

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY REPOSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

A Community Response Plan for the Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Declaration of Agreement	
Executive Summary	
Rationale for the Baker City SSRA/Baker County Response Plan	
State-Required Components of the Community Response Plan	
Components of the Baker City SSRA Community Response Plan	
Description of Smoke-Vulnerable Populations in the Baker City SSRA	
Means of Communication and Notification about Fire, Smoke Impacts, and Air Quality	
Options to Protect Public Health and Mitigate Exposure to Smoke	
Coordination and Communication Plan for Fire, Air Quality, and Public Health in Baker City	
Prescribed Fire Smoke and Air Quality	
Conclusion	
Appendix A: Sample Press Release	
Appendix B: Press Release Protocols	

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY REPOSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

Declaration of Agreement

The City Council of Baker City, in coordination with the Baker County Board of County Commissioners, has reviewed and approved the Baker City SSRA/Baker County Community Response Plan, per OAR 629-048-0180 of the 2019 Oregon prescribed fire Smoke Management Plan, the City of Baker City jointly agree to submit the Baker City SSRA/Baker County CRP to the Oregon Department of Forestry and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality as a formal request for exemption for the 1-hour smoke intrusion threshold for the Baker City SSRA.

Bill Harvey, Chair

Date

Baker County Commission

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

Executive Summary

Wildland fire and associated management efforts are dominant topics in natural resource fields. Smoke from fire can be a nuisance and pose serious health risks and aggravate pre-existing health conditions. When it results in reduced visibility near roadways, smoke can also pose hazardous driving conditions and reduce the scenic value of vistas. Communicating about smoke, whether in the preparation phases before a planned burn or during a wildfire event, can enable those at risk to make informed decisions to minimize their exposure to smoke or choose alternate activities that mitigate smoke completely. (Olsen, et al, 2014)

Baker City, in coordination with Baker County, has approved the following Prescribed Fire, Smoke, and Public Health Community Response Plan for the Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area (hereafter referred to as the Baker SSRA CRP) consistent with OAR 629-048-0180. The Baker SSRA CRP will be included in the request to the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for an exemption from the 1-hour smoke intrusion threshold within the 2019 Oregon prescribed fire Smoke Management Plan (SMP). The goals of the Baker SSRA CRP and exemption request are:

To increase opportunities to accomplish critical prescribed fire treatments in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) to improve forest health, reduce the risk of extreme wildfires, and increase community and firefighter safety when wildfires do occur;

To enhance coordination, communication, and notification of residents and visitors of Baker City and Baker County about planned prescribed fire, potential smoke and air quality impacts, and recommendations to reduce exposure and mitigate the health impacts of wildland fire smoke from all sources (controlled ignition and wildfire).

Rationale for the Baker SSRA Community Response Plan

Baker County spans 3,089 square miles (1,976,960 acres), making Baker County larger than Rhode Island or Delaware. Federal agencies manage approximately 51.5% of the land in Baker County, comprising a total of 1,016,511 acres. Approximately 33% of the County is managed by the US Forest Service (USFS), 18.5% is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and an additional 10,067 acres, or 0.5% of Baker County, is managed by the State of Oregon. The remaining 48% of the land in the county, approximately 950,382 acres, is privately owned. Approximately 1/3 of the County is forested.

Baker County has a population of approximately 16,765 residents (2018 Oregon Blue Book). In the past, the County has earned revenues through timber and agriculture, but in recent years it

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

has become a destination area for recreation and tourism. The City and County's economies are dependent on the health of the forests and natural resources.

Eight established incorporated cities, Baker City (population 9,890), Greenhorn (population 2), Haines (population 415), Halfway (population 295), Huntington (population 445), Richland (population 175), Sumpter (population 205), and Unity (population 75) (2018 Oregon Blue Book) are located in the County. In addition, Baker County contains 29 unincorporated communities. Twenty-one Wildland/Urban Interface (WUIs) have been identified as areas of concern in Baker County.

Baker County has a high probability of a wildfire, and moderate vulnerability. The significant reduction of logging, cycles of drought, and highly-effective fire suppression have resulted in dangerous fuel loading and high risk for extreme fire danger.

