visiting, <http://oregonsmoke.blogspot.com/>.

Additional information regarding prescribed burning on the Malheur National Forest is available on InciWeb at <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7426/> or by viewing the Prescribed Fire Activity interactive map at [USFS R6 Tri-Forest Prescribed Fire Map](#).

For further information on the Malheur National Forest, please visit us at [www.fs.usda.gov/malheur](http://www.fs.usda.gov/malheur) or call the Supervisor's Office at 541-575-3000.



*Figure 1. View of Murderers Creek 6 from Flagtail Lookout.*



*Figure 2. The photo displays an example of the terrain and fuel conditions where one may see smoke and flame.- photo courtesy of Doug Cates.*