



San Bernardino National Forest

Forest Service News Release

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San Bernardino National Forest to begin prescribed fire activities

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif., Nov. 9, 2023 –The San Bernardino National Forest plans to start prescribed fire operations on its three ranger districts this month and are schedule to continue through early 2024.

The Fire and Aviation Management program considers wind, humidity, temperature and fuel types, such as brush, trees and grasses when planning and implementing prescribed fires. Other factors include location and resources.

Scheduled prescribed fire activities will be publicized on the forest's social media and website.

Where can the public receive notifications about planned prescribed fire activities?

Information will be available at: the forest's X site at <https://twitter.com/SanBernardinoNF> the forest's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SanBernardinoNF/>, and; the forest's website, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sbnf/>.

Which prescribed fire techniques will be used?

Forest fire personnel are qualified and equipped to implement pile burning and start and manage a prescribed fire. Pile burning is the setting of fire to piles of logs, wood chunks, bark, branches, stumps and brush.

Prescribed burning can be started on the ground by personnel or from the air through helitorch operations. One example is the Thomas Mountain Prescribed Fire, which was the largest burn planned and managed by the forest in approximately 30 years. The activity took place in the San Jacinto Ranger District earlier this year and resulted in about four square miles being treated. Read about it at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/sbnf/home/?cid=FSEPRD1123231>.

What will community members and visitors in proximity see?

Areas being treated will be managed by forest wildland firefighters, fire patrols, other staff and a burn boss. The burn boss is a qualified leader, who manages and has responsibility over the activity. The community may see personnel, information boards and signs on some roads and other local areas to inform the public of the type of activity. They may also see equipment, such as engines, water trucks, fire buggies, trucks, helicopters, hand-held drip torches, water hoses and hand tools.

Why do we use prescribed fire?

There are a number of ways to reduce fuels, or combustible material, in forests such as mechanical thinning, prescribed fire and pile burning. Fire managers use prescribed fire to mimic the natural role of

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fire on the landscape and help maintain or restore ecosystems to a healthier condition and reduce wildfire risk.

Will the public see flames and smell smoke?

Some communities will see smoke in various forms, from thin lines to thick clouds or plumes of smoke. People closer to an activity area might see flames and smell smoke.

Prescribed fire personnel plan for and manage smoke from these fires to avoid adverse impacts on communities, minimize public health impacts, reduce visibility impairment on roadways, and avoid impacting social and local recreation activities.

Typically, emissions per acre from a prescribed fire are less than those from wildfire. Prescribed fires offer the opportunity to adjust the timing of fire to optimize where and how smoke disperses.

What if conditions change for a scheduled prescribed fire activity?

Many prescribed burns are postponed due to changes in wind and weather. In such a case, a public notification will be released through our social media channels.

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