The City of Baker City's Watershed encompasses approximately 10,000 acres and is located about 10 miles west of Baker City within the Elkhorn Mountains. The water system has over 77 miles of distribution pipe and serves approximately 9,890 people.

The City of Baker City (City) owns 160 acres of the Watershed. The remainder is Wallowa-Whitman National Forest (NF), Whitman Ranger District land. Except for the Marble Creek Road corridor, the Watershed is enclosed within a designated Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA). Access to the Watershed is by permit or authorized personnel only.

The Baker City Watershed is surrounded on all sides by forest and agricultural lands, managed either by the U. S. Forest Service (FS) or private land owners.

Due to the significance of the City's Watershed and overall depleted forest condition, prescribed burning in conjunction with other fuels reduction techniques will be required to reduce hazardous fuels, improve forest health, and protect the quality of the City's Watershed. Treatment of the Watershed is a priority for Baker City, Baker County, and the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.

Hazard fuel reduction, including prescribed burns throughout the forest, and especially around WUIs, provides firefighter safety and structure protection in the event of a wildfire, but also gives the fire management staff greater confidence and a broader prescription to allow natural ignitions to burn their course.

Prescribed fire is one of the most important tools used to manage fire. A scientific prescription for each fire, prepared in advance, describes its objectives, fuels, size, the precise environmental conditions under which it will burn, and conditions under which it may be suppressed. A Community Smoke Management Plan will become a large part of the prescribed burning process.

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

Baker City and Baker County are working together, in partnership with state and federal forest managers, local elected officials, and the public to address this challenge through proactive fire-adapted forest treatments to develop fire resiliency within the forest ecosystem. Forest managers will use a combination of focused forest thinning, mechanical fuels removal, and prescribed fire in order to reintroduce controlled and safer ways to reintroduce fire into the forests. Restored forests will be more natural and healthy, while reducing wildfire risks.

The Baker SSRA CRP provides the framework to provide timely, accurate, reliable, locally-relevant and proactive notification regarding planned prescribed fire, as well as unplanned wildfire, potential smoke impacts to air quality, and public health recommendations.

In coordination, the City of Baker City and Baker County will be submitting the Baker SSRA SRP to ODF and DEQ as part of a formal request under the 2019 Oregon prescribed fire SMP for an exemption from the 1-hour smoke intrusion threshold. Such action is necessary because of the urgent need to increase the pace and scale of prescribed, controlled ignition treatments in the forest surrounding the Baker City Watershed and the Wildland/Urban Interface around the Baker SSRA (+/- 20 miles). It is from these prescribed burn areas that, due to topography and seasonal nighttime temperature inversions, residual prescribed fire smoke invariably settles into the Baker SSRA, extending throughout the Baker Valley, causing short-duration smoke impacts which, as based on analysis of past smoke events, could exceed the 1-hour smoke intrusion threshold.

State Required Components of the Community Response Plan

As required by the 2019 Oregon Smoke Management Plan, the Baker City SSRA CRP has been coordinated with the local public health authority, which is the Baker County Board of Commissioners. It was developed through the partnership of members of the vulnerable populations, elected community officials, representatives from state and federal entities that have responsibility for prescribed fire and wildland fires, and the public.

The 2019 Oregon SMP states, ODF and DEQ “recommend communities that are SSRAs and have experienced repeated smoke incidents and/or intrusions in the past, collaboratively develop a community response plan and program.” Within the SMP, OAR 629-048-0180, Section 2, spells out the following required components of such a plan:

- A description of populations in an SSRA community that are vulnerable to the health effects of short-term smoke;
- Adequate means by which the public, especially vulnerable populations in the SSRA community, will be notified in a clear and reliable way of anticipated smoke impacts in a timely manner;
- Adequate options for protecting the health of vulnerable populations (or helping such populations to protect themselves) from short-term exposure to smoke, and;

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

- A plan and program for communications between the entities that conduct prescribed fire, the local public health authority, and the community's public and vulnerable populations who may be impacted by smoke.

