



Prescribed Fire Newsletter

2018 2nd Quarter



Alabama's Prescribe Burn Act

The Prescribed Burning Act (Section 9-13-270) outlines the rights of landowners to use prescribed burning and to address burner liability.

The law expressly states that "Prescribed Burning is a landowner property right and a land management tool that benefits the safety of the public, the environment, the natural resources, and the economy of Alabama." (Section 9-13-271(a)) This statement means that the proper use of prescribed burning can only be restricted by a statutory law passed by the legislature and not by any agency regulations.

The law defines prescribed burning as: "The controlled application of fire to naturally occurring vegetative fuels for ecological, silvicultural, agricultural and wildlife management purposes, under specified environmental conditions and following appropriate precautionary measures which cause the fire to be confined to a pre-determined area and accomplishes planned land management objectives." (Section 9-13-272-2).

The primary purpose of the law is to reduce the liability associated with prescribed burning if the burner chooses to become certified and follows the requirements of the law.

Section 9-13-273(a) of the law states: "No property owner or his or her agent, conducting a prescribed burn in compliance with this article, shall be liable for damages or injury caused by fire or resulting smoke unless it is shown that the property owner or his or her agent failed

to act within that degree of care required of others similarly situated.

Requirements of this Act:

For protection under this Act, the following requirements must be met.

1. The burn is to be accomplished only when at least one Certified Prescribed Burn Manager is supervising the burn or burns that are being conducted.
2. A written prescription that meets the outlined requirements is prepared and witnessed or notarized prior to prescribed burning.
3. A burning permit is obtained from the Alabama Forestry Commission.
4. It is conducted pursuant to state law and rules applicable to prescribed burning.

More information can be found at: www.forestry.alabama.gov



What Role does Prescribed Fire Play in Wildlife Habitat?

The long term key to wildlife management is not direct control of animal populations but the establishment of quality wildlife habitat. Habitat provides the essential fundamentals to life, food water and shelter. There are many tools natural resource professionals can use to establish and maintain wildlife habitat. One of these tools is prescribed fire. Prescribed burning is arguably one of the oldest and most cost effective tools in natural resource management.

Fire occurred naturally in the Southeast and most native species evolved with fire. Whether the fire is set intentionally by humans or natural lightning strike, changes in the plant community are inevitable. With dormant season burns, the goal is to reduce the amount of fuel on the ground therefore reducing the risk of an out of control wildfire. Growing season burns can kill woody vegetation converting the understory to grasses and forbs.

The key is that fire is an effect management tool for the forest and wildlife. Fire sets back succession while providing highly nutritious forage for wildlife. By using fire, managers can select their desired goals and habitat.

More information can be found:

www.aces.edu/natural-resources/wildlife/wildlifehabitat.php





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Upcoming Opportunities

- FREE Cogongrass Workshop, April 24, 2018
Location: Solon Dixon Center, Andalusia, AL
Registration: Covington County Extension Office by April 20 office: 334-222-1125
- Certified Burn Manager Certification Class, July 30- August 2, 2018
Location: 602 Duncan Drive, Auburn, AL ,Auburn University School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
Registration: Alabama Forestry Commission Website, Cost \$150
- Certified Burn Manager Certification class , August 20-24, 2018
Location: Stockton Civic Club, Stockton, AL
Registration: contact Ryan Mitchell: 850-758-8559, Cost \$150
- Certified Burn Manager Certification Class, September 18 -21, 2018
Location: Alabama Fire College, 2501 Phoenix Drive, Tuscaloosa, AL
Registration: Alabama Forestry Commission Website, Cost \$150

For more information contact:

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