

ALABAMA FORESTRY FOUNDATION

PRESCRIBED FIRE

NEWSLETTER



The Importance of Property Maps

No matter how many acres you own, every landowner should have access to a property map. Maps can display important information such as property boundaries, timber stands, and points of interest. No matter the type of information displayed on a map, there are a few items every map will need: a North arrow, a legend and a scale bar. The North arrow will help orient the information. A legend or key will provide a reference for map features. A scale bar, while often forgotten, helps assist with proper distances and size of delineated area. With today's technology, everyone should have access to a quality map.

Professionals generally use online software to create detailed maps. Landowners with internet access can also create detailed maps at little to no cost with online applications. Landowners do not need technology to create a useful map. Pencil and paper can still be used to depict important information about a property. Once created, maps can be given to guests or contractors to help navigate and understand property attributes.

Boundary Maps are a type of map that displays a landowner's total ownership. These maps can be used to outline project areas used for prescribed fire, herbicide spraying, and stand

types. Maps can display aerial photos, topography and roads, depending on intended use.

With property boundaries clearly defined, another good map to have is a stand map. Timber species, planted timber, food plots or riparian areas are commonly mapped to illustrate how a property is segmented. These maps are useful when writing a management plan because they provide visual representation of the plan throughout the property.

Lastly, a map displaying points of interest is also valuable for a property. When guests are invited to enjoy the outdoors, being able to display points of interest make navigating easier and more enjoyable. Points of interest can be roads, hunting stands, creek access, or food plots. If a property has road signs displayed, mapping these will ensure guests can safely explore the property.

Maps can be displayed in camp houses, meeting areas or printed to provide guests when they arrive. No matter how the property is utilized, having maps easily accessible is always a good idea both for the owner and their guests.

SPRING 2023



Upcoming Events

Mobile County Learn and Burn

Date: April 3-7, 2023

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Baldwin County Learn and Burn

Date: April 24-28, 2023

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GIVE ME A BREAK...

Firebreaks are areas that lack the fuels to carry fire, and are used to contain prescribed fire to intended area. These firebreaks can vary in size, with some being as narrow as a walking trails or thousands of feet wide, depending on the fuel types, fuel loads, weather conditions, equipment, and other factors. Firebreaks are usually not designed to stop an aggressive fire, such as a head fire, by themselves, but are used in conjunction with ignition techniques and tools, to keep fire from escaping the prescribed burn unit.

Most firebreaks are constructed by removing vegetation and exposing bare ground. Firebreak preparation is often one of the greatest expenses a landowner can incur when conducting a prescribed fire. Basic firebreak types include natural, existing, constructed, black lines, and mowed or wet lines. Many different breaks may be used on a single burn unit.

Natural breaks include things such as creeks, rivers, ponds, lakes, cliffs, gullies, and bluffs. These barriers require little to no preparation to be used. It is important when using these natural barriers as a break that you have a contingency plan in place. Access to extinguish a spot fire outside the burn unit may be limited due to terrain or water features.

Existing lines can include things like paved, gravel, or dirt roads. These existing

features require little to no preparation, however smoke and public roads can create a hazard. Using public roads as break can be done with the use of smoke screening and proper planning for ideal weather conditions.

Constructed fire breaks can be created using hand tools, tractor/bulldozer, or leaf blowers. All fuel should be moved to the outside edge of the firebreak, away from the burn. These types of firebreaks are labor intensive and care should be taken to minimize soil disturbance, especially in consideration of soil stability.

Black lines, or pre-burned areas, are created most commonly with a slow, low fire, and can be done weeks, days, or hours prior to a burn. This method is usually used in conjunction with another type of fire break, and is used to widen the break.

Mowed or wet lines can serve as a temporary fire break. Wet lines involve spraying water along the perimeter of the burn unit. Often this method is used in conjunction with mowing. This decreases the fire intensity and minimizes soil disturbance.

Firebreaks serve an important role in containing a prescribed fire to the designation area for a burn. Proper installation and use is key in completing your burn in a safe and effective manner.



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Important Contact Information

To Obtain a Burn Permit:
(800) 392-5679

For Fire Weather Resources:
[Alabama Forestry Commission](#)

Prescribed Burn Insurance
Application: [Alabama Forestry Association](#)