



# The Big Meadow Fire



The Big Meadow Fire was a prescribed fire ignited on August 26, 2009 near the town of Foresta. When the fire escaped control lines, firefighters aggressively worked to suppress the fire and were able to contain it along the Tioga Road near Tamarack Flat. Smoke from this fire may be seen throughout the fall.

Yosemite National Park and Foresta have been working to treat fuels through mechanical thinning projects and defensible space around homes in an effort to protect the community from fire. Firefighters were able to safely protect homes during the Big Meadow Fire because of this necessary work.



Wildland fire has been part of the Sierra Nevada for thousands of years and Yosemite's plant and animal species have adapted to it. Natural fire keeps dead vegetation from accumulating to fuel larger, more intense fires and prevents forests from being overgrown. The 1990 A Rock Fire burned through the community of Foresta, destroying many homes. The A Rock Fire burned so intensely, in part, because of years of suppressing fires.

## Why Use Prescribed Fire?

Prescribed fires are planned months in advance. Burn day conditions must meet prescription parameters for temperature, wind, relative humidity, air quality and other factors. The National Park Service uses prescribed fire:

- to reduce hazardous fuels and protect lives and property in nearby communities;
- to achieve ecological goals, creating a mosaic of diverse habitats for plants and animals.



## After the Big Meadow Fire...

Yosemite National Park is determined to understand why the Big Meadow Prescribed Fire escaped. An independent team comprised of fire professionals from various federal agencies is in the park to evaluate what led to the escape. The park is committed to using the review findings to ensure the continued excellence of the Yosemite fire management program.