

## News Release

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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### **ODF Declares 2026 Fire Season; SCOFMP Agencies Align Under Early-Season Conditions**

*LAKEVIEW, ORE.* – Due to low snowpack, minimal spring precipitation, and prolonged above-average temperatures, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) Klamath-Lake District will officially declare fire season in Klamath and Lake counties beginning Friday, May 22, 2026, at 12:01 a.m. This declaration applies to all private, county, and state wildlands protected by ODF.

In support of ODF's declaration, all agencies within the South Central Oregon Fire Management Partnership (SCOFMP) will begin coordinated fire season operations at the same time. This includes the Fremont-Winema National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Lakeview District, the Sheldon-Hart Mountain and Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complexes, and Crater Lake National Park.

As the upcoming holiday brings increased recreation activity and more people into the woods, the public is urged to use extra caution and do their part to help prevent wildfires. Abandoned campfires remain one of the leading causes of human-caused wildfires on public lands. While many campfires are safely extinguished, it only takes one escaped fire to threaten lives, damage property, and impact natural resources for years to come. On private lands, escaped debris burning continues to be a leading cause of human-caused fires. With the declaration of fire season, all debris burning is prohibited without a permit.

Fire danger level will be Moderate, and the Industrial Fire Precaution Level (IFPL) will be I.

#### **Moderate Fire Danger means:**

- Fires can start from most accidental causes, but the number of fire starts is generally low.
- Fires in open cured grasslands will burn briskly and spread rapidly on windy days.
- Timber fires spread slowly to moderately fast.

#### **IFPL I: Closed Season - Fire precaution requirements are in effect. A Fire Watch is required at this and all higher levels unless otherwise waived.**

- Fire extinguisher and shovel must be with each chainsaw.
- Fire extinguishers must be in all vehicles.
- Chainsaws must have a .023-inch mesh screen installed in the exhaust.
- Approved spark arresters must be on all internal combustion engines.

- Watchmen service must be provided for 1 hour after the shutdown of power equipment for the day unless otherwise specified.
- No smoking is permitted while working or traveling through any operations area on public land except while in enclosed vehicles.
- Permits to burn are required unless waived in advance.

For the Oregon Department of Forestry, the “Fire Season in Effect” declaration puts regulations in place that restrict debris burning and timber harvest operations. Wildland and structural fire protection agencies in Klamath County have agreed to prohibit all outdoor debris burning. Forest operations that require a Permit to Operate Power-Driven Machinery must now have fire tools, an on-site water supply, and watchman service on privately owned forestland.

Declaring “Fire Season” also prohibits:

- 1) Smoking while working in or traveling through any operation area.
- 2) The use of fuse and caps for blasting, unless approval is granted by the forester.
- 3) The discharge of exploding targets inside the district or within one-eighth mile of the district.
- 4) The discharge of tracer ammunition on land within the district or within one-eighth mile of the district, or when the ammunition, once discharged, crosses over land within the district or within one-eighth mile of the district.

For more information visit: <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/fire/pages/default.aspx>, or contact the local ODF offices: Klamath 541-883-5681, Lake 541-947-3311

**In conjunction with the declaration of the 2026 fire season, all lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management within half a mile of the Klamath River from the Keno Dam downstream to the Oregon/California border fall under this fire prevention order went into effect May 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

*“Anyone who is found guilty of violating a fire prevention order may be subject to prosecution under any applicable law or BLM regulation. A violation of this order may be classified as a Class A Misdemeanor Offense under 43 USC 1733(a) FLPMA, 18 USC 3559, and 18 USC 3571 Sentence of Fine - Sentencing Reform Act, Oct. 12, 1984. If the violation does not result in death, anyone who violates this order may be fined not more than \$100,000 and/or imprisoned for not more than 12 months or may be fined in accordance with the applicable provisions of 18 USC 3571. Restitution for total fire suppression and damage costs incurred will be borne by the responsible party.”*

Human-caused wildfires are preventable, and we ask the public to do their part in helping reduce wildfire risk. Stay up to date on seasonal changes by visiting our website or Facebook page.

For more information and current fire restrictions, visit <https://www.scofmp.org/>

*South Central Oregon Fire Management Partnership provides comprehensive wildland fire services to more than eight million acres of land administered by the Bureau of Land Management Lakeview District; Fremont-Winema National Forest; Oregon Department of Forestry Klamath-Lake District; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Sheldon-Hart Mountain National Wildlife Refuge Complex; Bureau of Indian Affairs Northwest Region; and Crater Lake National Park. The area encompasses federal, state and private lands within south central Oregon and northwest Nevada.*