

NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service

Eldorado National Forest

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Fall Prescribe Burning in the Eldorado National Forest is Scheduled to Begin Saturday, October 10

Placerville, CA (October 7, 2009)... The US Forest Service plans to begin fall prescribe burning in the Eldorado National Forest on Saturday, October 10, if air quality, weather, and fuel conditions are favorable. 168 acres of meadow lands in the Van Vleck Meadow Restoration Project are intended to be burned Saturday.

The restoration project, located seven miles north of Ice House Reservoir, includes Aspen Meadow and Upper and Lower Van Vleck Meadows. The Forest Service says the purpose of the burn is to improve the meadows' natural function, diversity of plants, and size.

Smoke will be visible after the planned 10 AM ignition.

Public access to the project area will be closed until the area is safe for public entry.

"These subalpine meadows are located within critical deer habitat and are utilized in the spring for fawning and in the summer for foraging," says Eldorado National Forest Pacific District Ranger Diane Rubiaco. "Historically the meadows were burned annually but this practice hasn't been applied for the past 70-100 years in the project area."

The Forest Service will document the value of prescribed fire in meadows by completing pre and post survey of conditions and vegetation.

The Van Vleck Meadow Restoration Project is partially funded by a grant from the California Deer Association.

Approximately 4,500 acres of Eldorado National Forest lands are prescribed burned each year. These controlled fires reduce the likelihood of catastrophic wildfire, provide nutrients to the soil, improve watersheds, and enhance wildlife habitat.

Information about this year's prescribed burns will be posted on the Eldorado National Forest website at: www.fs.fed.us/r5/eldorado. Notices can also be received via Twitter at: [Twitter.com EldoradoNF](https://twitter.com/EldoradoNF).

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"The conservation mission of the US Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nations' forests and grasslands and to meet the needs of present and future generations."