



Crater Lake National Park
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fire Information

August 2006

Bybee Wildland Fire Use Complex

During your visit to the park, you may have the opportunity to see smoke columns from the Bybee Wildland Fire Use Complex. The complex is comprised of two lightning-ignited fires called the Bybee and Bybee 2 fires which started naturally by lightning on July 23 and August 7, respectively. You may also observe helicopters or airplanes monitoring the fire or taking management actions and other firefighting activity.

What is Wildland Fire Use?

Wildland fire use is a tool that allows fire to play its natural role in the ecosystem to meet park resource management objectives. Fire use fires are naturally ignited and are allowed to burn and spread naturally when they do not threaten people, property, or other resources of concern. Fire is a natural ecological process that plays an important role in shaping and restoring the park's ecosystem. During the last century, fire was suppressed in the park, causing trees to encroach on meadows and shrublands. Gaps in forest canopies and meadows, essential for park wildlife, occurred naturally before the era of aggressive fire suppression. By managing naturally-ignited fires for resource benefits, the park is returning fire to its natural role in the ecosystem to increase meadowlands and shrublands that are important to meadow and shrub-dependent wildlife and birds.

Fire & Smoke

Look for pullouts with views of the fire on the west side of the park, near the Watchman area of the West Rim Drive. Smoke is a natural part of the park's ecosystem. The haze frequently visible throughout the park is the result of numerous fires currently burning in Oregon and neighboring states.