Components of the Baker SSRA Community Response Plan

As identified by Steelman and McCaffrey (2013), the Baker SSRA CRP will use the (5) best practices for effective communication: 1) use interactive dialogue or processes; 2) develop an understanding of the social context of the threat; 3) focus on providing accurate, reliable, honest, and timely information; 4) interact with authority figures and other credible sources; and 5) communicate both before and during crisis events.

Local communications will be relevant and provide the opportunity for non-specialists to gain a better understanding of associated impacts, risks, and provide education to the public on basic fire management strategies.

Specifically, as applied to prescribed fire, smoke, air quality, and public health:

- Use multiple channels/methods of communication to optimize information distribution across the demographically diverse public;
- Use innovative technologies such as social media networks and the local emergency notification system;
- Providing timely, accurate, reliable, locally relevant, and proactive notification about planned prescribed fire and potential smoke impacts;
- Partnership with forest management agencies, city and county staff, and others to develop and implement communications plans to leverage the reach of partner organizations to ensure trust and credibility of messages and messengers to enhance communication effectiveness;
- Preemptively identifying smoke vulnerable populations and strategies to provide advanced warning so these individuals can mitigate actions to reduce their exposure;
- Use clear, simple, and consistent messaging to improve understanding and compliance with public health recommendations to reduce smoke exposure;

Description of Smoke Vulnerable Populations in the Baker City SSRA

Health Risks of Smoke from Wildfire and Prescribed Burns

Wildfire smoke is a mixture of gases and fine particles from burning trees and other plant material. The fine particles, known as particulate matter or "PM", and gases, can be dangerous if inhaled. Smoke can cause the following:

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

- Watery or dry eyes
- Shortness of breath, asthma attack, or lung irritation
- Persistent cough, wheezing, phlegm, scratchy throat or irritated sinuses
- Headache
- Irregular heartbeat, chest pain, or fatigue
- Heart attack

People with chronic heart disease or lung disease, such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or those with, or recovering from, COVID-19 who have compromised health/lung function may be more likely to have serious health effects from smoke. (ODF - Smoke Management Rules – Statewide Communications Framework in the Context of COVID-19, October 9, 2020)

Populations Most Affected by Smoke Inhalation

Several factors influence a person’s sensitivity to smoke, including severity, and duration of smoke exposure and a person’s general health. Smoke may worsen symptoms for people who have pre-existing health conditions and those who are particularly sensitive to air pollution.

Smoke vulnerable populations include:

- Persons 65 years of age or older
- Infants and children
- Pregnant women
- Persons with asthma or other chronic respiratory diseases, such as COPD and emphysema
- Persons with cardiovascular disease
- Smoker’s, especially those who have smoked for several years
- Persons without housing or access to closed-loop air conditioning
- COVID-19 patients

Statistics of Smoke-Vulnerable Populations in the Baker City SSRA

According to 2019 Census data, Baker City’s population was 9,809, while the population for Baker County at that time was 16,124. Please note, one individual may fall into one or more categories.

The data below provides insight into approximately how many residents may be more vulnerable during smoke events:

Baker County adults over 65

- Adults aged 65+: 26.5%

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY REPOSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

Baker County children

- Children under 5-years old: 5.1%
- Persons under 18-years old: 19.8%

Baker County persons with asthma or other chronic respiratory diseases:

- Approximately 9.8% of Baker County adults aged 18+ report that they have asthma – estimated 1,300 adults (Source: Oregon Health Authority, 2014-2017)
- Approximately 12.3% of Baker County adults aged 18+ have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) – estimated 1,600 adults (Source: Oregon Health Authority, 2014-2017)

Baker County persons with cardiovascular disease:

- Approximately 18.1% of Baker County adults aged 18+ have cardiovascular disease (defined as coronary heart disease (or angina), heart attack, or stroke) (Source: Oregon Health Authority, 2014-2017)

Baker County persons who smoke cigarettes

- Approximately 21.6% of Baker County adults aged 18+ currently smoke cigarettes – estimated 2,900 adults (Source: Oregon Health Authority, 2014-2017)

Baker County Pregnant Women

- Approximately 169 total: 160 to adult women 18+ and 9 to teens (OHA, 2016)

Baker County Houseless Population (eocco, 2017)

- Sheltered: 3
- Unsheltered: 5

Means of Communication and Notification about Fire, Smoke Impacts, and Air Quality

It is important to ensure that the most smoke-vulnerable persons in the County are included in the development of communication materials and outreach plans. Several different media will be used including Baker County's AlertSense that sends texts, emails, or calls to registered numbers, newspapers, radio, and social media.

