

The Huckleberry Feast



Yvonne Iverson photos.



The tribes on Sunday celebrated the Huckleberry Feast at the Agency Longhouse.

2013 may be worst fire season in decade

(AP) — Gov. John Kitzhaber predicts hot, dry conditions this year are setting the stage for a long and busy fire season that he says is on track to be Oregon's worst in more than 10 years.

The 2013 season may be matched only by the 2002 Biscuit Fire that scorched a half-million acres and burned until the end of the year, said Kitzhaber, who was also governor during that fire. He said the lightning-sparked Douglas Complex of wildfires, in southern Oregon, is the "No. 1 (wildfire) concern for the federal government."

"This is one of the worst fire seasons we've had in years, probably worse than 2002," Kitzhaber said in a phone interview from Glendale, outside Oregon's largest wildfire."

Kitzhaber said the state is seeking assistance from other states and Canada and said he will brief the leadership of the Legislature this weekend on the conditions of two wildfires, including one burning more than 30,000 acres in southwest Oregon.

U.S. Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley also toured the area. There were about 5,200

people working on the blaze, including private personnel and the Oregon National Guard. Residents from 105 houses got evacuation notices last week, but the improving situation allowed 45 to return.

Smoke from the wildfires has worsened air quality to unhealthy-to-hazardous levels across southwest Oregon and into Northern California for the past week. Outdoor activities have been canceled and hospitals have seen an uptick in emergency room visits due to breathing complaints.

"It's incredibly smoky

when you get down to Glendale," Kitzhaber said. "We're monitoring for air quality. (Smoke was) just starting to rise when I left."

Nearly 4,500 firefighters statewide have been battling the blazes that have charred more than 40,000 acres of forestland in the state.

Kitzhaber praised the interagency coordination on the fires but said one of his chief concerns is the Big Windy complex of fires in Josephine and Curry counties, which has not been contained and is burning on more than 6,000 acres.

Ceded Land Hunting

Please come by the Natural Resources office to pick up your tags and a state lands Big Game Regulations Guide and to sign up for lottery hunts.

Tags will be issued on a first come first serve basis.

You may pick up your tag up to two days before the start of the hunt.

Due to the 2013 cost containment directive the Natural Resources office will be closed Friday, August 16 and Friday, August 30 for reduced work hours.

Tags for hunts starting the following Saturday's may be picked up the Wednesday and Thursday before.

You can also go online for more State Lands Big Game information at:

www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/big_game

The following is a list of ceded land tags that are available this month:

For a list of hunts starting in September, October, November, December and January visit the Natural Resources office.

Hunts starting in August

Antelope - Check regulations for bag limit (hunt number, hunt name, hunt dates):

WS435 - Paulina Unit Aug. 10 - Aug. 18

WS436 - Maury Unit Aug. 10 - Aug. 18

WS437 - Ochoco Unit Aug. 10 - Aug. 18

WS438 - Grizzly Unit Aug. 10 - Aug. 18

WS440 - Maupin - W Biggs Aug. 10 - Aug. 18

WS445A - S Fossil - Winlock Aug. 10 - Aug. 18

WS446 - Murderers Cr Unit Aug. 10 - Aug. 18

WS447 - Northside - Ritter Aug. 10 - Aug. 18

WS465 - Beulah Unit Aug. 10 - Aug. 18

WS472A1 - Silvies Unit No. 1 Aug. 10 - Aug. 18

WS472A2 - Silvies Unit No. 2 Aug. 21 - Aug. 29

WS435M - Paulina Unit Muzzleloader Aug. 24 - Sept. 1

WS435R - Paulina Unit Bow Aug. 24 - Sept. 1

WS436R - Maury Unit Bow Aug. 31 - Sept. 8

Antlerless elk - bag limit is one antlerless elk (hunt number, hunt name, hunt dates):

WS246T2 - Flat Cr Youth Aug. 1 - Aug. 23

WS234T - E Cascade Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS235T - Paulina - E Fort Rock Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS236T - Maury Unit Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS237T1 - Ochoco Unit No. 1 Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS238T - Grizzly Unit Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS240T - Maupin-W Biggs Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS241T - White Rvr-Hood Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS244T - Umatilla Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS245T - Fossil Unit Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS246T1 - Murderers Creek - Northside Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS248T - Heppner Unit Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS250T - Desolation Unit Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS265T - Beulah Unit Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS272T - Silvies Unit Youth Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

