

News Release

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For Immediate Release

Prescribed fire planned for Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge in Sherwood

SHERWOOD, Oregon – Residents of Sherwood may notice smoke from a prescribed fire at Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge this October. Refuge managers are planning a prescribed fire to restore wet prairie habitat. During the prescribed burn, refuge trails will be closed to visitors and the fire activity may be visible from Highway 99. People who have questions about the fire are encouraged to call the refuge at (503) 625-5944.

“Our priority is safety during this prescribed fire,” said Rebecca Gómez Chuck, project leader for the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge Complex. [Prescribed fire is an important conservation tool](#) at the refuge, part of the long term strategy to improve habitat for native plants and wildlife. Refuge managers work with fire management specialists to plan each prescribed fire to ensure safety and maximize its effectiveness for both habitat and wildlife.

Before any prescribed fire takes place, fire management specialists, firefighters and refuge managers work together to create a prescribed fire plan, a detailed prescription for where, when and how a fire will be used to restore habitat. This includes strict safety measures, such as a pre- and post- burn monitoring plan and identifying the ideal weather and wind conditions for the prescribed fire to take place. Because of the important role weather plays, managers identify a burn window – a specific length of time during which a prescribed fire might take place. The official day of the fire is not set until a day or few days before to ensure optimum conditions for the prescribed fire.

“The refuge is planning for the prescribed fire to take place sometime in the next few weeks, but the specified day or days have not yet been identified,” said Chuck.

The prescribed burn is expected to increase the amount and diversity of native plant species, improving habitat for native wildlife. Over 200 species of birds rely on the refuge, as well as deer, river otters, newts, and other animals that call the refuge home. Visitors can enjoy viewing wildlife from a year-round trail that meanders through wetlands and oak woodland. In addition, there are year-round educational programs and opportunities at the refuge.

Thanks to the efforts of local residents, the refuge was established in 1992 to protect some of the most diverse and abundant habitat remaining in the Tualatin River floodplain.

Learn more about Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/tualatin-river> and a previous prescribed fire: <http://ow.ly/JE4250L9phz>

Downloadable photos and video of the refuge: <http://ow.ly/Ibty50L7s9c>

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