



Region 05, Pacific Southwest Region, Stanislaus National Forest

Forest Service News Release

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Ignitions Planned for Strawberry Prescribed Burn

Areas near Pinecrest Lake and other popular recreation areas will feel smoke impacts, visitors should take appropriate precautions

SONORA, California, May 18, 2023 – Weather and conditions dependent, fire managers with the Stanislaus National Forest’s Summit Ranger District will begin prescribed fire operations near the town of Strawberry, Thursday, May 25. The burn will continue into June as conditions allow.

“Opportunities for us to put good fire on the ground for maximum impact to the landscape are not as frequent as we would like,” said Stanislaus National Forest Supervisor Jason Kuiken “With that, we must take advantage of those opportunities when weather and conditions align enabling our fire crews to begin this critical work.”

With burn operations expected to be on-going during the Memorial Day weekend, the Stanislaus National Forest will have public information officers available at information kiosks along the Highway 108 corridor to provide maps and answer any questions. In addition, visitors to the forest are encouraged to take appropriate precautions to reduce their smoke exposure.

““This prescribed fire is a very important aspect of our strategy to reduce the risk of wildland fire impacting Pinecrest, Strawberry and surrounding areas. In these fire dependent ecosystems, prescribed fire is an essential tool in addition to mechanical treatments,” Kuiken added. “We understand this event is happening over the start of the summer recreation season and there will be impacts to folks’ holiday weekend. We are doing everything we can to monitor air quality and will have multiple information kiosks along the Highway 108 corridor to answer any questions people may have.”

The majority of the burn units are located north of Highway 108 in between the Cold Springs and Leland Meadows. Up to 2800 acres can be treated with low-intensity fire, with planned ignition on approximately 50-200 acres daily. Daily area burnt will vary based on environmental conditions and smoke production.

With the prescribed burn, fire professional will reduce the buildup of flammable forest fuels, both ground fuels and ladder fuels; reduce the threat of uncontrolled, large and damaging fires; treat activity generated fuels; improve protection for life, property, and resources. Prescribed burning is an effective, cost-efficient method of reducing flammable forest fuels, improving firefighting capabilities, and reducing the impacts of large, uncontrolled damaging wildland fires.