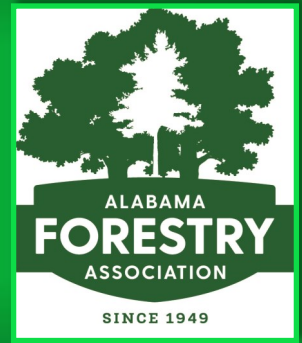




# Prescribed Fire Newsletter

First Quarter 2020



## Benefit of Dormant Season Burn

Burning Longleaf stands during the dormant season is a common management practice. Typical dormant season burns are conducted December through early March, and are a good tool for introducing prescribed burning into a stand. This is because weather conditions are cooler and humidity is higher resulting in a less intense flame. Properly executed dormant season burns can result in several benefits throughout the stand. Benefits include reduction of hazardous fuels, biomass, and habitat improvement for wildlife.

Reduction of hazardous fuels is imperative to young longleaf stands. Regular dormant season burns can address threats posed by lightning strike and wildfire. Dormant season burns are designed to reduce biomass such as leaf litter and fallen limbs. Forests burn, it is merely a matter of when and how. Fuel reduction in a stand will reduce intensity and destruction a wild fire could present. If risks are ignored or if the forest is not managed properly to reduce hazardous fuels, then fire introduced into stand could be catastrophic destroying the entire stand.

Beyond risk mitigation, it's important to remember the role a dormant season burn can play in creating wildlife habitat. Excluding fire, forest can become thick making it difficult or impossible for wildlife to navigate through. Burning during the dormant season will remove dead grasses and forbs in the forest. Making it easier for wildlife to maneuver. It also allows more sunlight to reach the forest floor providing opportunity for native grasses and forbs to sprout, grow, and produce sources of food and nutrition to wildlife species.

Dormant season burns are a great way to introduce prescribed burning to a stand, reduce hazardous fuels and improve wildlife habitat.

**For more information:** *A Pictorial Comparison of Seasonal Timing and Frequency of Prescribed Fire in Longleaf Pine Stands.*

## Planting Longleaf: "The Process"

Planting longleaf is a site preparation intensive process. If this process is rushed or timed incorrectly, landowners may be disappointed in the results. So what is the process and what is the general time line that a landowner can expect?

First, a site should be chosen, cleared of existing timber, and checked for presence of proper soils. Longleaf prefer well drained dry sandy soils.

After the proper site is chosen, site preparation begins to ensure the longleaf seedlings have the best chance of survival after planting. The first site preparation step is an herbicide treatment which should take place between June and September prior to planting in November to February. Site must be sprayed to kill all vegetation. This is in effort to reduce competition for the longleaf seedlings. An experienced spray contractor should be used to ensure desired outcome.

The next site preparation step is to conduct a site prep burn. A site prep burn should be completed roughly 6 weeks post herbicide treatment, after all vegetation has died, to reduce the hazardous fuel load. Without the site prep burn, introduction of fire after planting longleaf will intensify the fire potentially causing a higher mortality rate. With the site prep burn, introduction of fire after planting will mimic natural burn patterns and stimulate seedling growth. As with the herbicide treatment, contact a professional early in the process to make sure this is done properly.

Finally, it is time to plant seedlings. Seedlings should be preordered as soon as possible to guarantee the nursery can provide enough seedlings. Containerized Longleaf seedlings can be planted beginning in November and continuing through February. Ideally, planting early ensures seedlings get enough moisture to produce roots which increases survivability. Again hiring an experienced professional will ensure desired outcome.

Additionally, due to aftermath of Hurricane Michael in 2018, nurseries predict it will take a billion seedlings to replace lost forest. Nurseries in the southeast combined produce a total billion seedlings annually. So, be sure to order as soon as possible to secure your seedlings.

**For more information:** *Successfully Establishing Longleaf Pine from the North Carolina Forest Service.*





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## Upcoming Opportunities

- Alabama Forestry Association 2020 Auburn Regional Reception January 23, 2020  
**Location:** Notasulga, Lee County, AL  
**Registration:** <https://www.alaforestry.org/events>
- Free Learn and Burn Field Day, January 27-31, 2020  
**Location:** Baldwin County AL  
**Registration:** <https://www.aces.edu/event/learn-to-burn/>
- Free Learn and Burn Field Day, Henry County February 4-6, 2020  
**Location:** Abbeville, Henry County, AL  
**Registration:** <https://www.alaforestry.org/events>
- Free Learn and Burn Field Day, Bullock County February 17-21, 2020  
**Location:** Sehoj Plantation, Bullock County, AL  
**Registration:** <https://www.alaforestry.org/events>

## For more information contact:

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