Florida Needs Fire

“…the flammable nature of pine needles, palmetto fronds and wiregrass, enhanced by periodic droughts, has facilitated natural fires and the preservation of our pine woodlands. Put another way, FLORIDA’S FORESTS WERE DESIGNED TO BURN AND BURN THEY WILL.”

Excerpt from the Florida Society of American Foresters position paper

*Florida Division encourages the use of fire to fight fire*
What is a Prescribed Burn?

- Controlled application of fire to wildland fuels
- Specific environmental conditions
- Confined to a predetermined area
- Accomplishes resource management objectives
Florida’s Forests in the Early 1900’s

Fire occurred naturally and often.
Beginning around the 1920’s man excluded fire, fearing it would destroy valuable timber assets.
Today’s Forests

Fire Exclusion ADDS fuel to the flames.
Homes and High Fuel Loads Don’t Mix.

When fire is excluded from a fire dependent ecosystem, catastrophic fires are more likely to occur.
Many Objectives for Prescribed Fire

- Reduce Hazardous Fuels
- Prepare Forest Regeneration Sites
- Maintain and Restore Natural Communities
- Improve Wildlife Habitat
- Reduce Competing Vegetation
- Perpetuate Fire-Dependent or Endangered Species
- Improve Appearance and Access
- Control Disease and Pests
- Recycle Nutrients
Grass stage
Grass stage
Beer bottle brush

Longleaf pine bottlebrush
Bottle Brush
Sapling
Flatwoods- 1 year rough
Burn Prescription Elements

- Burn map and aerial photographs
- Defined area to be burned
- Resource management objectives
- Desired timing or season of burn
- Prescribed Burn Plan Form

John Bethea State Forest
Burn Prescription

Burn Name: Road 34

District: SUWANNEE

Landowner: John M. Bethea State Forest
Address: 11656 State Road 2, Sanderson, FL 32087

Telephone Number: 904-259-4688

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sect(s)</th>
<th>17</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twp</td>
<td>1N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rng</td>
<td>20E</td>
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Sections: 1412, 1447, 1413, 1402, 1401

Acres within Lines: 150

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<tr>
<th>Fire line Distance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Road: 0.5 mile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural: 1.5 mile</td>
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Previous Burn Date: N/A

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<th>Stand Description</th>
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Height to Bottom of Crown: N/A

Maximum Acceptable Crown Scorch: N/A

Understory Type: broom sedge, gallberry and palmetto

Overstory Type: N/A

Fuel Description: broom sedge, gallberry, palmetto

Fuel Model #: 3 & 5

Purpose of Burn: fuel reduction, timber management

Burn Objectives: reduce fuel by 75%, flash fire through to promote longleaf

Resource Section Contact(s): Baker County Fire Dept. US Forest Service

Special Precautions: Safety zones and escape routes

Road 34 to Eddy Grade

Notes

Possible Smoke-Sensitive Areas: State Road 2, County Road 125, Taylor Community

Prescription Done By: Andy Lamborn
Date: 2/2/2015
Environmental Considerations for a Prescribed Burn

- Relative Humidity
- Fuel Moisture
- Dispersion Index
- Wind Speed & Direction
- Drought Index
- Temperature
- Smoke
- Crew Training and Experience
Anatomy of a Prescribed Burn

Prescribed burn managers try to find a natural firebreak, such as a creek (1), from which they set a down wind backfire (3). This creates the blackline (2) at which the spot-headfires (set in successive ignitions, 5, 6, and 7) will stop. Crew members patrol a handline (4) to ensure that the burn is contained.
Nature’s Adaptations to Fire

“Business as usual” for wildlife. Florida’s flora and fauna have adapted to the frequent occurrence of fire.

- The average prescribed fire only moves less than 1/4 mile/hour—plenty of time for even the gopher tortoise to outrun it!
- Burns can also be timed to known nesting seasons.