



PRESS RELEASE

Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team

For Immediate Release

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Tahoe Basin prescribed fire operations to continue

Contact: USDA Forest Service, Lisa Herron (530) 543-2815

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, Calif. – Weather permitting, California State Parks, California Tahoe Conservancy and the USDA Forest Service may continue prescribed fire operations over the next several weeks around the Tahoe Basin. A map with project locations and details is available for viewing at <http://tahoe.livingwithfire.info/get-informed/>. To receive prescribed fire notifications, send an email to pa_ltbmu@fs.fed.us.

Prescribed fire operations are conducted whenever weather, conditions and staffing allow to reduce excess vegetation that can feed unwanted wildland fires. Planned fires now reduce the threat of unplanned fires later, which helps provide increased community protection. Low intensity fire is a natural process in the Sierra Nevada and helps keep our forests healthy by minimizing the spread of insects and disease, recycling nutrients back into the soil and promoting improved habitat for diverse vegetation and wildlife.

Prescribed fire managers use different methods to reintroduce fire back into our forests that include pile burning and understory burning. Pile burning is intended to remove excess fuels (branches, limbs and stumps) that can feed unwanted wildfires and involves burning slash piles that are constructed by hand

and mechanical equipment. Understory burning is low intensity prescribed fire that takes place on the ground (the understory) rather than pile burning. Understory burning uses a controlled application of fire to remove excess vegetation under specific environmental conditions that allow fire to be confined to a predetermined area. Understory burning produces fire behavior and fire characteristics required to attain planned fire and resource management objectives.

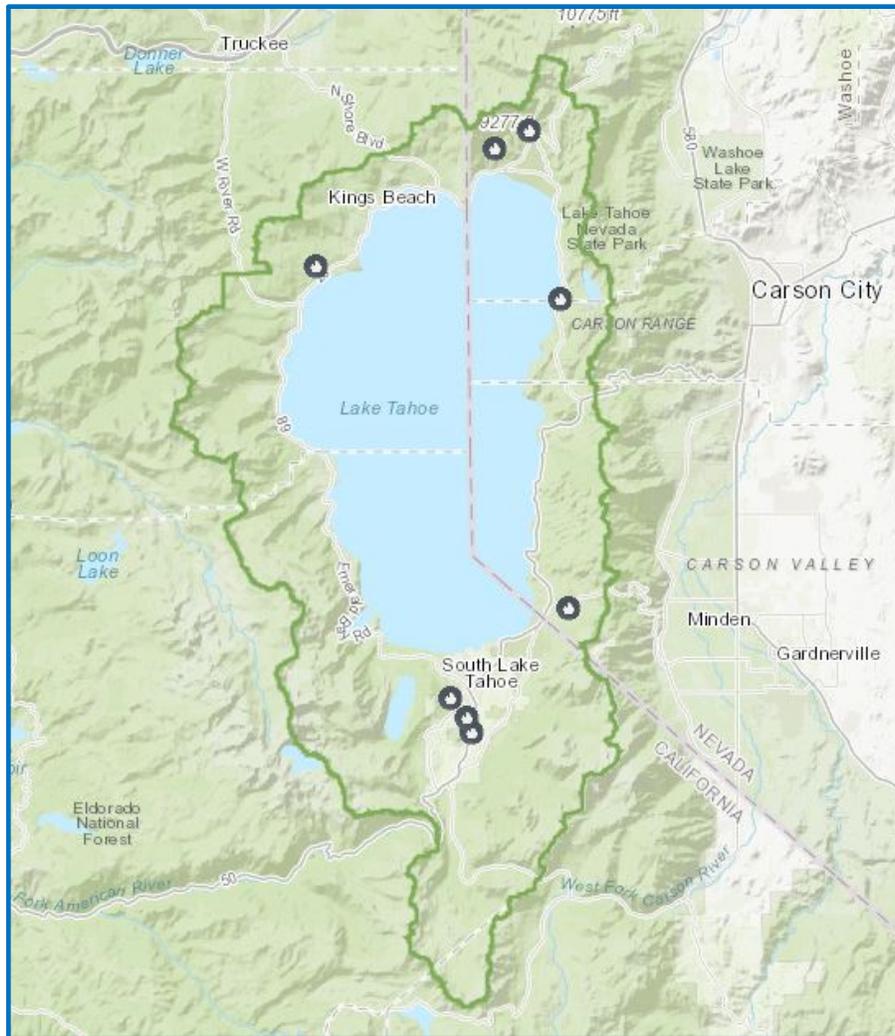
Each prescribed fire operation follows a specialized burn plan, which considers temperature, humidity, wind, moisture of the vegetation, and conditions for the dispersal of smoke. This information is used to decide when and where to burn.

Smoke from prescribed fire operations is normal and may continue for several days after an ignition depending on the project size and environmental conditions. Prescribed fire smoke is generally less intense and of much shorter duration than smoke produced by unwanted wildland fires.

Agencies coordinate closely with local county and state air pollution control districts and monitor weather conditions carefully prior to prescribed fire ignitions. They wait for favorable conditions that will carry smoke up and disperse it away from smoke sensitive areas. Crews also conduct test burns before igniting a larger area, to verify how effectively materials are consumed and how smoke will travel.

Before prescribed fire operations are conducted, agencies post road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, send email notifications and update the local fire information line maintained by the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit at 530-543-2816. The Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team gives as much advance notice as possible before burning, but some operations may be conducted on short notice due to the small window of opportunity for conducting these operations.

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About the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team

The Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team (TFFT) consists of representatives of Tahoe Basin fire agencies, CAL FIRE, Nevada Division of Forestry and related state agencies, University of California and Nevada Cooperative Extensions, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, the U.S. Forest Service, conservation districts from both states, the California Tahoe Conservancy and the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. Our Mission is to protect lives, property and the environment within the Lake Tahoe Basin from wildfire by implementing prioritized fuels reduction projects and engaging the public in becoming a Fire Adapted Community.

For more information, visit www.tahoefft.org.