

Annual Meeting of the

# Oregon Prescribed Fire Council

June 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019 – Lakeview, OR

Photo: Cheryl Barth

## Meeting Summary Tuesday, June 4th

The Oregon Prescribed Fire Council Annual Meeting was held June 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in Lakeview, Oregon. In the last year, two new chapters formed (Klamath-Lake and Blue Mountains), implementation has begun for Oregon's new Smoke Management Rules, and the OPFC Steering Committee met for a day long strategic planning session. Building on this momentum, the OPFC met to catalyze responsible use of fire on the landscape by addressing barriers, sharing regional accomplishments and activities, and building social license. Meeting in Lakeview offered a unique opportunity to learn more about Strategic Fire Planning on the Fremont-Winema National Forest as well several of as Klamath-Lake Forest Health Partnership's innovative cross-boundary fire risk reduction projects.

### **OPFC Strategic Planning**

The first part of the day focused on clarifying and expanding on a draft 3 Year Strategic Plan that came out of a planning meeting held in April 2019. This plan provides a roadmap for achieving a number of important goals and milestones. Workforce goals include streamlining the tracking of Incident Qualification Cards for non-Federal Employees and establishing a certification program for Prescribed Burning professionals. Policy goals include addressing landowner liability, which continues to be a barrier for conducting prescribed burns on private land. The plan also includes building the capacity of the OPFC to improve communication between chapters, share communications strategies, and coordinate action items. Next steps are to confirm of working group participants and approval of the draft Strategic Plan by the OPFC Steering Committee.

### **Chapter Updates**

The *Blue Mountain Chapter* has been working with a Cohesive Wildfire Strategy group, including local, state and Federal government, Blue Mountain Forest Partners and others to develop a Community Response Plan under the new smoke management rules for Baker and La Grande. The *Klamath-Lake Chapter* formed through the Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership to support prescribed fire as KLFHP projects move into implementation. The Klamath-Lake Chapter has been working with the Fremont-Winema National Forest on Strategic Fire Planning and as begun considering a Community Response Plan.

### **Smoke Management**

Presenting remotely from Salem, Nick Yonker of Oregon Department of Forestry, discussed implementation of changes to the Oregon Smoke Management Program Rules, which began March 1<sup>st</sup>. Ed Keith of Deschutes County, discussed Deschutes Forest Collaborative's process convening public health and forest health professionals for the creation of a Community Response Plan. Under the new rules, exemptions to the one hour threshold for air quality standards can only be requested if a Community Response Plan is in place. Deschutes County Public Health, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, the USDA Forest Service, City of Bend, the Deschutes Forest Collaborative and others all participated in a facilitated process.

## Strategic Fire Planning

How can you plan for managing a fire before ignition? Fremont-Winema National Forest is examining this question through a Strategic Fire Process, which draws on the wealth of experience of fire staff, place-based knowledge, and potential wildland fire operational delineations (PODs), a tool that uses spatial analysis to map potential control lines for containing wildfires, fuel loading, and other variables important for understanding fire risk, mitigation, and suppression. This has involved stakeholder outreach, such as Strategic Fire Workshop, as well as consultation with Forest Interdisciplinary Teams (IDT) and fire staff. OPFC was able to do a Q&A with fire staff about how Strategic Fire Planning is being implemented on the forest.

## Field Trip **Wednesday, June 5th**

The Field Tour focused on projects being led by the Klamath-Lake Forest Health Partnership: North Warner, Chiloquin, Thomas Creek, and Crooked Mud Honey. For more information about these projects, see [Planning and Implementing Cross-Boundary, Landscape-scale Restoration and Wildfire Risk Reduction Projects](#) available through the Oregon State University Extension Catalog.



*This event was brought to you by:*



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