

Prescribed Fire as a Management Tool

2023 Media Kit

Conservation and forestry agencies in Arkansas have partnered to offer you a **media kit about the many uses of prescribed fire**, also known as prescribed burning or controlled burning. This is an extensive topic, but the following resources will help you to better understand prescribed fire so you can effectively communicate about it with the public. Contact a representative on the attached media contact list for an in-depth look at prescribed fire in your area.

Here are a few important things to know about prescribed fire:

- Prescribed fire as a management tool is a carefully planned and managed undertaking – learn more about the benefits, methodology, and outcome from a prescribed fire technician.
- Prescribed fire makes communities safer by removing flammable debris and vegetation (fuel for fire), thereby making landscapes more resistant to wildfire.
- Prescribed fire is a great tool for adding and/or improving wildlife habitat.
- Prescribed fire opens the seedbed of the landscape to allow for healthier growth of tree seedlings and herbaceous plant species.
- Prescribed fire is the cheapest, and most natural land management tool available.
- Prescribed fire is a natural, historic part of the Arkansas landscape.
- Prescribed fire improves natural areas aesthetically and ecologically.
- Prescribed fire helps native plant species to flourish.

What is prescribed fire? A prescribed fire is a strategically planned and carefully managed application of fire used to accomplish specific conservation/land management objectives. Prescribed burns are conducted in Arkansas by officials from an array of conservation agencies, and in many cases by private landowners and companies. **In 2021, federal, state, and private agencies/individuals reported 319,877 acres of completed prescribed fires in Arkansas, the most acres burned in a single year since records have been taken in Arkansas.**

Partners use prescribed fire as a management tool: Officials from private, state, and federal agencies use prescribed fire as a management tool to improve natural areas and manage forests, grasslands, woodlands, and prairies across Arkansas. February – April is the most common time period for prescribed burning efforts in Arkansas due to favorable weather conditions. September – November is the second most common time period for safe prescribed burning conditions. The top priority of all prescribed burn efforts is safety. The best conditions for prescribed burning also coincide with periods of the highest wildfire frequency in Arkansas. Prescribed fire technicians work carefully to monitor weather conditions to differentiate between safe burning conditions (low wind/mild humidity/dry vegetation) and unsafe burning conditions (high wind/low humidity/dormant vegetation).

Where are prescribed fire resources? Find an array of resources attached here, and in the links below:

1. Arkansas Prescribed Fire Council Factsheet, attached.
2. Prescribed Fire is Good Fire Infographic, attached.
3. Prescribed Burn Media Contact list, attached.
4. Contact a representative from The Nature Conservancy to discuss the benefits of prescribed burning for the management of forests and woodlands (find contact information in the attached Media Contact List).

5. Find an updated Wildfire Danger Map, a list of scheduled Prescribed Burns for the day (for prescribed burns reported by landowners/agencies to the Arkansas Department of Agriculture Forestry Division Dispatch Center), and the Arkansas Burn Ban Map (highlighting Burn Bans declared by County Judges and reported to the Forestry Division):
https://www.ark.org/forestry_fire_info/index.php?do:showPBurns.
6. Find a comprehensive Fire Media Guide for the Ouachita National Forest and the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest, from the U.S. Forest Service, here:
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/ouachita/fire>
7. Find more landowner management tips from the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, here: <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/environment-nature/forestry/managing-woodlands/>.
8. Check out University of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service Publication FSA50009 on Prescribed Burning: <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/publications/pdf/FSA-5009.pdf>.
9. Find resources and opportunities from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
<https://www.fws.gov/fire/>.
10. Follow social media pages of media contact organizations to stay informed about the latest in prescribed fire.
11. Find Arkansas Voluntary Smoke Management Guidelines:
https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Smoke_Management_Guidelines.pdf.
12. Find more about prescribed fire in the Southern U.S.: <https://www.goodfires.org/>
13. Smokey Bear prescribed fire information and resources: <https://smokeybear.com/en/about-wildland-fire/benefits-of-fire/prescribed-fires>

Who are media contacts for prescribed fire? Find a list of media contacts attached. These contacts can answer any questions about prescribed fire best practices, burns going on in your area, and other information about prescribed fire.

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The Arkansas Department of Agriculture offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Prescribed Fire as a Management Tool: Arkansas Media Contact List 2023

Prescribed Fire Partnerships

- **Interior Highlands and Fire Restoration Program**
(Represents a group of organizations and state and federal agencies that has formed to work to support forest and woodland restoration throughout the Interior Highlands of Arkansas)
Contact information: McRee Anderson, wanderson@TNC.ORG, (501) 804-3250

State Agencies

- **Arkansas Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division**
Amy Lyman, amy.lyman@agriculture.arkansas.gov, (501) 410-4616
- **Arkansas Game and Fish Commission**
Randy Brents, randy.brents@agfc.ar.gov, (501) 539-2559
- **Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission**
Ruthie Berryhill, ruth.berryhill@arkansas.gov, (501) 324-9634
- **Arkansas National Guard (for prescribed fires at Camp Robinson and/or Fort Chaffee)**
Zachary Lehr, zachary.i.lehr2.nfg@army.mil, (501) 212-5020
John Oldham, john.r.oldham.civ@army.mil, (501) 212-5020

Private Agencies

- **The Nature Conservancy**
Brigitte Coleman-Williams, brigitte.williams@tnc.org, (501) 993-1165

Federal Agencies

- **U.S. Forest Service**
Mary Wood, mary.wood@usda.gov, (479) 964-7276
- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**
Elsie Davis, elsie_davis@fws.gov, (404) 679-7107

Social Media: For the latest information on prescribed fire, be sure to follow these contacts, as well as related organizations on social media outlets.



