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# Grant will restore tiny part of Rim burn

State agency provides \$842,000 for meadows, deer habitat, springs, culverts

Recipient is coalition called Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions

Work is separate from tree plantations on much larger acreage



*Three bucks, two of which had lost their antlers, roam along the road to Cherry Lake off Highway 120 in March 2015. A state grant will pay for meadow restoration in a part of the Stanislaus National Forest south of Cherry Lake. **Jeff Jardine** Modesto Bee file*

BY JOHN HOLLAND

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An \$842,000 grant will pay for meadow restoration and other work on a tiny part of the area scorched by the Rim Fire.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy, a state agency, awarded the money to Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions, a coalition of the timber industry, environmental groups and other partners.

The work will occur through next summer in a part of the Stanislaus National Forest south of Cherry Lake. It will include 204 acres of deer habitat enhancement, restoration of four meadows totaling 21 acres, replacement of two culverts to keep roads from washing out, and fixes to seven natural springs where wildlife and cattle drink.

The project is separate from the reforestation planned on 21,300 acres in the national forest, as well as the more intensive planting on private timberland and the natural recovery of burned areas in Yosemite National Park.

“It’s the kind of stuff people don’t think about when they think about a forest fire,” said coalition member Patrick Koepele, executive director of the Tuolumne River Trust. The 2013 fire burned across 257,314 acres over several weeks, mostly in the watershed this group works to protect.

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Chris Trott, chairman, Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions

Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions is named because of its interest in issues affecting both the national forest and park. Members earlier agreed on a plan for logging some of the dead trees and on the reforestation.

The fire burned at varying severity, consuming just low-to-the-ground fuel in some places while turning many mature timber stands into infernos. Some of the worst damage was in the watershed of Cherry Creek, which flows into the Tuolumne just west of Yosemite. The creek also feeds Cherry Lake, owned by San Francisco.

The grant will include thinning of dense vegetation that restricts deer migration. It will help meadows recover their function in holding water for much of the year, as well as diversifying habitat. The springs will be protected from soil erosion.

“The area burned by the fire is so vast it will take many years to recover, but these projects help jump-start that process,” said industry forester Chris Trott, chairman of the coalition, in a news release.

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