



Air Pollution Control District  
San Luis Obispo County

## **SMOKE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AND ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PRESCRIBED BURNING**



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# DEFINITIONS

- ▶ **Prescribed burning** is the intentional use of fire to reduce wildfire hazards, clear downed trees, control plant diseases, improve rangeland and wildlife habitats, and restore natural ecosystems.
- ▶ **Smoke Management Plans (SMP)** are developed to minimize the impacts of smoke from prescribed burning, taking into account the specific characteristics of the proposed burn and are submitted by the entity desiring to burn- Required by State law if over 10 acres/ 1 ton PM
- ▶ **SMPs specify the “smoke prescriptions”, which are a set of air quality, meteorological, and fuel conditions needed before burn ignition may be allowed.**



# BACKGROUND

- ▶ The District has worked closely with land managers including State Parks, Camp Roberts and CAL FIRE to minimize smoke impacts from prescribed fire through the Smoke Management Program first approved in 2001
  - ▶ Reviewing Smoke Management Plans
  - ▶ Issuing burn permits
  - ▶ Coordinating and assisting applicants to ensure plan components are implemented
    - ▶ Forecasting
    - ▶ Smoke modeling
    - ▶ Public notification
    - ▶ Air monitoring
    - ▶ Burn monitoring



\*No District fees are associated with prescribed burning support for agency-initiated burns (CAL FIRE, Camp Roberts, Camp SLO or State Parks)

# BACKGROUND

**Prescribed burning in SLO County (mostly State Agency initiated)**

**CAL FIRE-**

**Broadcast/ Piles**

2016 - 75 acres/340 tons  
2017 - 315 acres/1,260 tons  
2018 - 1,090 acres/200 tons  
2019 – 850 acres/1,188 tons  
2020 – 1,500 acres  
2021 – 647 acres  
2022 – 250 acres to date

**State Parks-**

2016 - 250 acres  
2017 - 105 acres/200 tons  
2018 - 432 acres/200 tons  
2019- 135 acres/ 150 tons  
2020 – no burns on record  
2021 – 56 acres

**Camp Roberts-**

**Monterey Co / SLO Co**

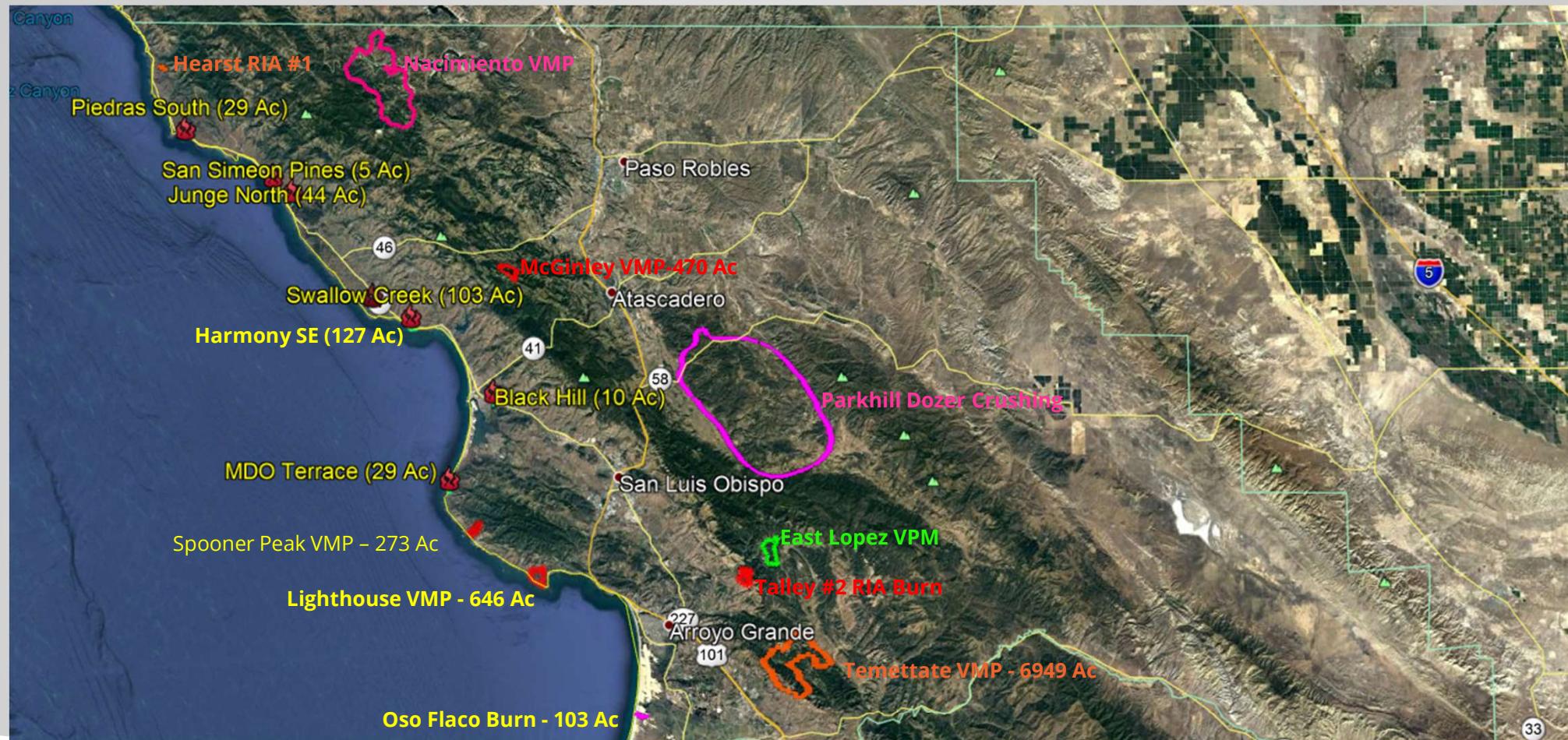
2016 – 8,361/1,655 acres  
2017 – 8,361/1,655 acres  
2018 – 8,361/1,655 acres  
2019 – 8,361/1,655 acres  
2020 – 250 acres  
2021 – 1,300 acres  
2022 – 2,417 acres

