



**sacramento valley
conservancy**

open space. for all.

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TWO FIRES AT SACRAMENTO COUNTY'S LARGEST OPEN SPACE PRESERVE

1,100 acres of oak woodland and grasslands burned at Deer Creek Hills

Sacramento – The Latrobe Fire, located near Latrobe Road and Scott Road in Sacramento County near Rancho Murieta, began on Wednesday, July 26, 2017 at 2:45pm burned through the south side of the Deer Creek Hills Preserve. A second fire, named by Cal Fire as the Largo fire, began Sunday July 30, 2017 at 1:45am on South Shingle Rd at Michigan Bar Rd, northeast of Rancho Murieta, also burned through Deer Creek Hills Preserve. The acreage of the two fires combined totaled 1,522 acres. The Sacramento Valley Conservancy lost 1,100 acres between the two fires, with an estimated 230 acres of oak woodland and 870 acres of grasslands burned.

"It looks like a wasteland," said Fred Tracy, Sacramento Valley Conservancy Stewardship Manager.

While these fires were primarily grass fires and did not burn high into the canopy, the closure of the south property will result in a loss in grazing revenues. SVC's annual agricultural revenue has taken a significant hit. Winter flooding on the conservancy's Elkhorn Basin Ranch resulted in half of the walnut trees dead or severely damaged. Damaged trees, paired with overly saturated grounds and inability to plant crops, combined with lost revenue from the wildfires, the conservancy is now down more than \$200,000 in revenue for 2017.

"Every dollar and hour donated will make a difference in getting Deer Creek Hills back in shape for us all to enjoy again," said Aimee Rutledge, Executive Director.

For both ecological and safety reasons, the conservancy will keep all outings and users off of the Deer Creek Hills south property for the remainder of the 2017 season. Once the burn area begins to recover SVC will conduct vegetation monitoring in order to track the recovery of the oak woodland and grasslands. Conservancy staff anticipate the fire damage will not drastically affect hiking activities which resume in October, however they will need help with rehabilitating fire breaks, restoring trails and trail markers, repairing over 5 miles of damaged fence-line and signs, and is asking the community for donations. Volunteers wishing to help can join a post-fire volunteer day scheduled for October 7, 2017 and donations can be made to the Deer Creek Hills South Fire Recovery Fund through www.sacramentovalleyconservancy.org.

Deer Creek Hills Preserve is the largest open space preserve in Sacramento County. The 4,500-acre property consists of Blue Oak Woodlands, seasonal creeks, and grasslands, and is a working cattle ranch. A network of winding trails and ranch roads allow visitors to explore the beauty and expanding views of the Sacramento Valley and the High Sierras.

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The Sacramento Valley Conservancy (SVC) is a 501c3 non-profit, and accredited land trust organization with a mission to protect Open Space for All. SVC was founded in 1990 on two basic principles: that open lands are necessary for quality of life and that we must care for the land today so future generations may enjoy its physical and spiritual benefits tomorrow. To date, SVC has protected more than 17,584 acres of land.