WS247E2 - E Northside Private No.2 Aug. 1 - Mar. 31, 2014

WS245E - Fossil-E Biggs Agri Aug. 1 - Mar. 31, 2014

WS247D1 - W Grant Private No.1 Aug. 1 - Sept. 30

WS247E1 - E Northside Private No.1 Aug. 1 - Sept. 30

WS234B - Tumalo Aug. 1-23 & Dec. 1-31

WS234A - Little Rvr Aug. 1-23 & Nov. 11-30

WS248C - Monument Aug. 10 - Sept. 1

WS236A - Maury-Hampton Butte Aug. 15 - Nov. 10

WS237A - N Ochoco Aug. 15 - Nov. 30

WS237B - Crooked River Aug. 15 - Nov. 30

WS238A - SW Grizzly Aug. 15 - Nov. 30

WS235A - Badlands Aug. 15 - Oct. 31

WS238B - N Grizzly Private Aug. 15 - Nov. 30

Deer - Check regulations for bag limit (Hunt number, Hunt name, Hunt Dates)

WS136R - Maury Unit Bow Aug. 24 - Sept. 22

WSDTR - Deer Archery Aug. 24 - Sept. 22

Bull elk - Check regulations for bag limit (Hunt number, Hunt name, Hunt Dates)

WSETR - Elk Archery General Season Aug. 24 - Sept. 22

Either sex elk - Check regulations for bag limit (Hunt number, Hunt name, Hunt Dates)

WS237R1 - Ochoco Unit Bow No. 1 Aug. 24 - Sept. 22

WS237R2 - Ochoco Unit Bow No. 2 Aug. 24 - Sept. 22

For 2013 there is mandatory reporting of hunter harvest.

Failure to report harvest results will be a loss of hunting privileges for subsequent tags.

Hunters are important sources of wildlife related information. The information gathered from hunter surveys is valuable for biologists, wildlife committee and tribal council to help make informed wildlife management decisions.

By reporting, you are helping monitor wildlife populations and helping enhance hunting opportunities.

Information from hunters who did not hunt or harvest an animal is as important as hunters who did take an animal.

Hunter surveys are available at the Natural Resources office and will be given out with tags. Thank you for your participation!

The Warm Springs Wildlife Department.

Around the region

Treated sewage seeping into groundwater

BEND (AP) — The urban-like density of rural subdivision lots in La Pine is feeding increasing levels of sewage contaminants into the groundwater.

A committee commissioned by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality found that 85 percent of the Deschutes County lots and 75 percent of the Klamath County lots are at risk of having groundwater comprised of at least 25 percent of partially treated sewage.

The combination of thousands of septic systems close together, permeable soil and a shallow water table led to

the sewage contaminants entering the groundwater. The potential groundwater contamination around La Pine starts in septic systems, but it's not raw sewage or the typical hazards connected to human waste.

Instead, chemicals and pharmaceuticals with unknown impacts on groundwater are the chief concern.

John Blakinger, co-chair of the South Deschutes North Klamath Groundwater Protection Steering Committee, said a future study would examine concentrations of nitrates, which are a tracer showing that other contaminants from septic systems are

making it into the water.

"The concentration of houses became a concern," Blakinger said. "That is why we need an urban-type solution like a sewer or cluster systems."

Blakinger said tap water in La Pine is safe to drink, with either contamination lower than state health guidelines or their wells drawing water from sources deeper than the tainted groundwater.

Officials said the situation is not yet a public-health risk, but the committee has called for further study on the potential impacts to the Little Deschutes River, and say the rural areas require solutions

for dealing with sewage contaminants more like what is used in urban areas.

"There is a risk, but we don't know how big it is," said Eric Nigg, water quality manager with the agency in Bend. "We believe there is an increasing contamination of the groundwater, but we believe we are in a position to head it off before it becomes a widespread public health risk."

Nigg agrees with the call for more study of what is seeping down into the water and what might be draining into the Little Deschutes River.