



NEWS ALERT

Date: October 18, 2023

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Prescribed Fire Planned for Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Cloverdale, OR.~ The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is planning to conduct a prescribed fire on grasslands at Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge). The first burn is planned for Thursday October 19, 2023. There are multiple factors to consider 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 days, the Two Rivers Nature Trail, the Pacific View trail and access to the upper parking lot 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 carefully 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 prescribe burn will be conducted in the minimum number of acres required to meet habitat objectives.

The burn is planned and executed by fire management professionals with the Bureau of Land Management, the US Forest Service, and the USFWS Fire Management Program. 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.