



Inyo National Forest, Pacific Southwest Region

## Forest Service News Release

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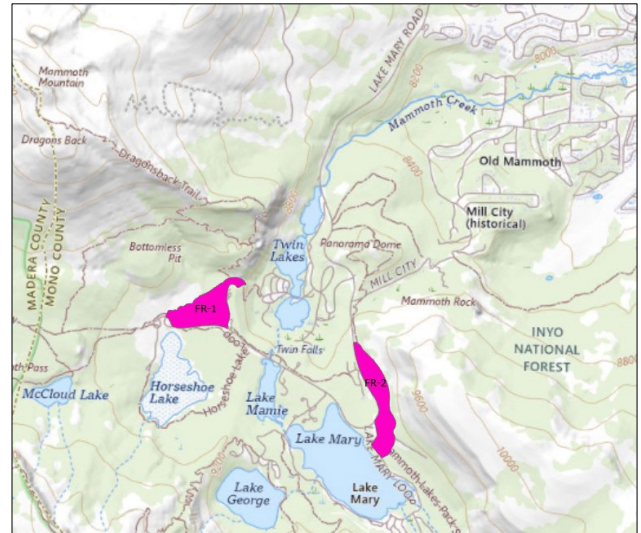
[www.fs.usda.gov/inyo](http://www.fs.usda.gov/inyo)

### Inyo National Forest to conduct pile burning starting Thursday, November 21

**BISHOP, Calif., November 20, 2024** — When conditions are favorable, Inyo National Forest fire personnel aim to complete approximately 700 acres of pile burning across the northern and central areas of Inyo National Forest over the fall and winter months.

The first pile burn of the season will begin tomorrow, Thursday, November 21 in the Lakes Basin area of Mammoth Lakes, California. Up to 64 acres of piles are slated for burning within two units in the Lakes Basin (see map, right), with ignitions expected to last until Friday, November 22 as conditions allow. This area remains closed to vehicular traffic only.

“Firefighters will continue to monitor these piles through the weekend and take further action if needed, however the expected storm will help to further secure and extinguish piles,” said Alex Teitelbaum, the Burn Boss overseeing the project. “Smoke will be very visible from this area, especially from atop Mammoth Mountain.”



#### When and Where:

Ignitions will continue according to windows of opportunity in weather, funding and availability of resources. Immediately prior to each prescribed burn operation, an announcement describing the location and acreage size will be posted on both the [Inyo National Forest website “Alerts”](#) and on the [Facebook page](#). Locations will depend on current conditions, and are listed below:

- Aspendell
- Crowley Lake (near Hilton Creek and Aspen Springs)
- Deadman Creek Road
- Inyo Craters
- June Lake Loop (near Northshore Drive)
- June Mountain Ski Area

- Mammoth Lakes Basin
- Reds Meadow Valley
- Sherwin Creek Road (near Valentine Lake Trailhead)
- South Fork Community

### Smoke Impacts:

Firefighters always seek to minimize smoke impacts by coordinating burning with [Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District](#) and National Weather Service meteorologists to ensure desired weather patterns and smoke dispersal. Some smoke does tend to drift due to local topographical influences and may settle in low-lying areas, especially overnight.



Smoke will be visible from many communities adjacent the projects and from high points. Flame may also be visible when burn piles are adjacent to communities, roadways or when over-snow vehicle users and backcountry skiers travel near some of the more remote units. Fire resources will monitor conditions and respond accordingly. Please do not report or call 911.

After ignitions are complete, smoke may continue to be visible up to a week while resources continue mopping up. For more information on air quality, visit: [fire.airnow.gov](http://fire.airnow.gov)

### Ash Pits:

Please recreate cautiously near these project areas, as hot ash pits in the snow are created where the piles were ignited and consumed. These pits generally remain hot for a few days after ignitions are completed. The public and their pets should avoid these areas during burning and a few days after. Signage will be placed in strategic locations to notify the public near high-traffic locations.



## Background:

These 'slash piles' are a result of thinning projects over the span of several years to improve forest health and hazardous fuels reduction. Slash piles include limbed branches, cut logs, and other vegetation debris that have been removed to reduce surface and "ladder fuels" and assembled into piles. This reduces the speed and intensity of fire behavior, and resulting severity of the fire, should a wildfire happen in that area.



