



NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Declares May as Wildfire Awareness Month

(Boise, Idaho) – Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter declared May “Wildfire Awareness Month” today as Idahoans prepare to flock to the forests for the Memorial Day holiday weekend – marking the unofficial start of summer with rising temperatures and increasing wildfire risks.

Governor Otter joins seven other governors in the West seeking to raise public awareness of the growing threat that wildfires pose to homes and communities as more people take to wildland areas for recreation and a mountain lifestyle.

The Wildfire Awareness Month proclamation signed today encourages all citizens to better prepare their homes and communities for wildfire, and to work toward becoming a fire-adapted community.

Last year 321 fires burned more than 789,500 acres within Idaho Department of Lands protection areas. The total cost was \$78 million as fires destroyed 75 residences and 220 outbuildings during the fire year.

The proclamation notes the importance of individual homeowners taking on greater responsibility for wildfire prevention and preparedness. It also notes how collaborative efforts to increase survivability of homes and properties are paramount in co-existing in a wildfire environment.

Further information regarding wildfire preparedness is available at Idaho Firewise, <http://idahofirewise.org/>

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