

NEWS RELEASE

CAL FIRE SAN LUIS OBISPO UNIT

Unit Chief
John Owens



July 7th, 2026

CAL FIRE TO CONDUCT PRESCRIBED BURN NEAR SANTA MARGARITA

Santa Margarita, CA — CAL FIRE San Luis Obispo Unit (SLU), in cooperation with private landowners and the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (APCD), will conduct the Rinconada Prescribed Burn near Santa Margarita on Wednesday, July 8, 2026, weather and air quality conditions permitting.

The prescribed burn is part of an ongoing vegetation management effort targeting yellow star thistle, a highly invasive plant species that poses environmental, economic, and public safety concerns. Conducting prescribed fire before the plant sets seed helps reduce its spread, deplete the soil seed bank, and promote the recovery of native grasses and other desirable vegetation.

In addition to controlling invasive vegetation, the project will reduce available wildfire fuels, helping decrease the potential for future wildfire ignition and spread.

Smoke may be visible throughout the Santa Margarita area during the burn, including along Highway 58, Pozo Road, and potentially Highway 101. Motorists are encouraged to use caution when traveling through the area, as fire personnel and equipment may be operating near roadways.

Approximately 4 fire engines and 2 hand crews will be assigned to the project. All burning operations will be conducted under strict environmental guidelines and only on permissive burn days as approved by the San Luis Obispo County APCD.

Residents and visitors are reminded that visible smoke during the burn window is expected and is the result of a planned, professionally managed fire operation.

For more information on prescribed fire and vegetation management, visit [ReadyForWildfire.org](https://www.readyforwildfire.org).

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