



Riverside County Fire Department in Cooperation with CAL FIRE

NEWS RELEASE



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Bill Weiser, Fire Chief



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Release Date:

April 25, 2022

LIVE FIRE CLASSES TO BE CONDUCTED

PERRIS, CA – On Wednesday, May 4th, Thursday, May 5th, Wednesday, May 18th, and Thursday, May 19th, 2022, CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department, in cooperation with Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District, Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency and Municipal Water District, will be conducting live fire classes and vegetation management burns at Lake Skinner and Lake Mathews.

The burns are part of CAL FIRE's operational management and company officer training; and provides an opportunity where firefighters utilize advanced firing techniques and intentionally light fire ahead of an advancing fire to protect lives and property.

The burns at Lake Mathews accomplishes the goal of rehabilitating the burrowing owl and Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) habitat through eradication of invasive, non-native grasses and weed species. This allows mammal species to find food and make homes. Through a collaboration of agencies, along with the work we have done, the SKR has been down listed from endangered to threatened. The burns at Lake Skinner benefit Englemann Oaks, Smooth Tarplant, Paysons Jewel Flower and Parry's Spine Flower species. This also accomplishes the goal rehabilitating mammals such as the LA Pocket Mouse, San Diego Pocket Mouse, SKR, and San Diego Black-Tailed Rabbit.

The scheduled dates are dictated by favorable weather conditions. At Lake Mathews, a total of 67 acres will be burned on Wednesday, May 4th. An additional 83 acres will be burned on Thursday, May 19th for a total of 150 acres. At Lake Skinner, a total of 75 acres will be burned on Thursday, May 5th. An additional 55 acres will be burned on Wednesday, May 18th for a total of 130 acres. Drift smoke may be visible from nearby communities, but will disperse quickly and is not expected to be a health hazard. Burning operations typically begin after 6:00 A.M. and conclude by 1:00 P.M. the same day. The burning operation will only occur on permissive burn days as determined by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD).

The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs and Community Education Bureau can be reached at (951) 940-6985 or RRUIO@fire.ca.gov

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