“Pile burning is one of the tools in our toolbox for reducing hazardous fuels in a cost-effective way for both the forest and our nearby communities,” said Jennifer Martin, Acting Prescribed Fire and Fuels Specialist for Inyo National Forest.

“Its important we take every window of opportunity to conduct these prescribed burns when we can. Between our in-house staffing and our partnerships, we have ‘all hands on deck’ to accomplish these projects.”

The forest also regularly explores options to remove the material using timber and fuelwood sales, however most of the piled material is generally smaller diameter, less desirable quality, or collection is constrained by resource related concerns, as determined by Specialists during reviews required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

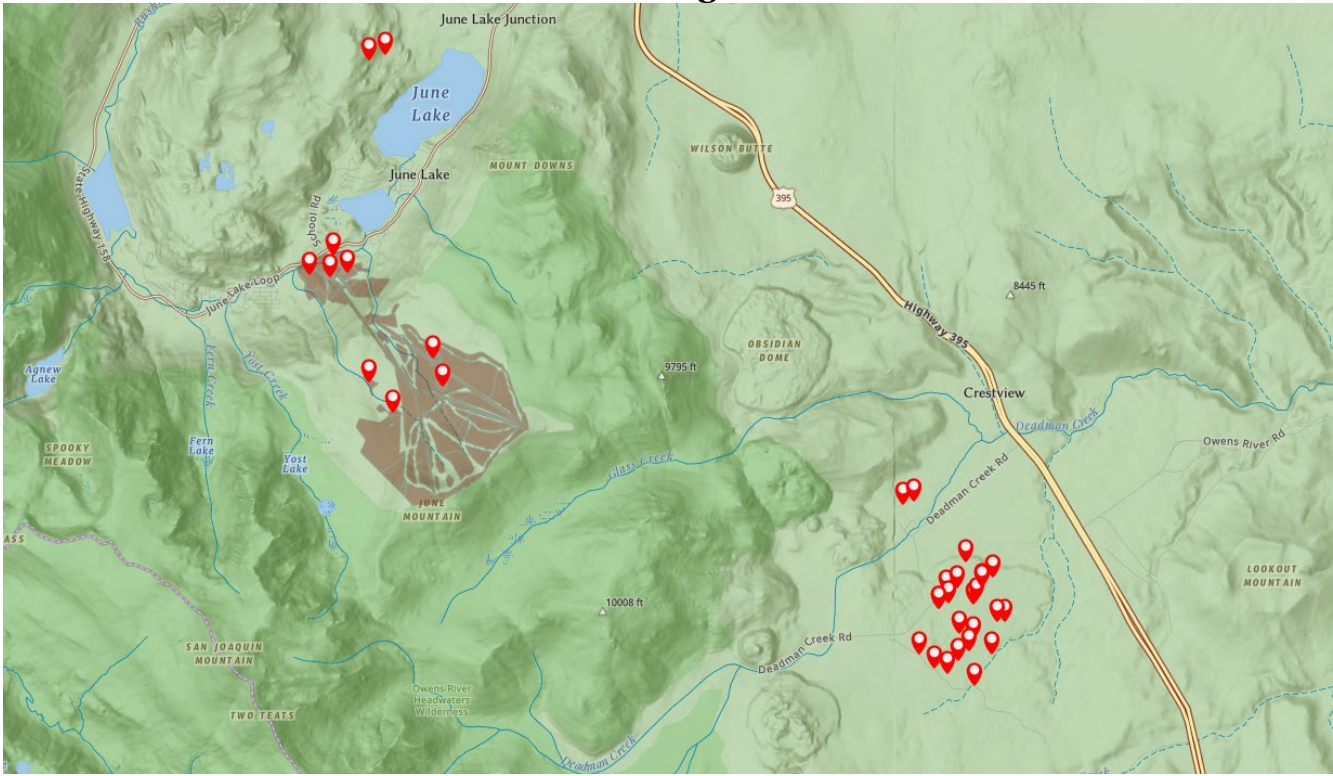
Many of these projects, which span over several NEPA Decisions, were made possible with funding and assistance from our partners including:

