

Fall prescribed fire activities in Redwood Park

October 3, 2022



Redwood National and State Parks plans to conduct a series of prescribed burns this fall in the prairies and oak woodlands of the Bald Hills east of Orick, California. The prescribed fire season in the parks begins in late September or early October as weather conditions permit.

This year fire will be used as a management tool in four specific burn units in the Bald Hills: Coyote, Child's Hill, Lower Elk Camp, and South Boundary. The four units combined are approximately 1,950 acres.

For thousands of years, Yurok, Tolowa, Chilula, and Hupa people managed prairies, oak woodlands, and some coastal areas that are now within the parks with periodic fire to keep them open. Intentional burning provided grazing and hunting areas for elk and deer, maintained important resources like tanoak trees and various basket weaving materials, kept trail and travel corridors open, and lessened the prevalence of parasites like ticks in the prairies. Early European Americans who ranched these same lands continued the practice of burning until it was outlawed in the 1930s.

The park's 2021 Fire Management Plan provides for the use of fire to restore natural and cultural processes, manage exotic plants and conifers encroaching into prairie and oak woodland plant communities, and to educate the public about the role of fire in the parks.

The parks have successfully used prescribed fires to achieve these objectives since the early 1980s.

If you are in the parks over the next couple of months, there will likely be additional activity and equipment on and near Bald Hills Road. Smoke may linger on the roadways and traffic control may be in place. Please be cautious for your safety as well as the fire crews working on the prescribed burns.

For further information, please contact Bryan Boatman at (707) 496-0258.