CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

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CAL FIRE CZU Plans to Conduct Prescribed Burn in Oak Woodland for Post-Fire Restoration

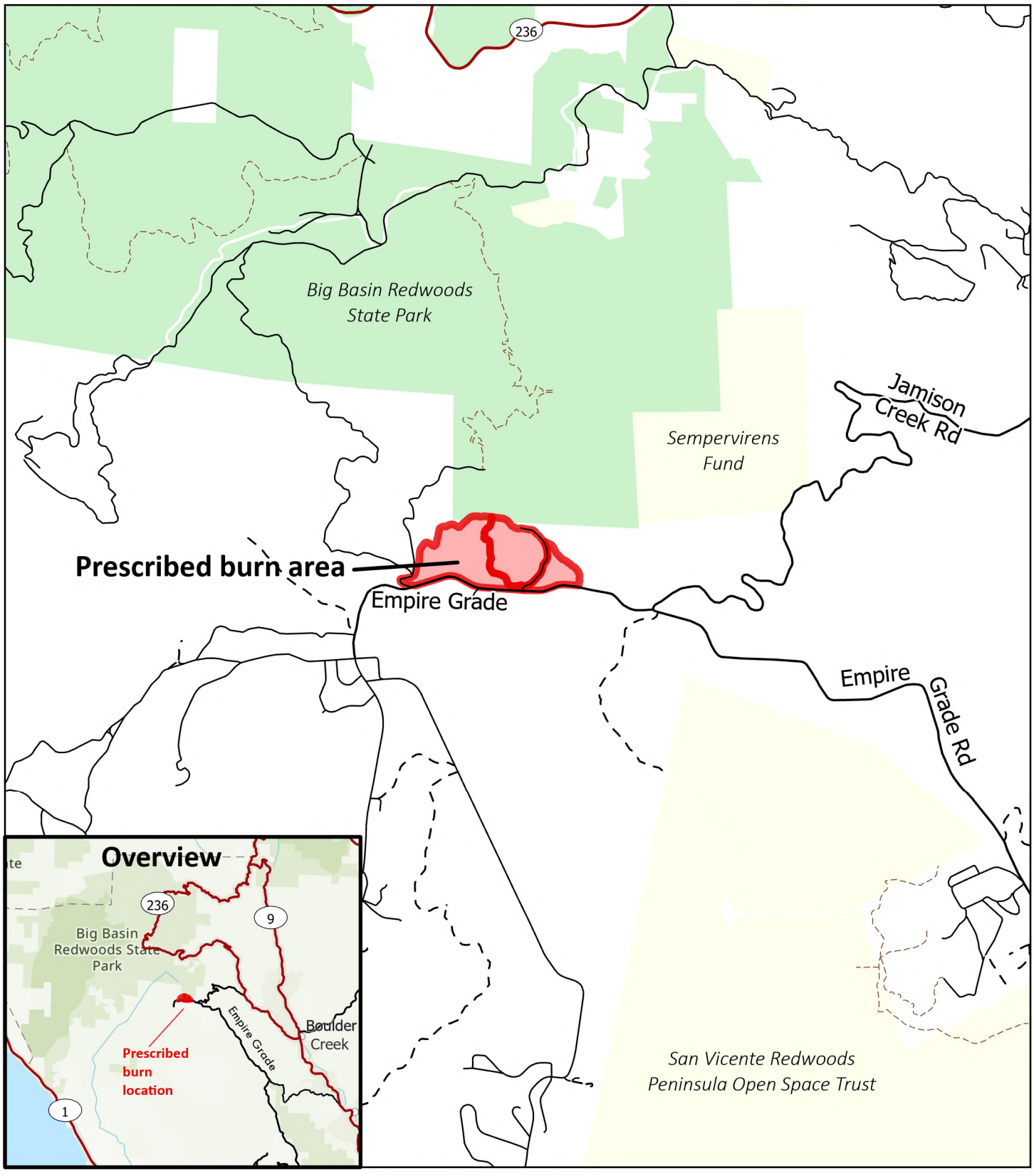
On Friday, Oct. 10, 2025, weather permitting, CAL FIRE CZU plans to burn an estimated 40 acres of grass, brush, and dead standing trees at Locatelli Ranch in Santa Cruz County. The burn area is located within the footprint of the CZU August Lightning Complex. You'll find a map of the project location on page 2.

Santa Cruz County Vegetation Management Forester Scott Bullock says "Our goal is to burn back the brushy species that are encroaching on the oak-woodland and grassland habitat. It's a specialized habitat that is decreasing across the state due to population pressures and lack of working ranches. This is a unique ecosystem that needs to be maintained to be preserved."

Prescribed fire also creates a strong fuel break, decreases receptive or available vegetation, and reduces ladder fuels that carry fire from the ground to the canopy. Smoke impacts should be minimal. However, on the day of the burn, smoke may be visible from Boulder Creek looking over the ridge toward the end of Empire Grade.

This burn will be performed in accordance with the Monterey Bay Air Resources District on a permissible burn day. This is a one-day firing operation. Crews will remain on scene as necessary for mop up and patrol.

This prescribed fire is part of a broader strategy to protect communities and natural resources in the area. These plans are developed collaboratively with stakeholders and incorporate community input. The project contributes to statewide efforts to meet or exceed fuel reduction goals outlined in the California Fire Plan and the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan. There is more information here in the CAL FIRE fuels reduction dashboard at: https://www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/natural-resource-management/prescribed-fire. For wildfire prevention and preparedness information, visit https://readyforwildfire.org/.



Cal Fire is working with local land owners along Empire Grade to implement a prescribed burn as part of the Locatelli Vegetation Management Project.

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