



Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks

Wallspring Prescribed Fire Meets Multiple Goals Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, California

Fire managers completed the 175 acre *Wallspring Prescribed Fire* this fall in Giant Forest—a popular visitor attraction—in Sequoia National Park.

Multiple goals were achieved by the completion of this fire. They include:

Encourage giant sequoia renewal. Giant sequoias are fire adapted and thrive in a natural fire cycle. They have a thick, fire resistant bark. 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.

Reduced risk of unwanted fire. This fire provided additional protection from unwanted fire by reducing the amount of dead and down material and other fuels in the forest.

This was a restoration burn. This means that fire was being re-introduced after more than 100 years of fire exclusion. Scientists measured 100 tons of dead fuel per acre prior to the burn. Post burn measurements showed a 90% reduction in these fuels. This dramatically limits the size and severity of potential wildfires and returns the area a more nature state.

Fire managers could safely return fire to an area that had unnaturally accumulated fuels and reach the desired ecological goals by following a defined prescription window that ensured that conditions such as temperature, wind, and relative humidity were within acceptable parameters.



*Giant sequoias benefit from a natural fire cycle.
NPS photo.*



*Park visitors learn about the natural role of fire at the **Fire Place**. NPS photo by D. Schweizer*

Educational experience for visitors. The Giant Forest is one of the primary attractions for visitors to Sequoia National Park. The prescribed fire was an exciting additional experience for many visitors to Giant Forest. Park employees staffed the Fire Place, a mobile learning center dedicated to furthering visitors understanding of the role of fire in the park through educational and fun activities for all age groups. Visitors got to see first hand the benefit of natural fire for sequoias. After all, sequoias are one of the primary reasons for the park's creation and a constant draw for visitors to the park.

Contact: Deb Schweizer, Fire Education Specialist
Phone: (559) 565--3703