

**Ochoco and Deschutes National Forests,
and Prineville District, Bureau of Land Management
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Controlled Burns Scheduled Near West Butte & Sanford Creek

PRINEVILLE—Prineville Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and U.S. Forest Service fuels specialists are planning to ignite two controlled burns in early to mid September near the West Butte and Sanford Creek areas.

The West Butte controlled burn area is located approximately 15 miles south of Prineville along the Millican Highway and due south of the Juniper Acres subdivision. The targeted total acreage for this burn is 4,600 acres. The burn is tentatively scheduled to begin on Tuesday, September 8th, weather conditions permitting. Fuels specialists will create a “black line” around the perimeter of the planned burn utilizing handheld drip torches. Once the black line is complete, a helicopter equipped with a PSD (plastic sphere dispenser) machine will be used for ignition in the interior portions of the identified burn area.

“When the helicopter is used, the intensity of the burn is generally greater, so the local residents can expect to see active flame during this burn,” said Burn Boss Nancy Wiggins.

The objective of the burn is to reduce hazardous fuels that could add to the intensity of future wildfires in the area, maintain and create wildlife habitat and restore the health and diversity of vegetation in the area, and to decrease the expansion of western juniper, an invasive species in the rangeland ecosystem.

The Sanford Creek controlled burn area is located approximately one mile southeast of Prineville Reservoir. Some smoke may impact the Conant Basin subdivision (1.5 miles from the burn area) and Highway 27 for short durations. The burn will be visible from Jasper Point, and Prineville Reservoir State Park. The targeted total acreage for this burn is 1,500 acres. The burn is tentatively scheduled to begin around September 14, weather permitting. This burn will be conducted utilizing black line in critical area utilizing hand-carried drip torches. A helicopter may be used for some interior burning during one operational period. The burn objective is similar to the West Butte controlled burn.

Both burns could take up to two weeks to complete, including preparation, ignitions and mop up activities. Crews will monitor and mop up the burns until completely extinguished. Signs will be posted on all major roads in and adjacent to the controlled burn areas.

All controlled burns are weather-dependent and completed in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Forestry smoke management plan. Fire specialists will postpone burning if winds are not forecasted for adequate smoke dispersal. For additional information, contact the Prineville Bureau of Land Management District Office at (541) 416-6700.

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