ARKANSAS PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL

KNOWING THE FACTS



Like us on Facebook: Arkansas Prescribed Fire Council

Since 1997

Natural resource managers across the state have participated in the Arkansas Prescribed Fire Council (APFC) to promote the benefits of prescribed fire to agency personnel and the public.



Preparing Students to Become Prescribed Fire Leaders!



Prescribed Fire as a Management Tool Course

- Hosted by the APFC each fall
- Open to private, state, and federal agencies and forest industry personnel
- Taught by instructors from participating agencies
- Teaches burn planning, forest management, firefighting, conservation, weather factors and influences, safety protocols, public engagement, liability, etc.
- Students perform supervised burns in wooded and grassy units
- Students must pass a rigorous test at the end of the course

APFC Members Assist in “Learn To Burn” Workshops across the State That Are Tailored to Private Landowners Interested in Learning More About the Use and Benefits of Prescribed Fire

Prescribed Fire’s 6 Primary Management Purposes

- Wildlife habitat improvement
- Reduction of hazardous, flammable fuels
- Disposal of logging debris
- Site preparation for new seedlings
- Management of competing vegetation
- Forest insect and disease control

- Arkansas Department of Agriculture/Forestry Division
- Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality
- Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism
- Arkansas Forestry Association
- Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
- Arkansas National Guard
- Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission
- Beaver Water District
- Central Arkansas Water
- Chloeta Fire
- Green Bay Packaging
- National Weather Service
- Quail Forever
- Resource Management Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service
- University of Arkansas at Monticello College of Forestry and Natural Resources
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- USDA Forest Service/Ouachita & Ozark-St. Francis
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Participating Agencies
And Departments

Helpful Links

- Voluntary Smoke Management Guidelines publication:
 - https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Smoke_Management_Guidelines.pdf
 - Voluntary Smoke Management Guidelines for Row Crop Burning:
 - https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Voluntary_Smoke_Management_Guidelines_for_Row_Crop_Farmers_2018.pdf
 - A fact sheet for the benefits of Prescribed Fire is available, here:
 - https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Benefits_of_Prescribed_Burning_Temp..pdf
 - Learn To Burn Class Contacts:
 - <https://www.agfc.com/en/wildlife-management/private-lands-program/private-lands-biologist/>

PREScribed FIRE

... IS GOOD FIRE

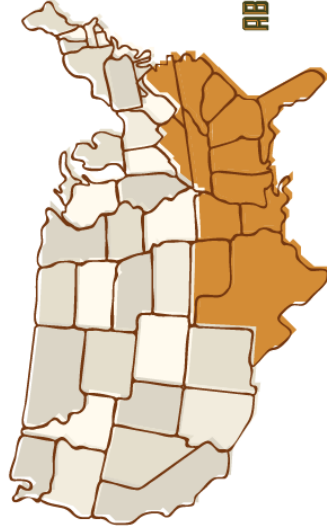


Like a doctor prepares a prescription for a patient for specific results, a **prescribed fire** has a science-based prescription prepared for it.



WHAT IS IT?

Prescribed fire is the use of fire to meet a specific objective, using a specific plan, to restore or maintain the health of a specific ecosystem. The prescription includes specific weather and fuel conditions required to carry out the fire.



DID YOU KNOW?

The South prescribe burns more acres annually than any other region:

ABOUT 6 MILLION

In fact, several ecosystems of the South are dependent upon periodic fire to sustain healthy animal and plant communities.

50% or more of the wildfires that occur in the US annually are in the South.

7 BENEFITS OF A BURN

1. Removing Hazardous Fuels

Prescribed fire reduces or removes fuel that can burn, which **lowers a potential wildfire's intensity**. This makes it easier and safer for firefighters to suppress a wildfire and acts as an insurance policy to **protect timber investment** from more catastrophic wildfires.

2. Forest Health

Fire returns nutrients to the soil creating healthy habitats while controlling some diseases, insects, and invasive plants that can affect tree health. Periodic fire can **improve water quality** by increasing aquifer absorption.

3. Economic Gain

Prescribed fire can aid **regeneration of Southern pines**, by creating seedbeds for proper germination. Prescribed fire also **helps establish seedlings** by controlling competing vegetation.

4. Community Risk Reduction

Well planned prescribed fires **help protect and reduce wildfire risks to communities** where wildfires pose the greatest threat to life and property.

5. Aesthetics

Prescribed fire increases the occurrence and visibility of wildflowers, which attract pollinators, and maintains open spaces and transparency that improves the scenic quality of a forest.



6. Farm, Range, and Brush Management

Periodic fire can replenish rangelands by improving the palatability, quality, and quantity of grazing forage while reducing needs for fertilization.

7. Wildlife Habitat Improvement

Prescribed fire can **attract wildlife and songbirds** by increasing plant diversity which also yields a variety of food. Fire **allows plants to capture sunlight and grow**.



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GoodFIRES
GoodFires.org