

OWYHEE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MURPHY, IDAHO



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 18, 2026 MURPHY, Idaho — The Owyhee County Board of Commissioners is pleased to announce the appointment of **Lance Okeson as Owyhee County Natural Resources Director**.

Okeson brings decades of natural resource management, wildfire mitigation, fuels management, public lands experience, and collaborative work in southwest Idaho and the Owyhee region. His extensive knowledge of Owyhee County's landscape, natural resources, agricultural community, and federal land management issues will be a valuable asset to the County and its residents.

Okeson comes to Owyhee County following a long career with the **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**. A second-generation BLM employee, he spent much of his career working in natural resource and fire management in Idaho and Oregon. For most of the past two decades, he worked within the BLM's Boise District, where his responsibilities included developing and implementing large-scale fuels and habitat management projects.

Among his notable work is his involvement in developing the **Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-grouse Habitat (BOSH) Project**, a landscape-scale effort focused on reducing hazardous fuels, addressing juniper encroachment, protecting sagebrush habitat, and improving conditions for Greater Sage-grouse and other wildlife.

Okeson also has extensive experience working on wildfire prevention and fuel-break projects throughout southwest Idaho. During his BLM career, he served in leadership positions including **Boise District Assistant Fire Management Officer for Fuels, Acting Fire Management Officer, and Acting Owyhee Field Manager**. His work has required collaboration with ranchers, grazing permittees, local governments, state and federal agencies, conservation organizations, and other stakeholders on complex natural resource issues.

In his new role, Okeson will represent and advise Owyhee County on natural resource and public land matters affecting the County. His responsibilities will include coordinating with federal and state land management agencies, reviewing proposed land-use and natural resource actions, assisting the Board of Commissioners with natural resource policy, working with the Owyhee County Natural Resource Committee, and working with local landowners, agricultural producers, permittees, and other partners.

"Lance brings a tremendous amount of experience and, just as importantly, a deep understanding of Owyhee County and the people who live and work here," **Cindy Bachman, chair of the Owyhee County Board of Commissioners** said. "His experience working collaboratively on public lands, wildfire, grazing, habitat, and natural resource issues will strengthen the County's ability to be actively involved in decisions that affect our communities, economy, and way of life."

Okeson's career has been closely connected to the Owyhee's and that familiarity will allow him to immediately begin working on many of the natural resource issues important to Owyhee County.

The Board of Commissioners looks forward to working with Okeson as the County continues its commitment to **local involvement, multiple use, responsible stewardship, agriculture, recreation, wildfire resilience, and the long-term health and productivity of Owyhee County's natural resources.**

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Lance Okeson

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Personal Note:

Lance was raised in Prineville, Oregon and graduated high school in 1983. While attending college at Oregon State University he started his wildfire career working for the forest service on the Ochoco National Forest. After earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Rangeland Sciences in 1988 he went to work for the BLM in wildland fire. Lance brings a long history of working with local communities in SW Idaho on resource issues that are important to Idaho's culture and economy. Lance recently retired in the winter of 2025, after 35 years of working in the wildland fire and fuels programs. Lance has been married for 34 years and has three children, his interests include outdoor recreation focused around hunting and fishing.