

## PROTECTING OREGON IS AT HEART OF PUBLIC CAMPAIGN KICKING OFF WILDFIRE AWARENESS MONTH

### #OREGONOUROREGON

News Release from **Oregon Department of Forestry**

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Downloadable file: [KOG Archie Creek.jpg](#)

Downloadable file: [KOG-Logo-Rectangle-2-Color.jpg](#)

SALEM, Ore. – May is Wildfire Awareness Month. Keep Oregon Green, in partnership with federal, state and local fire agencies and organizations, is promoting May as a great time to encourage the public to create defensible space around homes and prevent careless, unwanted wildfires this summer.

#### **At stake: Lives, property, forests**

Last Labor Day, Oregon faced a rare and exceptionally strong east wind event during a prolonged dry period and heat wave. The wind drove explosive growth on wildfires that were already burning and sparked new ones. One Oregonian in 10 was under some level of evacuation notice, 9 people died, and 4,000 homes and 1,000 other structures were destroyed. Five fires reached megafire size, burning over 100,000 acres each. Altogether, a million acres burned statewide in a little over a week – twice the average area burned in an entire year.

Over 70% of Oregon's wildfires are started by people, placing the power of prevention squarely in our hands. Public lands were saw large crowds last summer, and land managers expect high numbers again this year. Before heading outdoors, contact the agency or landowner who manages the lands at your destination for an update on current fire restrictions or bans. Residents staying close to home must also check fire restrictions before building backyard campfires or using equipment that could ignite dry vegetation, such as lawn mowers or weed trimmers.

#### **Oregon, Our Oregon**

Keep Oregon Green's annual wildfire prevention campaign encourages residents and tourists to practice basic wildfire safety while enjoying the outdoors. Stunning campaign photos of Oregon's iconic landscapes will encourage everyone to protect our state's scenic recreation areas. Using the hashtag, #OregonOurOregon, Keep Oregon Green is asking the public to share photos of their favorite natural areas and thoughts for keeping Oregon free of wildfire. Campaign artwork, PSAs, and additional wildfire safety tips can be found at [keeporengreen.org](http://keeporengreen.org) and its various social media platforms.

#### **Coming soon: Wildfire Awareness Month Tips**

During May, a new wildfire prevention topic will be introduced each week to help homeowners and recreationists learn how to prevent their outdoor activities from sparking the next wildfire. For more wildfire preparedness and prevention information, visit the websites for Keep Oregon Green at <https://keeporengreen.org/>, the Oregon Department of Forestry's restrictions map <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/fire/Pages/fireprevention.aspx>, OSU's new Fire Program at <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/fire-program> and OSU's Oregon Wildfire Risk Explorer tool: <https://oregonexplorer.info/topics/wildfire-risk?ptopic=62>