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Placer RCD Uses Prescribed Burning to Improve Fire Resiliency

On Tuesday, February 8, Placer County Resource Conservation District (Placer RCD, District) is assisting a private landowner in Meadow Vista with a 2-acre low-intensity prescribed burn to reduce carrier fuels and improve defensible space. The burn is part of the Prescribed Burning on Private Lands (PBPL) pilot program, funded by CAL FIRE to empower landowners with the skills and knowledge to use prescribed burning as a fuels reduction and forest stewardship tool. The event is part of a series of understory burns that Placer RCD will help coordinate over the next several years.

Smoke may be visible in the area on the day of the burn, but several mitigation measures have been taken to reduce smoke generation, including staggered ignitions, and backing and flanking burn patterns. An experienced burn practitioner will instruct and lead operations on the day of the burn. The weather forecast will be evaluated prior to and during ignition to ensure conditions remain within prescription. Placer RCD is working closely with the Air Pollution Control District to minimize smoke impacts and obtain required permits. Representatives from UC Davis are collecting data before and after the burn to assess fire effects on vegetation and fuels. The Fire Safe Council of Nevada County has offered tools and radios for volunteers to ensure safe and successful operations.

In addition to the case study burns, Placer RCD is developing a white paper to document challenges and offer solutions for increasing the pace and scale of prescribed burning throughout the state. The District is collaborating with multiple partners including CAL FIRE, the United Auburn Indian Community, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and community members to increase awareness and education on safe and effective prescribed burning. Placer RCD remains dedicated to working with multiple agencies and regional organizations to invest in fuels reduction and improve community fire resiliency. For questions or concerns, please contact Placer RCD at (530) 390-6680.

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The Placer Resource Conservation District is local, non-regulatory special district. Since 1946 we help people help the land by partnering with people to conserve agriculture and natural resources.

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