**Private**

2016 - 2018 1,200 tons  
2019 – 375 acres  
2020 – 75 acres/ 250 tons  
2021- no burns on record  
2022 – none to date



# EXAMPLE OF ANNUAL PROPOSED PRESCRIBED BURNS CAL FIRE



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ **Work closely with CAL FIRE to understand priorities**
  - ▶ Meet to review projects in the pipeline and discuss timing/ potential challenges
  - ▶ Bringing new staff on board- learning to work together, develop new relationships and clarifying expectations
- ▶ **Develop tools to assist in communication- with the public, other agencies and within each organization**
  - ▶ Work with PIOs
  - ▶ Develop messaging for notifications before and during prescribed burning
  - ▶ Monitoring and reporting of real-time burn status
  - ▶ Incorporate elements of social media and other widely available resource to reach wide range of public



# PRESCRIBED FIRE GRANT ELEMENTS

- ▶ Coordinate with California Air Pollution Control Officer's Association (CAPCOA) and CARB
  - ▶ Monitor fires and attend training on use and deployment of monitoring equipment as needed
  - ▶ Public messaging and outreach regarding the benefits of prescribed burning versus extreme fire events
  - ▶ Additional training needs (PFIRs, etc.)
  - ▶ Keep records of prescribed burns and provide quarterly data
  - ▶ Complete a final report
- ▶ Expanded use of the Prescribed Fire Information Reporting System (PFIRS) for all prescribed burns where feasible
- ▶ Ensure all prescribed fire projects greater than 10 acres or estimated to create more than 1 ton of particulate matter have SMPs as required in 17 CCR Section 80160



# RELATED TOPICS

## ► Fire Training

- ▶ More agencies requesting training
  - ▶ Local agencies, State Parks, CAL FIRE, etc.
- ▶ Developed guidelines to ensure training need is satisfied but minimizing impacts to public-
  - ▶ NESHP Compliance
  - ▶ Distances from residences
  - ▶ Types of burns- vehicles
  - ▶ Notifications to public or neighbors in vicinity

## ► Communication

- ▶ Huge amount of turnover in many agencies
- ▶ Need to develop new relationships /trust
- ▶ Prioritizing in-person communication as possible
  - ▶ Observe burns, invite staff to discuss issues,



# QUESTIONS?

