

# News Release

Inland Northwest National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
1310 Bear Creek Rd.  
Colville, WA 99114  
[www.fws.gov/refuge/little-pend-oreille](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/little-pend-oreille)



NATIONAL  
**WILDLIFE**  
REFUGE SYSTEM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date 09/19/2024

Contact: Thurman Johnson (509) 684-8384  
[thurman\\_johnson@fws.gov](mailto:thurman_johnson@fws.gov)

## Prescribed Fires Scheduled September through November at Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge

**COLVILLE, WA** — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) plans to conduct prescribed burning at Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge near Colville, WA starting in late September. Prescribed fires will be implemented through November as weather and environmental conditions allow. These operations will reduce wildfire risk on the refuge and help restore healthy forest habitat. Smoke may be visible during the prescribed burns; the refuge will provide community updates on its website when a prescribed burn is taking place.

Refuge staff work with the Fish and Wildlife Service's highly skilled fire management professionals and wildland firefighters to develop and implement detailed burn plans. These plans follow strict safety measures, including monitoring units pre- and post- burn, identifying burn windows—periods of ideal weather and wind conditions for burn implementation, and tracking the air quality in the area. Burning will only occur when weather conditions will favorably influence fire intensity and smoke dispersion. The precise day a fire is implemented is not set until one or a few days beforehand to ensure optimum conditions will occur as predicted. To ensure public and firefighter safety, roads and public use areas may need to close temporarily as operations are taking place.

Prescribed fire operations are the result of months and even years of planning and preparation. At Little Pend Oreille NWR, prescribed burning occurs after tree thinning and piling to reduce wildfire risk and severity. This is an important part of the refuge's habitat management and ecosystem restoration, having occurred on the refuge for decades. Scientific evidence has shown that low-intensity fires are essential for healthy ecosystem function in fire-dependent forests like those on the refuge. Prescribed fire, when used strategically and repeatedly, reduces the risk of catastrophic wildfires and the severity of future wildfires when they do occur, helping keep communities and firefighters safer.

For more information about the scheduled prescribed fires, please contact Thurman Johnson, Refuge Manager, at [thurman\\_johnson@fws.gov](mailto:thurman_johnson@fws.gov) or (509) 684-8384.

*The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information, visit <https://www.fws.gov/about/region/pacific> and connect with us on social media: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Flickr](#), and [YouTube](#).*