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# MD Forest Service Prescribed Fire Program Overview



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## MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOREST SERVICE

Operation Order 2010-204

Effective: December 1, 2010

### PRESCRIBED FIRE

#### General

This order supersedes 2008-204 Prescribed Fire and all previous operation orders and policies pertaining to prescribed fire operations.

#### Objective

This operation order establishes the policies and procedures for conducting prescribed fire operations within Maryland on public and/or private land. All prescribed fire operations shall comply with MD DNR regulations COMAR 08.07.04 Forest Fire Protection and MD MDE regulations COMAR 26.11.07 Open Fires Authority. This policy will serve as guidance to other Units within the Department.

#### Prescribed Burn Plans

In compliance with the above regulations, for prescribed fires occurring before 4 pm EST, all prescribed fire practices greater than one acre shall have a written prescribed burn plan. Any practices less than one acre may be approved with a verbal plan at the Project's discretion and issued a DNR Forest Service Burning Permit.

Prescribed burn plans shall be submitted in the DNR Forest Service standard plan format (Attached) or may be submitted in other written format containing all of the same required information. Plans shall have attached maps including general site location, site map of proposed burn area, and one and five mile smoke impact radius from burn site.

The landowner/agent or the County Forest Service office may prepare the prescribed burn plan. Applicant shall submit the prescribed burn plan to the Forest Service at least 30 days prior to the projected start date of the plan. A Prescribed Burn Plan number shall be assigned by the Fire Manager using the year-region # format (Western 2010-1001; Southern 2010-2001; Central 2010-3001; Eastern 2010-4001). The Fire Manager shall review and approve the plan within 15 days or request additional information needed from the applicant. Upon approval the plan shall be returned to the applicant and a copy sent to the local Forest Service office. Prescribed Burn Plans shall be valid for the calendar year in which the burn is scheduled to occur as specified in the plan

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## MFS Cooperators Conduct Most Prescribed Burns in MD

### Examples of MFS Cooperators:

- USFWS Blackwater NWR
- National Park Service
- MD DNR Wildlife & Heritage
- TNC
- Private Contractors
  - Chesapeake Wildlife & Heritage
  - Sustainable Solutions
- Private Landowners

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### Average Prescribed Burn Plans Reviewed Annually

Western Region – 30

Southern Region – 3

Central Region – 12

Eastern Region – 91 burn plans for 6,949 acres

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### Average Prescribed Burns Reported Annually

Western Region – 20 for 188 acres

Southern Region – 3 for 33 acres

Central Region – 6 for 103 acres

Eastern Region – 32 for 643 acres

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## Agency Conducted Prescribed Fires

- Primarily conducted on lands managed by the agency
- Utilized to meet various land management goals and objectives

## Agency Priorities for Prescribed Fires

1. State Lands
2. Understory and Hazard Fuel Reduction
3. Site Preparation
4. Marsh

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## MFS Prescribed Fire Challenges

- Burn Window (Weather)
- Agency Priorities
  - Seasonal
  - Departmental
- Personnel
- Infrastructure (roads, communities, schools, etc.)
- Livestock (chicken houses, horse farms, etc.)
- Coordination
- Budgets

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