Baker City/Baker County acknowledges that there needs to be multiple approaches in addressing the communication challenges. There must be managed consistency across agency boundaries

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

that are coordinated and provide a better understanding by the public of the forest management decisions. Communication resources need to be optimized and targeted to reach the vastly different demographics with different preferences for how information is received. Providing timely, accurate, reliable, and locally relevant advanced notification about planned prescribed fire in Baker County forests, and the potential smoke impacts, will be a critical element in effective communications. Ongoing efforts will be developed to build and maintain social acceptance of prescribed fire.

Components of communication outreach to the public include:

- Important information, key messages, and recommendations addressing: 1) the purpose and importance of prescribed fire, 2) when and where prescribed fire is planned, 3) strategies employed to reduce emissions from prescribed fire, 4) the health impacts of smoke from all sources, and 5) recommendations to reduce exposure and mitigate potential health impact caused by smoke;
- Joining in the call/text/email alert system operated by Baker County Dispatch;
- Information provided in the various communication methods on how to access the interactive Air Quality Index map for current air quality information provided by DEQ; and
- Link information to online resources provided by agencies, such as OHA, EPA, and others.

These strategies will be used before each planned prescribed fire on public lands in Baker County. However, special attention will be given to fully implementing this strategy for prescribed burns in the WUIs surrounding Baker City, where past experience with smoke events has shown that communication and notification is critical.

The Oregon Office of Emergency Services defines access and functional needs (AFN) as persons who are, or have: physical, developmental or intellectual disabilities, chronic conditions or injuries, limited English proficiency, older adults, children, low income, homeless and/or transportation disadvantaged (dependent on public transportation), and pregnant women. Communication methodology will be shared with this group prior to prescribed fire season to assure that access and functional needs are considered when sharing information.

Options to Protect Public Health and Mitigate Exposure to Smoke

A lot of work occurs in the forest before a prescribed burn is conducted. These actions reduce the amount of combustible material available to burn, which in turn reduces the intensity of the fire and helps ensure that prescribed burns produce less smoke, achieve forest restoration goals, and can be safely controlled.

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

Before and during prescribed burn activities, special attention is paid to monitoring changing weather, fuel, and fire behaviors, as well as where smoke is moving during and after prescribed fires, to minimize smoke impacts to communities in the area. However, some smoke in the air is inevitable during burn operations and the night and early morning immediately after prescribed fires.

Oregon Revised Statute 477.552 defines the policy of the State of Oregon “To minimize emissions from prescribed burning consistent with the air quality objectives of the federal Clean Air Act and the State of Oregon Clean Air Act Implementation Plan developed by the Department of Environmental Quality.”

Management of smoke from prescribed burning within the State of Oregon is defined under the Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 629 Division 48 - Smoke Management (OAR 629-048). This direction is for prescribed burning on all forestlands on public and private ownership within the state of Oregon, and all planned fire activities are subject to state air quality regulations. These regulations and guidelines are used to minimize the emissions and adverse impacts of smoke on public health.

State (ODF, ODFW), County, Federal (USFS, BLM, USFW) and private forest land managers/owners within Baker County are directed to follow these guidelines and to use techniques that reduce or eliminate smoke from prescribed fire.

There are three general approaches to managing the effects of prescribed fire smoke on air quality defined within OAR 629-048:

- OAR 629-048-0200 - Alternatives to Burning discusses techniques to reduce or eliminate fuel loads
- OAR 629-048-0210 Best Burn Practices; Emission Reduction Techniques discusses techniques to reduce the emissions produced for a given area treated.
- OAR 629-048-0220 Forecast Procedures defines processes to redistribute the emissions through meteorological scheduling and by sharing the airshed.

