



News Release – Cooperative Smoke Message

Date: August 5, 2009

During the summer and fall, local and regional fires affect air quality. Prescribed (man-made) fire is an important tool for both the forestry and agricultural communities. Fire benefits the ecosystem by destroying diseases, stimulating growth, and reducing the potential for catastrophic wildfires.

However, smoke is a byproduct of all sources of fire. Therefore, when managing smoke a number of factors are considered to determine if burning will be allowed. These include:

- the number of fires burning or planned in the area
- the amount of smoke already present in the airshed
- the current and projected weather and air quality conditions
- coordination between agencies that conduct and/or oversee burning

It's important to know that smoke can travel long distances, so fires in other areas can also affect local air quality. Our agencies are working together to manage smoke and share information with the public.

For all smoke comments and complaints, call the following number:

Smoke Hotline: 800-345-1007

Visit These Websites for Air Quality & Burn Information:

Nez Perce Tribe Air Quality: <http://www.nezperce.org/Official/airquality.htm>

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality:

<http://www.deq.state.id.us/air/AQindex.cfm?sitenum=5>

Montana/Idaho Airshed Group: <http://www.smokemu.org>

United States Forest Service and Idaho Department of Lands:

http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dc/idgvc/smoke_mgmt.htm

Additional Contacts:

Johna Boulafentis, Nez Perce Tribe Air Quality, 800-720-4089

Jansun Cregger, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, 208-799-4370

Laura Smith, Clear/Nez Fire Zone (Nez Perce National Forest), 208-983-5143

Elayne Murphy, Clear/Nez Fire Zone (Clearwater National Forest), 208-476-8200

Harry Steele, Idaho Department of Lands, 208-666-8673

###