

The smoke you'll see from Fresno County's mountains may be a planned fire

By Marc Benjamin

Fresno Bee, Saturday, May 20, 2017

If you see smoke from Fresno County's mountains next week, it may be from a prescribed burn.

Sierra National Forest officials plan a wood fuel burn beginning Tuesday.

The Vincent fuel break is part of an ongoing hazardous fuels reduction plan. The intention, officials say, is to use favorable weather conditions, extra fire personnel and equipment on the project until the fuel is extinguished and as burn days permit.

Smoke may be visible from Fresno and Clovis along Highway 168 and affect the Cressman's subdivision and areas around Shaver Lake. Signs will be posted along roadways where burning takes place.

The 237-acre treatment is expected to take two or three days to complete in each area, with active burning lasting two weeks.

237The amount of acreage in prescribed burn in the Sierra

Fuel breaks are part of a wildfire defense system across the forest that are designed to slow the progression of wildfires, protect the surrounding communities and allow firefighters a safe area to engage in suppression activities.

Prescribed burns are designed to protect communities from destructive wildfires by reducing hazardous fuel conditions and by sustaining healthy forest ecosystems. Introducing fire into the ecosystem provides forage and hiding cover for wildlife and makes it easier for firefighters to confine and control a wildfire during the summer months.

The Forest Service coordinates all burning activities with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District to coincide with favorable weather conditions and smoke dispersion.