

From: [xpmeadows@reagan.com](mailto:xpmeadows@reagan.com)  
To: [Paula Wilson](#)  
Cc: [Tiffany Floyd](#)  
Subject: Comments to DEQ on rules for prescribed burns  
Date: Friday, June 7, 2019 1:55:55 PM

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Dear Ms. Wilson,  
Below I am submitting comments for prescribed burns.  
Adams County Commissioner Viki Purdy

To: DEQ Administrators,  
Regarding comments on rules for prescribed burns.

From:  
Adams County Commissioner Viki Purdy,

Over the past two years, I have campaigned for myself and many others. During that time I have spoken to well over 1000 people and knocked on as many doors. The number one issue they raise is smoke from forest fires. Folks don't care whether the smoke comes from wild fires, prescribed burns, or prescribed burns not extinguished that turn into forest fires. They just know that their families are breathing smoke, often for months at a time. Concern was especially strong for youth engaging in outdoor sports activities.

The U.S. Forest Service spends untold amounts of money on advertising in an effort to convince people that it must burn to keep catastrophic fires from growing larger. A spokesman for the USFS has repeatedly stated that the USFS intends to burn more acres not fewer. On May 3 of this year an article in the Argus Observer quoted a landscape ecologist who said that "fighting bad fire with better fire is what we need to be doing." Quite a statement when it is clear that the particulate in the smoke is a health hazard that causes lung cancer and heart disease. All other agricultural sectors must use best management practices. The grass seed industry, for example, must get permits and pay to burn. The USDA does not.

Ironically, environmentalist groups don't sue the USDA for burning our forests, only for harvesting timber. It seems fairly clear that those environmentalist groups have no regard for the health of our

citizens or the air they breathe.

Who is responsible for enforcing federal law?

The Organic Act, at Section 2, provides that any person who shall build a campfire, or OTHER FIRE, in or near any forest, timber or other inflammable material upon the public domain, shall, before breaking camp or leaving said fire, totally extinguish the same.

Section 3 of the Act provides that the department will make special effort for the enforcement of the law against all persons guilty of starting or causing the spread of forest fires in the (forest) reservations in violation of the above provisions.

The Act imposes criminal penalties for violations, both fines and jail time. The Act does not exempt federal employees from criminal liability.

The Organic Act and the National Forest Management Plan clearly provide that burned, dead, bug infested or diseased trees are to be harvested to protect the rest of the forest. The Act and the Plan also

make clear that grazing interference is impermissible.

It is time to resume best management practices that protect our forests from further and avoidable destruction, as well as the health and safety of our citizenry.

Montana State Representative Kerry White has a detailed presentation on the effects of smoke on our lungs and hearts. Please consider contacting Representative White during this process. Montana is no more a fan of Idaho's smoke than Idaho is a fan of Montana's.

I request consideration be given to curtail prescribed burning in the spring.

I would submit that prescribed fires must be completely extinguished within 24 to 48 hours of when they are first ignited.

I request air quality equipment be placed in the New Meadows Valley and the Council area or Indian Valley.

I would be interested in a meeting with DEQ and other concerned county commissioners. There is a great deal more to discuss. Thank you for your consideration in this very important matter.

Adams County Commissioner Viki Purdy  
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