CalDeer, CAL FIRE, CalTrout, June Mountain and Mammoth Mountain Ski Areas, National Forest Foundation, Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the Whitebark Institute. For a list of these projects, visit: [www.fs.usda.gov/projects/inyo/landmanagement/projects?sortby=3&archive=1](http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/inyo/landmanagement/projects?sortby=3&archive=1)

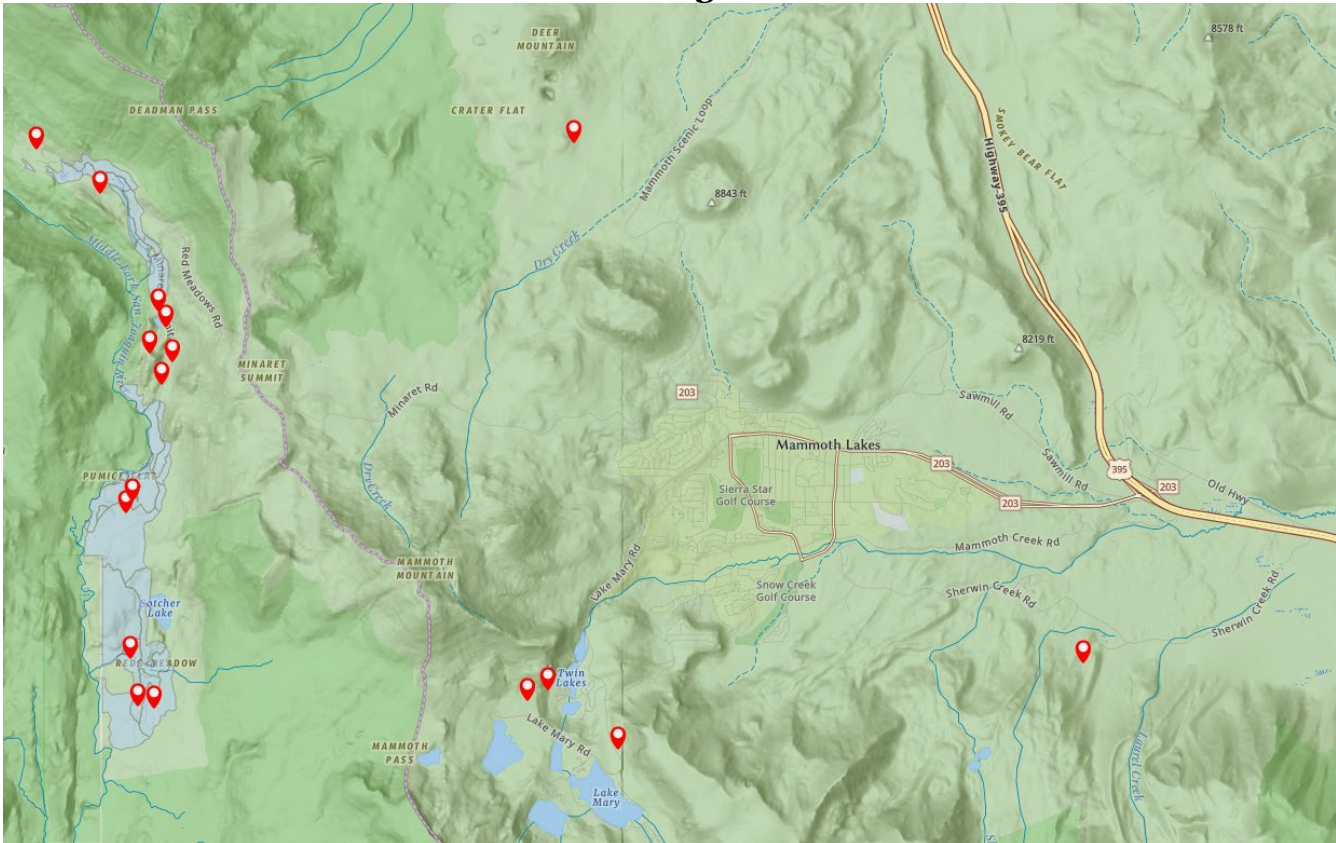
## Maps of pile locations:

Please note, pinned pile locations are approximate and generalize locations of multiple, dozens, and/or hundreds of piles.