OAR 629-048-0200 Alternatives to Burning describes techniques to reduce or eliminate fuel loads include mechanical removal of fuels, mechanical processing on site, firewood sales, removal of biomass for electrical generation or biomass utilization. The amount of area being burned can be reduced by isolating fuels and burning concentrations, by mosaic burning, and by spreading the burn over time. The amount of fuels being consumed can be reduced by burning when fuel moistures are higher in large fuels and in litter and duff layers.

Smoke production can be reduced by increasing combustion efficiency. This can be accomplished by piling or windrowing fuels and allowing them to cure and dry prior to ignition. Piles and windrows should be mostly free of soil, rocks and other non-combustible materials and should be loosely stacked to promote aeration. These piles can be covered to allow them to be

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

burned later in the season when adjacent fuels are damp and weather conditions are better for smoke dispersal. Smoke can also be reduced by burning under dryer conditions, utilizing areal or mass ignitions, utilizing backing fires, and or by rapid mop-up or timing burns ahead of predicted precipitation.

Meteorological scheduling is often the most effective way to prevent direct smoke impacts to the public. Weather forecasts and smoke dispersion models are used to determine timing of burning for best smoke dispersal away from populated areas. Forecasters are able to reasonably predict how much smoke can be put into the atmosphere, and at what locations, without likelihood of threat to air quality objectives. This information is then converted into instructions to field administrators and burn bosses as to how much and where prescribed burning may be permitted. Total smoke generated within an airshed can be managed to minimize impacts to SSRA's within that airshed.

Daily weather information can be found at:

http://www.odf.state.or.us/DIVISIONS/protection/fire_protection/Daily/neo.htm

OAR 629-048-0300 Registration of Intent to Burn requires that in all instances of prescribed burning on forestland, the operator, federal land manager, landowner, or timber owner must first register with ODF Smoke Management all forestland that is intended to be burned.

Finally, OAR 629-048-0230 Burn Procedures defines the requirements for burn planning before any prescribed burning is initiated. Prior to ignition of any prescribed burning on federally owned forestland, the burn boss must obtain the current Smoke Management forecast and instructions and must conduct the burning in compliance with the instructions.

Mitigation of Smoke Impacts

Based on the analysis of the air quality data during smoke events in the Baker SSRA (see section titled Fire, Smoke, & Air Quality Analysis for the Baker SSRA CRP below) the following are key messages and recommendations for the public to mitigate and reduce their exposure. The analysis shows a clear and consistent pattern of prescribed fire smoke events that occur in the Baker SSRA, namely short-duration, low to moderate magnitude, occurring overnight or pre-dawn hours.

The below recommendations are consistent with established state protocols outlined in the June 2018 Oregon Severe Wildfire Smoke Episode Response Protocol created by DEQ, LRAPA, OHA, OSHA, OEM, ODF, and USFS designed to address short-term (less than 24-hours) wildfire smoke impacts.

Key Messages: Smoke is made up primarily of small particles, gases, and water vapor. These particles can be inhaled deeply into the lungs, damaging lung tissue and causing respiratory and cardiovascular problems. Regardless of the source, smoke is a form of

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

air pollution that can pose a health risk Symptoms of short-term smoke exposure can include:

- Watery or dry eyes
- Persistent cough, phlegm, wheeze, scratchy throat, or irritated sinuses
- Headaches
- Shortness of breath, asthma attack, or lung irritation
- Irregular heartbeat, chest pain, or fatigue

Guidelines/Advisories: The following guidelines are items that members of the public and vulnerable populations can do to minimize short-duration smoke impacts from prescribed fire or wildfire:

