CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

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Ralston Prescribed Fire Update

Due to less than optimal consumption of the fuels, on Tuesday, Oct. 28, 2025, CAL FIRE CZU decided to stop the Ralston Prescribed Fire at 6 acres rather than attempting to burn the 52-acre plot. Though the burn unit was in prescription, and the grass carried fire, the coyote brush did not carry fire, most likely due to the recent rain events. Burning the over mature coyote brush was the primary objective in this prescribed fire. See a photo on Page 2 and the map on Page 3.

Instead of using additional measures to overcome this, we chose to avoid creating extra smoke for nearby communities since we would not be able to efficiently meet our objective. We will reattempt this prescribed fire when conditions are more favorable. CAL FIRE CZU and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) had planned to conduct a prescribed burn, between I-280 and St. James Road in Belmont. This high-visibility, single-day operation is a critical component in reducing hazardous fuel loads in the wildland-urban interface (WUI). The 52-acre burn would target dense coyote brush and poison oak within this high-risk corridor.

CAL FIRE CZU Burn Boss Sarah Collamer says "This strategically planned fuel reduction project targets dense vegetation, addressing an area of frequent fire activity along I-280. Given the steep, inaccessible terrain of the area, prescribed fire is not merely an option, but the most strategic and impactful method to create a defensible space for nearby communities, including Fox Elementary and residents along St. James Road." Per CAL FIRE records, over the past 15 years there have been three wildland fires in this area east of I-280 that have threatened the community.

Many resources were at the scene yesterday, including multiple wildland fire engines, a bulldozer, hand crews, and a water-dropping helicopter. This effort continues successful fuel-reduction projects conducted along the I-280 corridor over the last three years, which have effectively reduced dense vegetation and enhanced native ecosystems. See the CAL FIRE fuels reduction dashboard here: https://www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/natural-resource-management/prescribed-fire. For complete wildfire prevention and preparedness information, visit: https://readyforwildfire.org/.

Ralston Prescribed Fire
October 28, 2025
Belmont, CA





Ralston Burn Unit

SFPUC VMP - Unit 4 52.1 acres

N
W E
S

Transmission Lines

Work_type

Mastication

Hand Line

9/30/2025 8:41 AM

Scale: 1:6,000

0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 Miles

0 1,000 2,000 3,000 Feet