

Controlled burns could make for smoky weekend in the Valley

By David Castellon, staff writer

Visalia Times-Delta and Tulare Advance-Register, Saturday, Oct. 1, 2011

Smoke here could be particularly heavy on Saturday, when winds are likely to push smoke down to the Valley floor, Borgioli said.

By Sunday afternoon, air quality in the lower elevations should improve, as a weak storm system likely would push the smoke east, back toward the Sierra. That, however, could pose problems for smoke-sensitive people in the foothills, Borgioli said.

"For most people who do not have asthma, it probably will not pose a significant issue," Dr. Lauren Hiyama said of the smoke.

"But people who have asthma or [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease] or other chronic lung conditions may be at risk of having a decline in their respiratory status."

Hiyama, an allergist at the Baz Allergy, Asthma and Sinus Center in Visalia, said if smoke settles over populated areas, people with respiratory problems should avoid outdoor activities, particularly those involving heavy exertion.

"If they need to go outdoors, and they need to be in the area where there is very poor air quality, they need to make sure they take their rescue inhalers [with them], and certainly not exercise."

And anybody living near a burn site who can't leave the area should stay indoors, Hiyama suggested.

Here are the controlled burns:

- CAL FIRE crews are expected to start setting their controlled burns starting at 9 a.m. Saturday in the Grouse Creek drainage, about six miles southwest of Three Rivers.
- They plan to burn about 1,600 acres of brush and grass oak woodlands in order to reduce fuel for wildfires that could threaten Three Rivers, as well as improving wildlife habitats and water drainage in the area.
- On Sunday, National Forest Service crews will start a series of fires intended to burn 96 acres northwest of Hume Lake Christian Camp.
- This latest fire is part of a series of controlled burns set in a mosaic pattern — leaving some areas burned and some untouched — to reduce fuel for wildfires and also prevent soil erosion.
- The first phase of the planned "Huckleberry Prescribed Burn" in Sequoia National Park is expected to burn 69 acres starting Saturday, with subsequent burns planned for 151 and 90 acres, the National Park Service reports.
- Each burn is expected to last one to three days, depending on ground and weather conditions.
- Those burns will occur east of Crescent Meadow Road, south of the Huckleberry Trail and west of Crescent Meadow.
- The "Swale East Prescribed Fire" in Kings Canyon began with a prescribed burn of 26 acres Sept. 25. The next phase, beginning Saturday, is expected to burn 75 acres over a day or two, according to the Park Service.

That burn will occur west of Highway 180, east of the South Boundary Trail and south of Grant Tree Road.

Park Service fire crews will monitor both the Huckleberry and Swale East burns.

They will be set to help giant Sequoia trees reproduce.

Visitors and residents near those areas should expect smoke, particularly in the mornings and late evenings.

Borgioli said that on Monday, stronger winds blowing east should move smoke from any fires still burning over the Sierra, improving the air quality here.

And late Tuesday or early Wednesday, he said, "we should get rain in the foothills and Valley floor, which should be enough to put out any fires remaining."

Burn planned near Hume Lake

Bakersfield Californian, Saturday, Oct. 1, 2011

Forest personnel have planned a burn near Hume Lake starting Sunday.

The burn will take place northwest of Hume Lake Christian Camp and is not expected to impact the camp or recreational activities taking place around the Lake.

To prepare for burning, fire crews have created fire lines in strategic areas and have targeted specific areas where concentrations of fuel need to be reduced. Smoke from the burn operations will be visible around Hume Lake.

Forest personnel will be working closely with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District to manage smoke production and reduce any local impacts.

-- *U.S. Forest Service*

Public meetings

Lodi News Sentinel, Mon., October 3, 2011

Tuesday

Lodi City Council shirtsleeve session

Key items:

- Current state of air quality presented by San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.
 - "Smart growth" plan presented by the San Joaquin Council of Governments.
- When and where: 7 a.m., Carnegie Forum, 305 W. Pine St., Lodi.

[Fresno Bee editorial, Sun., Oct. 2, 2011:](#)

Partnership lifts Valley's profile

For far too many years, the San Joaquin Valley's legislative needs were ignored by lawmakers and governors who focused their attention on more populous parts of the state. That changed in 2005 when then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger created the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley. The public-private partnership has continued under Gov. Jerry Brown.

On Friday, partnership officials will meet in Bakersfield for its 2011 summit, bringing together state officials and representatives of the Valley counties between San Joaquin and Kern. It will be a time to celebrate the partnership's successes and plan strategies to attack the region's shortcomings.

The partnership work has given the Valley an important sense of a regional identity and introduced elected officials and civic and business leaders to each other.

After all, the problems facing Stockton, Modesto, Fresno and Bakersfield are similar -- unemployment and the lack of a highly trained work force, poor air quality, an inconsistent water supply for agricultural uses.

The Valley also receives substantially less per capita funding than the averages for California and the nation.

"The partnership is helping to raise the profile of the Valley in Sacramento and D.C.," said Mayor Ashley Swearingin, who chairs the partnership board. "In a state this size, the Valley has often gotten lost in the shuffle. Through the partnership's collaborative efforts, the Valley is drawing attention from private investors as well as policymakers at the state and national level."

The partnership has three main goals: Develop a prosperous economy for the region, create a quality environment and achieve social equity.

Within those goals are six major initiatives: Build a 21st century transportation system; grow a diversified globally competitive economy; create a model public school system; develop high-quality health and human services; attain clean-air standards, and implement a framework for sustainable growth.

Friday's all-day summit in Bakersfield will feature a keynote speech by Marek Gootman of the Brookings Institution. He'll talk about strategies to improve metropolitan areas. Gov. Brown's cabinet secretaries also will participate in the summit.

The Valley partnership has become a model for regional governance and planning and how to leverage the strengths of the public and private sectors. We've come from barely knowing elected officials from outside our county to communicating regularly with representatives across the eight counties.

With the change of administrations in January, there was a question of whether Gov. Brown would continue the partnership. But the new governor was persuaded of its importance, and he continued the commitment to the project and having his cabinet secretaries being involved.

The partnership's work has improved the Valley by focusing on the region's issues and getting the state to put resources into much-needed local projects. It has also enabled the Valley to consolidate its political strength so the region won't be ignored in Sacramento. This group has shown what the Valley can do when it works together.