

NEWS Release BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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BLM
Vale District Office

Thunderstorms Ignite Several Fires

Vale, Oregon – August 2nd thru August 3rd. Powerful thunderstorms moved through eastern Oregon today igniting several fires throughout the Vale District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The District received hundreds of lightning strikes starting Sunday afternoon and continued into the late evening/early morning. The thunderstorms produced strong winds and some rain though the rain was spotty at best in most areas.

The Vale BLM District initial attack forces were able to limit the acreage burned. Out of the thousands of lightning ground strikes, only two fires were able to burn significant acreage.

The Reinhart Butte # 2 fire grew to approximately 750 acres. The fire is located just a mile east of Vale Oregon. The area received several lightning strikes; numerous fires which were started joined together to form the one fire. Several homes were briefly threatened but no structures were lost and no one was injured. With assistance from the rural fire departments of Vale, Ontario, Adrian, Nyssa, Fruitland, Payette, Weiser, Parma, and New Plymouth, as well as several contract pieces of equipment, the BLM was able to secure the fire perimeter and construct lines by early Monday morning. Burn-out operations were being conducted Monday to strengthen the existing lines and dozers continued to expand the containment lines supported by water tenders and engines. The public will continue to see smoke and flames as some interior islands of unburned fuel are consumed.

Pritchard Creek fire also started on Sunday evening/early Monday morning and burned approximately 75 acres. Initial attack crews were able to get containment lines around the fire perimeter by 6:30 am MDT but mop-up operations continue.

All other fires which started grew to less than 3 acres and most either received rain or where the lightning strikes occur there was insufficient fuel to sustain the fire which help limit the acreage burned.

Red Flag warning have been issued for Monday afternoon thru early Tuesday morning for more lightning to occur within the District.

For more information about the Vale District BLM visit the website at:

www.blm.gov/or/districts/vale

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The BLM manages more land – 258 million acres – than any other Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western States, including Alaska. The Bureau, with a budget of about \$1 billion, also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

