

Oregon Smoke Management Review Committee
2600 State Street
Salem, Oregon 97310

November 3, 2017

To the Oregon Smoke Management Review Committee:

On behalf of the Oregon Wild, I would like to voice our support for the increased use of safe and effective prescribed burning in Oregon's forest. Prescribed burning under controlled conditions in the spring and fall helps the Forest Service and other agencies reduce the risk of larger uncontrolled fires during the heat of the summer. This summer's Milli Fire near Sisters once again demonstrated the importance of prescribed fire as one of the most effective tools we have available to reduce wildfire risk to our communities and the people who live, work, play, and visit our forests; forests that are the backbone of our economy and our way of life.

In order to restore our forests to their natural historic conditions we need more fire on the landscape. Prescribed fire plays a big role in achieving that outcome. We need more than minor incremental changes if we hope to make a difference on the landscape.

We know that in order to increase the use of prescribed fire we need meaningful reforms to Oregon's smoke management rules. The recommendations outlined in the attached letter from the Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project represent a viable strategy that would enable greater use of prescribed fire.

While we recognize that increased prescribed fire may lead to an increase in short-term smoke impacts in our communities, this pales in comparison to the potential weeks of smoke in summer that increased prescribed fire could help reduce the odds of. It's important to remember that there is no smoke-free option to living in places like central Oregon.

Ultimately, we support a more holistic solution to prescribed fire and smoke management than what is currently provided by state policy. We believe that the short-term impacts of prescribed fire will be far less than the impacts of wildfire. We ask that you carefully consider strategies to increase the use of prescribed fire while protecting air quality and the health of our communities in the long run.

Respectfully,



Erik Fernandez
Oregon Wild