CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Amador-El Dorado Unit

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Fuels Reduction Project Launched in Placerville's Gold Bug Park and Mine

Placerville – The CAL FIRE Amador-El Dorado Unit (AEU), in partnership with the El Dorado County Fire Protection District and the City of Placerville, has begun a collaborative new fuels reduction project in Gold Bug Park and Mine in Placerville.

This joint project aims to enhance the park's resilience against potential fire hazards while improving its overall safety, accessibility, and beauty for visitors. AEU's Ponderosa Fire Center Crews and the Growlersburg Hand Crews are focusing on improving the existing trail system, reducing ladder fuels (vegetation that can carry a fire from low-growing plants to taller trees), and thinning dense vegetation throughout the park. Additionally, the hand crews are working on trail infrastructure improvements, including putting in steps on the steeper sections of the trail.

"The park has not had fuels reduction work done in some time, so the scope of this project is significant," said AEU Battalion Chief Mark Brunton, who is overseeing the project. "As we enter fire season, the importance of reducing fuels cannot be overstated. This project not only mitigates fire risk but also enhances the park's beauty and safety for all visitors."

According to Placerville City Manager Cleve Morris, the mutually beneficial project provides training for the fire crews and much-needed fire abatement for the park. Additionally, the work will allow Gold Bug Park and Mine to double the number of hiking trails with hopes of providing four miles of beautiful pathways and picnic areas to park visitors.

"The city, local community, and outdoor and historical enthusiasts greatly appreciate this collaborative effort to make the park fire-safe with the added benefit of additional hiking trails," said Morris. "Due to several rough terrain areas, this project did not seem possible to complete alone. However, in conjunction with the El Dorado County Fire Protection District and CAL FIRE, Gold Bug Park will have that much more to offer."

The involvement of El Dorado County Fire Protection District is critical in this endeavor, as the park falls within their jurisdiction.

"The El Dorado County Fire Protection District commends the City of Placerville for their partnership with CAL FIRE to work collaboratively to address and reduce the vegetation within Gold Bug Park," said Fire Chief Tim Cordero. "This fuel reduction project will reduce the risk to the park and surrounding community in the event of a wildland fire."

Crews began working in the park in early May. Approximately 30 acres will be treated in this phase, with the work projected to last one to two months, depending on crew availability.

Gold Bug Park & Mine is a 62-acre park with areas of rugged terrain located within the City of Placerville, a mere five minutes from Highway 50. The park is a hidden gem of Placerville, dating back to the late 1800s. Gold Bug Park offers five hiking trails totaling nearly two miles.

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Media: Gold Bug Park photos and information

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