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For Immediate Release

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**Central Oregon Fire Chiefs Announce Seasonal Burning Closure
June 1, 2010**

The Central Oregon Fire Chiefs Association (COFCA) announces the scheduled date for closing all burning across Deschutes, Jefferson and Crook Counties. The Fire Chiefs from all firefighting agencies including municipal and rural fire departments, the US Forest Service, the BLM and Oregon Department of Forestry have agreed that unless weather patterns change drastically, **each jurisdiction will enter fire season and no longer allow outdoor burning of debris and agricultural burns as of June 1, 2010.**

“Our biggest concern this time of year is the increase in escaped debris burns that turn quickly into uncontrolled brush fires,” says Redmond Fire Chief Tim Moor. “Even with the moisture we’ve had the last couple weeks, grasses and vegetation are drying out rapidly and the potential for escaped debris burns to become a wildfire hazard is greatly increased,” adds Chief Moor.

The Chiefs coordinate the seasonal burning closure each year to minimize confusion across the region. However, if weather patterns change quickly, individual Fire Chiefs may opt to allow burning in specific fire districts. As June 1st approaches, the Chiefs encourage residents to check with their respective fire agencies for specific regulations or possible extensions for burning that may change quickly due to weather.

The US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management will continue with planned burning projects on federal lands in the cooler, higher elevations away from communities and structures.

Oregon Department of Forestry will continue to allow regulated burning on lands protected exclusively ODF until they enter Regulated Use Restriction Status.

All agencies will continue to monitor weather and fuels conditions throughout the summer and anticipate the opening of burn season in late fall.

COFCA reminds residents in Deschutes County to be aware of the increased risk of potential wildfire, especially when operating tools or ATVs that can throw sparks and ignite nearby brush and grass. “Keeping grass and weeds cut low and generally preparing your home for wildfire will also help prevent losses from fires this summer,” recommends Chief Moor.

For more information about preparing your home for wildfires, please visit www.firefree.org.

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