



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Sequoia & Kings Canyon  
National Parks

47050 Generals Highway  
Three Rivers, CA 93271

559 565-3341 phone  
559 565-3730 fax

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## Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks Fire Update

For Immediate Release – July 28, 2009  
Michelle Puckett (559) 565-4287  
Deb Schweizer (559) 565-3703

### Mechanical Thinning Project in Atwell Mill

Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks have begun a twelve acre mechanical thinning project in Sequoia National Park. The project began Wednesday July 22<sup>nd</sup> and is located near the Atwell Mill campground. This project will be completed by National Park Service fire crews and may take a few weeks.

This project is designed to provide protection from unwanted fire near developments by reducing the amount of available vegetation to fuel a fire. This will provide an additional measure of defensible space for Atwell Mill Campground, as well as the communities of Silver City and Mineral King.

Trees that are less than eight inches in diameter and brush will be piled. These trees, if not removed, may act as a “ladder” that can bring fire from the forest floor into the canopy. These piles will be burned at a later date when weather conditions permit.

Mechanical thinning is one of the tools fire managers in Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks use to help reduce the intensity of unwanted fire by removing unnatural amounts of forest fuels. Prescribed fire and lightning fires that can be safely managed for forest health also reduce forest fuels and bring the ecological benefits of fire in the parks. As always, fires that threaten lives, homes, or infrastructure are suppressed.

<http://www.nps.gov/seki/naturescience/current-fires.htm>