- Limit smoke exposure.
- Reduce time spent outdoors during a smoke event. This may provide some protection, especially in tightly closed, air-conditioned houses. Set you A/C or heating unit to recirculate air when at home or in your car, in order to limit exposure.
- Limit the time engaged in vigorous outdoor activity. This can be an important, effective way to lower the amount of smoke that is breathed in. It can help to minimize health risks during a smoke event.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Reduce other sources of indoor smoke and dust. This includes cigarettes, candles, gas or propane ranges, wood burning stoves, and vacuuming.
- Follow health provider prevention, directions, and treatment of symptoms if heart or lung disease or respiratory illnesses such as asthma are present.
- Vulnerable or smoke sensitive persons may consider using an indoor high-efficiency HEPA air filter for the home or to create a room with cleaner air to breathe.
- Before you go to bed at night, close doors and windows to prevent outside smoke from getting inside and help to keep indoor air clean.
- If smoke is already impacting health, avoid outdoor physical exertion and remain indoors. Contact the medical provider if serious health problems caused by smoke are experienced.

Coordination and Communication Plan for Fire, Air Quality, and Public Health in Baker City/Baker County

The Baker SSRA CRP and underlying information and notification options were developed through the professional partnership of the US Forest Service, Wallowa-Whitman Ranger District, the Oregon Department of Forestry, and Baker County Natural Resources and Health Department. The group provided the knowledge and expertise to develop the

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY REPOSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

strategy, core messages, communication, and notification methods that will facilitate success for the Baker SSRA CRP. In the future, there will continue to be shared information and notification on multiple media outlets, and partner developed messaging, to secure coordination and communication.

Examples of press releases are provided in appendix A. The responsibility to initiate each of these press releases lies with the agency who is primarily responsible for the activity. For example, the US Forest Service will, in most cases, initiate messaging for planned burns while Baker County Health Services may initiate messaging about ongoing smoke impacts. The most regular communication will be related to planned burn units. In this case the U.S. Forest Service prescribed fire burn boss leading the burn will initiate the process and work with the public information officer to create a press release with the relevant information. The press release is distributed to media partners, partner social media platforms, and a text/email/call alert for registered AlertSense users. See the appendices for sample press releases and messaging protocols.

The public is also able to engage in the process followed by the federal agencies that is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), offering the opportunity for public comment on proposed actions.

Prescribed Fire Smoke Intrusion Reports for the Wallowa-Whitman Ranger District (2016-2019)

Date	Event Name	Acreage	Direction and Distance to Baker SSRA
April 2 – April 3, 2016	Union Miners	140	SW, (8) air miles
April 18- April 19, 2016	Foothills	40	W, (5) air miles
Nov. 10, 2016	Union Miners	90	SW, (8) air miles
April 24, 2018	Union Miners/Little	235	SW, (8) air miles
May 10, 2019	Foothills	180	W, (5) air miles
All of these acres will be revisited for maintenance burning in the next 10-years			

As seen above, prescribed fire is not a significant cause of degraded air quality in the Baker SSRA. Due to Baker’s generally high air quality throughout the year, prescribed burning does not pose a significant threat to violation of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for PM 2.5.

However, when they occur, wildfire is a significant cause of degraded air quality in the SSRA and statewide. Smoke from the recently massive wildfires, both locally and out of the state, have contributed to many days of air quality concerns.

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

Conclusion

The health of residents, visitors, and smoke-vulnerable populations in Baker County is very important. The community and its economy relies on a healthy environment. It is part of what draws people to live and work here. Healthy forests provide an avenue for recreation, subsistence living, use of natural resources including mining and forestry, and, certainly not least, an aesthetically pleasing view of the mountains. For those reasons, the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest and private forest lands must become healthy and fire resilient in the face of all wildland fire. Prescribed fire is an important tool in that toolbox to achieve success. Forest managers carefully weigh the trade-offs between prescribed fire and wildfire across a broad suite of ecological, economic, and social/community values. Research from across the western United States shows that, prescribed fire, when used in conjunction with other fuels reduction methods, and applied across the landscape, will significantly reduce the intensity and severity of wildfires, which promotes the protection of the values Baker County citizens care about.

An exemption for the Baker SSRA is critical to local, state, and national initiatives underway in Baker County to maximize focused forest restoration and prescribed burn treatments in the Baker City Watershed and the WUIs surrounding Baker City to accelerate the improvement in forest health, reduce the risk of wildfires, and optimize firefighter and community safety when wildfires do occur. Through multifaceted community outreach, communications, and notifications as outlined in this document, there will be increased opportunity for prescribed burns and other fuel treatments while mitigating public exposure to smoke from all wildland sources.

