



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Sequoia & Kings Canyon
National Parks

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Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks Fire Notification

For Immediate Release – July 3rd, 2009
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Hart Prescribed Fire Planned

Fire crews plan to begin ignitions on the Hart Prescribed Fire in Kings Canyon National Park on July 5th, weather and air quality conditions permitting.

This unit is located in the Redwood Mountain Grove along the west side of Generals Highway. The project area is located approximately one mile south of the Kings Canyon Overlook. This project area is 802 acres and ignitions will likely last four to five days. Of the 802 acres, 19 acres of the project are in Sequoia National Forest.

The Generals Highway will remain open with possible delays due to smoke. Please observe posted speed limit signs and travel with your lights on for your safety and the firefighters' safety.

Trails closed by this prescribed fire will include the Big Baldy trail to the south and the Hart Tree trail to the west. The Buena Vista trail will not be affected, and will remain open. All other trails in the Redwood Canyon will remain open.

Fire is an essential ecosystem process. Giant sequoias are fire adapted and thrive in naturally cycling fire. Fire opens the cones, and releases the tiny seeds to the nutrient rich ash and mineral soil below—ideal conditions for this tree's germination. Fire thins competing vegetation and trees and opens the canopy for this sun-loving species. The Hart Prescribed Fire will provide an excellent opportunity to see firsthand how fire has shaped the beauty of the Sierra Nevada ecosystem.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, researchers in the Redwood Mountain Grove discovered that giant sequoias depend on fire for regeneration and observed the fire effects of various intensities on these giants. Redwood Canyon is home to the largest giant sequoia grove in the world and is also the birthplace of prescribed burning in the western United States.

Grant Grove and Sequoia National Forest may be impacted by smoke. Park visitors who are sensitive to smoke or have pre-existing respiratory problems should limit their outdoor activities, particularly in the morning, and keep car windows closed during the burn. For more information about how to limit exposure to smoke, please visit <http://www.airquality.org/smokeimpact/>.

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

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