



NEWS ALERT

Date: September 14, 2026

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Prescribed Fire Planned for Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is planning to conduct a prescribed fire on 16 acres of grasslands at Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) on September 17 and 18, 2026. Multiple factors are considered prior to burning, including public safety, the temperature, moisture content of the vegetation, and wind direction and speed. The prescribed fire will only be ignited when these factors are ideal for burning. During the burn day(s), the Refuge will be closed to the public. Call 541-270-3191 for up to date information on the burn schedule.

The Refuge is burning to restore healthy habitat for wildlife. One of the special habitats the Refuge is restoring at Nestucca Bay is coastal prairie. The coastal prairie restoration is designed to meet the habitat requirements of the Oregon Silverspot butterfly, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, which has declined significantly. The Refuge uses a variety of tools for this restoration, including mowing, herbicide treatment, planting and seeding, and prescribed fire.

Prescribed fires are beneficial, carefully planned, and strategically located. They are monitored and manipulated by trained fire professionals. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is consulting with local fire management agencies to ensure all safety measures are taken to reduce risk to people and wildlife. Safety risks of any prescribed fire include potential smoke impacts, undesired fire effects, and the unlikely but possible escape of fire outside of the planned area. Extensive planning has occurred to ensure that all safety measures are taken to reduce these risks, including the approval of a Prescribed Fire Plan. The Prescribed Fire Plan addresses everything needed to plan for and implement the fire. A prescribed fire is only conducted under very specific conditions set out in the plan and depending upon available resources, time of year, weather, and desired results. The prescribed fire will be conducted in the minimum number of acres required to meet habitat objectives.

The burn is planned and executed by fire management professionals in several organizations including the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the US Wildland Fire Service. Fire managers are coordinating with the Nestucca Rural Fire Protection District and Oregon Department of Forestry. National Weather Service local forecasts are requested and reviewed to ensure the amount and duration of smoke impact on the local community is limited.