Annual Reporting

Per OAR 629-048-0180 Section 3(f) of the 2019 Oregon prescribed fire Smoke Management Plan, if granted the exemption, the City of Baker and Baker County jointly commit to reporting annually to ODF and DEQ on our implementation of the Baker SSRA CRP. This report will document continued compliance with the four required components of the Baker SSRA CRP outlined above, as well as summary of the methods used to communicate to the public and smoke-vulnerable populations, a log of dates and times the Baker SSRA CRP is initiated.

Unless otherwise specified, annual reports will be submitted in March of each year, prior to the commencement of each spring prescribed burn season.

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY REPOSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

Appendix A: Sample Press Releases

Pre-season example

For Immediate Release Contact: XXXXX
Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
XXX-XXX-XXXX

Need Up to Date Prescribed Fire Information?

Prescribed burning is primarily done in the spring and fall. Whenever fire is used deliberately as a tool to improve the health of the forest and increase community and firefighter safety, it requires careful planning and is conducted under specific conditions of temperature, wind, and humidity. This ensures land managers accomplish the desired ecological outcomes and the fire can be safely controlled, all while reducing the likelihood that heavy amounts of smoke will blow into nearby communities.

Prescribed fire, when used strategically and repeatedly across larger areas, helps sustain healthy forest ecosystems, reduces the risk of out-of-control fires, reduces the severity of future wildfires when they do occur, and keeps our communities and firefighters safer.

With the implementation of prescribed burning, some communities in Central Oregon will have short duration smoke events. Many factors influence a person's sensitivity to smoke, including severity and duration of smoke exposure and a person's health. Your health and the health of your family are important. There are things you can do to minimize the impacts of smoke on you and your family; such as, limit your exposure, stay hydrated, and close windows during periods of smoke and at night when prescribed burns are planned to prevent smoke from getting inside.

End

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

**Prescribed Fire, Smoke, & Public Health Community Response Plan
Baker Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area**

Beginning season example (Wallowa-Whitman National Forest) Prescribed Burning Season Begins on the WWNF

Baker County, Oregon - If conditions remain favorable, firefighters on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest plan to ignite XX prescribed burn(s) tomorrow, the first is XX of XXXX and the other is approximately XX miles XX of XXXX. Ignitions are scheduled to begin around XX a.m. and continue through the afternoon.

The smoke from this XX acre burn will be visible from Baker.

Firefighters will also be burning a XX acre unit *off* Forest Road XX about XX miles XX of XXXX.

Due to the location of these units, the public could see smoke and drivers may experience smoke impacts on nearby highways and Forest roads. For all prescribed fires, signs will be posted on significant nearby Forest roads and state highways that could be impacted. The public is encouraged to close their windows at night and if smoke is on the roadway, turn on headlights and slow down while traveling through smoky areas. The public's health is important to the Forest Service. While significant preventive measures are taken, many factors influence a person's susceptibility to smoke, including severity and duration of smoke exposure and a person's health. If individuals feel impacted by smoke, they should avoid outdoor physical exertion and remain indoors. If people experience serious health impacts from the smoke, they should contact their doctor.

Fuels specialists will follow policies outlined in the Oregon Department of Forestry smoke management plan, which governs smoke from prescribed fires (including pile burning), and attempts to minimize impacts to visibility and public health.

For more information, visit the Wallowa-Whitman website at www.fs.usda.gov/wallowa-whitman.

-End-

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY RESPONSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

**Prescribed Fire, Smoke, & Public Health Community Response Plan
Baker Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area**

Ongoing smoke impacts (Baker County)

Baker County Health Services advises residents to take health precautions during periods of smoke. Many factors influence a person's sensitivity to smoke, including severity and duration of smoke exposure and a person's health.

