

## For Immediate Release

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## South Bay Prescribed Burn Association Expands Regional Fire Resilience with Inaugural Wildland Firefighting Training

**July 24, 2026, Santa Clara County, CA**—The South Bay Prescribed Burn Association (South Bay PBA) recently hosted its first wildland firefighting training, bringing together 20 participants providing foundational training required to participate in a prescribed burn.

Managed by the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council under a grant from the California Coastal Conservancy, the South Bay PBA works to empower local land stewards to use beneficial fire to reduce wildfire severity and safely manage fire-adapted ecosystems by organizing specialized training programs, workshops and community outreach.

Participants included staff from the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, San Benito Resource Conservation District, San Jose State University and local community members.

The all-day training, classified as an S-130 Field Exercise and Capacity Test, was held in a closed area of the Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve, managed by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen). By completing the course, all participants earned their Fire Fighter Type II certification, the entry-level qualification for wildland firefighting under the National Wildfire Coordinating Group.

The field training, led by Prometheus Fire Consulting, which did not use live fire, tested participants through physical and technical modules, including:

- Work Capacity (Pack) Test: Completing a 3-mile hike in 45 minutes while carrying a 45-pound pack.

- [Progressive Hose Lays](#): Rapidly deploying and connecting water lines across terrain.
- [Handline Construction](#): Cutting and clearing vegetation to establish firebreaks used to halt fire spread.
- [Fire Shelter Deployment](#): Practicing crucial emergency survival protocols.

*“Building capacity through cross-agency collaboration and hands-on training is vital for the safety of our local communities,” said Seth Schalet, CEO of the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council. “By empowering community land stewards and partners with certified qualifications, the South Bay PBA is laying the foundation for a more wildfire-resilient region.”*

“Midpen works throughout the year to reduce wildland fire severity with an emphasis on environmentally sensitive vegetation management promoting healthy, resilient, fire-adapted ecosystems,” added Midpen Field Resource Specialist Chelsea Young. “Collaborative field exercises like this allow us the opportunity to enhance training and workforce capacity to implement prescribed fire, a goal set forth in the California Wildfire and Landscape Resilience Action Plan.”



**About Santa Clara County FireSafe Council:**

As 501 (c)3 nonprofit with a 25-year history, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council's core mission is to mobilize the people of Santa Clara County to protect their homes, communities, and environment from wildfires. A trusted partner across the government, fire service, corporate and WUI residential communities, SCCFSC has led some of the most complex hazardous fuel reduction projects in the region. With a board of directors and advisory board that has a deep expertise across the wildfire ecosystem including wildfire and environmental research, academia, emergency management, regional planning, technology solutions and wildland firefighting leadership, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council is uniquely positioned to lead cross-sector collaborations, government-private partnerships in Silicon Valley, Santa Clara County and beyond. For more information, visit <https://sccfiresafe.org/>

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**About Midpen:** TBD