

Massive fuels reduction project to resume

The 10,000-plus acres South Shore Fuels Reduction and Healthy Forest Restoration Project will start again in early May.

The first area scheduled for treatment this season consist of 280 acres between Golden Bear Estate off Pioneer Trail and the Sierra Tract.

Those who mountain bike, run, hike and walk their dogs in this area will need to temporarily find another playground. The U.S. Forest Service will officially close the area due to the hazards posed by heavy equipment operation and falling trees. The work should take about two months to complete.



Heavy equipment is needed for the South Shore fuels reduction project. Photo/LTN file

Possible alternatives for recreational access include National Forest lands south of the Golden Bear subdivision and the reopened Railroad Grade Trail east of Pioneer Trail.

While the two treatment units are heavily crisscrossed with neighborhood trails, they have very few official roads and trails. After work is completed, the Forest Service will

restore official trails. but will not restore user-created trails.

As the season progresses, mechanical thinning may occur in a number of other South Shore locations as conditions allow, including Christmas Valley, Fallen Leaf Lake, Meyers, the Highway 89 corridor, Gardner Mountain and the Pioneer Trail side of Trout Creek.

In addition to mechanical operations, the Forest Service also expects crews to complete at least 300 acres of hand thinning, which will include urban lots and areas near Hawley Grade in Meyers.

Early season work also will include removing log decks, slash and biomass from landings in units near Trout Creek and Fallen Leaf Campground and decommissioning them.

For local residents who've been wondering what will become of the very large deck of logs near Camp Richardson Resort, Forest Service staff expect to eventually remove the pile, potentially later this year.

The Forest Service will post closure orders for mechanical work online and provide periodic updates as work moves to new areas. For general information on the South Shore project, also go online.