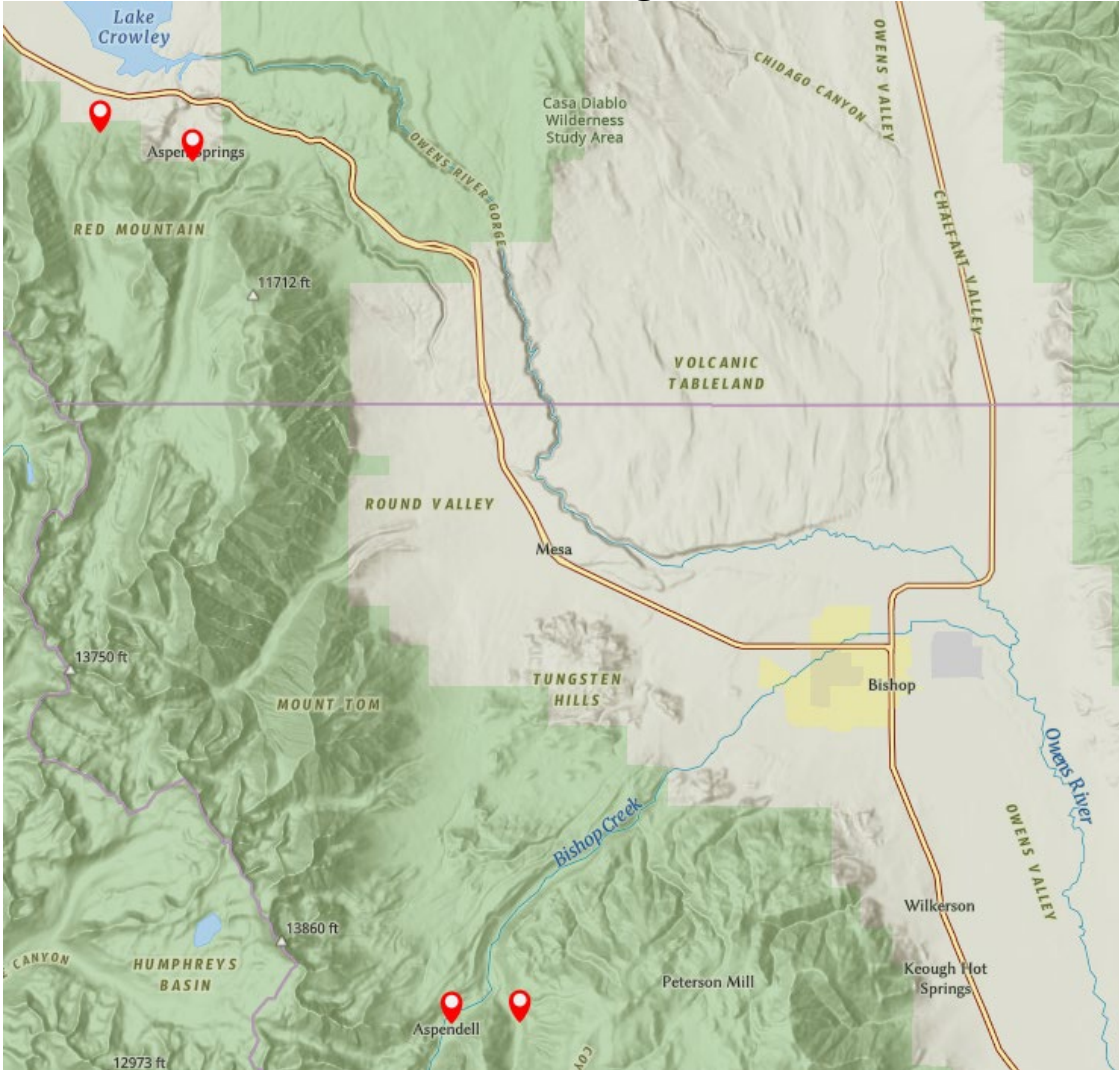
## Mono Lake Ranger District:



## Mammoth Ranger District:



**White Mountain Ranger District:**



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