



News Release

**U.S. Forest Service
Sierra National Forest**

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For Immediate Release
January 25, 2014

Forest Service Prescribe Burn near Barnes Mountain

The High Sierra Ranger District of the Sierra National Forest has been conducting a prescribed burn in the vicinity of Blue Canyon south of Shaver Lake. The extraordinary dry weather has brought this research burn back to life, creating the perfect opportunity for continuing the research being carried out with the Pacific Southwest Research Station. Prescribed burning is primarily conducted to maintain the forest in a healthy condition and reduce the intensity of a wildfire. This prescribed burn was ignited in late November 2013 and became quite inactive for the last several weeks after the December 7th, 2013 rain. On January 22, 2014 the dry conditions allowed the fire to rekindle within its containment lines and continue creeping.

The Clarence Burn has been an on-going two year project to conduct habitat studies in known Pacific Fisher denning areas. Carbon monoxide and temperature sensors are recording data inside denning (nesting) Pacific Fisher cavities. The data from the sensors will be used to determine Pacific Fisher survivability during prescribed fires and how the fishers respond to fire. Unlike wildfire, prescribed burns are management ignited under very specific weather conditions and remain under management control to reduce the spread and intensity of the flames. This allows managers to moderate the effects of the fire on the forest as well as species habitat.

Firefighters are using a tactic called "black lining" where the forest debris is burned along roads and containment lines. The burned out containment lines can serve to assist firefighters in burning the rest of the burn area under drier conditions. At this time, the fire is moving on its own and fire crews are on scene to make sure it stays within its boundaries. It is possible smoke will be visible from Highway 168 (along the 4 lanes at about 4000 foot elevation) as well as Burrough Valley and from the valley floor on clear days and in the immediate location of the prescribed burn.

The High Sierra Ranger District is working closely with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control Board to minimize the smoke impacts to the local communities, and restricting ignition acres to those necessary to keep the fire from escaping the containment lines.

For more information about these projects or questions on prescribed burning, contact District Fire Management Officer Carolyn Ballard or Fire Specialist Tomas Gonzalez at the High Sierra Ranger Station in Prather at (559) 855-5355.

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