

PRESS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Division of Boating and Waterways | Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division | Office of Historic Preservation

For Immediate Release

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Prescribed Fire Operations Planned at Wilder Ranch State Park in Santa Cruz County

Burns Tentatively Set for October 27 – Nov. 5, 2021

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — California State Parks is planning to begin prescribed burns at [Wilder Ranch State Park](#) in Santa Cruz County beginning tomorrow, October 27, pending weather conditions.

These burns are part of the prescribed fire program for vegetation management, hazardous fuel load reduction, wildlife habitat improvement, and other ecological benefits. This treatment will enhance the health of the grassland by removing thatch, restoring essential nutrients to the soil, and reducing the chance of a catastrophic wildfire.

The burns are scheduled between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. starting on Wednesday, Oct. 27 through Friday, Nov. 5, 2021. Proactive monitoring and patrol will continue through the week and weekend.

At Wilder Ranch State Park, California State Parks will burn roughly 600 acres of different grassland habitats. Some trails will be closed temporarily to ensure public safety, including Enchanted Loop, Baldwin Loop, Wilder Ridge and Zane Gray Cutoff Loop.

These prescribed burns are permitted, planned and coordinated with the Monterey Bay Air Quality Management District and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District in order to minimize the smoke impacts on surrounding communities. All burning depends on weather and air quality conditions that are favorable for smoke dispersal. If the conditions are not conducive for burning, the burns will be rescheduled.

People around the Monterey Bay area as well as those driving on Highway 1 may see smoke on the day of the burns. In the unlikely event you smell smoke, Santa Cruz County officials urge you to take precautions and use common sense to reduce any harmful health effects by limiting outdoor activities.

Prescribed burns produce significantly less smoke than wildfire. If you see or smell smoke in your surroundings, officials recommend avoiding strenuous outdoor activity and remaining indoors as much as possible. These precautions are especially important for children, the elderly and people with respiratory and heart conditions. **Please use extreme caution while driving near prescribed fire operations due to fire personnel and equipment in the area.**

Personnel participating in the project will adhere to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and state guidelines to minimize exposure to and the spread of COVID-19. California State Parks is adhering to the safety protocols set by public health officials and have made accommodations to limit exposure among first responders and field crews to protect staff from COVID-19 during prescribed burns.

For additional information and updates, please visit our Santa Cruz Fire Management [Facebook page](#).

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California State Parks and the recreational programs supported by its divisions of Boating and Waterways, Historic Preservation and Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation provide the opportunity for families, friends, and communities to connect. Off-highway motor vehicle recreation, boating activities, horseback riding, cycling, hiking, camping, rock climbing, tours, hikes, school group enrichment, and special events are just some of the activities enjoyed in 280 park units organized into 21 field districts throughout the state. Learn more at www.parks.ca.gov.

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