There are things you can do to minimize the impacts of smoke on you and your family:

- Reduce time spent outdoors when smoke is present.
- Use an indoor high-efficiency air filter (HEPA) or electrostatic precipitator in your home to help create one or more rooms with cleaner air to breathe.
- Set your A/C or heating unit to recycle or recirculate when at home or in your car.
- Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water.
- Reduce other sources of indoor smoke and dust, including: burning cigarettes, candles, gas or propane ranges, wood burning stoves and furnaces, and vacuuming.
- Reduce the time you engage in vigorous outdoor activity.
- If you have heart or lung disease or respiratory illnesses such as asthma, follow your health care provider's advice about prevention and treatment of symptoms.
- Consider maximizing time in air-conditioned homes or buildings during smoky periods or visit public, air-conditioned places such as libraries, community centers, senior centers, restaurants, and retailers for relief from smoke.
- Smoke may worsen symptoms for people who have pre-existing health conditions and those who are particularly sensitive to air pollution. Contact your health care provider to develop a smoke plan.
- Sensitive groups include:
 - Persons with asthma or other chronic respiratory diseases, such as COPD
 - Persons with cardiovascular disease
 - Persons 65 years of age or older
 - Infants and children
 - Pregnant women
 - Smokers, especially those who have smoked for several years

For current information on air quality, visit <https://aqicn.org/map/oregon/> or use the 5-3-1 visibility index:

If visibility is well over five miles, the air quality is generally good.

Even if visibility is five miles but generally hazy, air quality is moderate and beginning to deteriorate, and is generally healthy, except possibly for smoke sensitive persons. The general public should avoid prolonged exposure if conditions are smoky to the point where visibility is closer to the 5-mile range.

**PRESCRIBED FIRE, SMOKE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH
COMMUNITY REPOSE PLAN
Baker City Smoke Sensitive Receptor Area
January 2021**

If under five miles, the air quality is unhealthy for young children, adults over age 65, pregnant women, and people with heart and/or lung disease, asthma or other respiratory illness. These people should minimize outdoor activity.

If under three miles, the air quality is unhealthy for everyone. Young children, adults over age 65, pregnant women, and people with heart and/or lung disease, asthma or other respiratory illness. These people should minimize outdoor activity.

If under one mile, the air quality is unhealthy for everyone. Everyone should avoid all outdoor activities.

End

Appendix B: Press Release Template

Prescribed Fire News Release Info Form

Please complete the following information and send to *Wallowa-Whitman NF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER* (PAO), XXXX@fs.fed.us, when you have finalized plans to conduct a prescribed fire. It would be helpful for you to fill out as much as you can ahead of time. Since there is usually a quick turnaround once the conditions are right, please provide a courtesy call to *WALLOWA-WHITMAN NF PAO* at office (xxx-xxx-xxxx) or cell (xxx-xxx-xxx). This also applies if your project is cancelled or delayed.

Name and size of the prescribed burn project.

Location in terms the public understands, as mileage from a nearby community or landmark (for example, "About seven miles southeast of Baker and in the vicinity of Coyote Butte").

Ignition date and approximate time, if possible.

Expected smoke impacts on Highways or Forest Roads and whether you'll have signing/flaggers. Any closures or traffic delays?

Burn objectives. Be specific - not just fuels reduction, but what are the specific goals_(e.g., introducing fire back into the ponderosa pine ecosystem, maintenance burning, removing leftover vegetation associated a thinning project to prevent the possibility of high intensity crown fires in the wildland urban interface, restoring old-growth juniper woodlands, enhancing riparian areas, etc.) . If possible, also identify NEPA document.

Any previous treatments or is this the first entry?

Any biomass utilization?

Agencies and cooperators involved. Specify if crews, such as the hotshots, will be involved or any unique partners.

Project duration. {How long will the burn take? Mop up? Will there be a patrol over the weekend or overnight?}

If a subdivision may be impacted, identify name of subdivision and distance from the project area and nearest community.

Any other item of interest, for example: Is it a second treatment, a helicopter ignition, or have other treatments in the area mitigated the spread of wildfire in the recent past? Have we already treated a significant amount of acres? Special funding source (e.g., Elk Foundation, ARRA, etc.)