

Prescribed Fire Opportunities for Forestry & Wildlife Consultants



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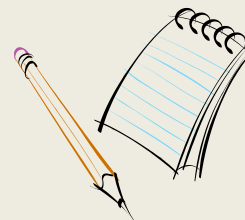
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 TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT CENTER



Outline

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- Need for Prescribed Fire
- Income Opportunities
- Education & Training
- Insurance Options
- Liability Protection
- Prescribed Fire Resources
- Questions?



Why is Prescribed Fire Important?

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- Fuel Reduction
- Site Preparation
- Aesthetic Enhancement
- Insect & Disease Control
- Improve Wildlife Habitat
- Manage Competing Vegetation
- Biological Community Restoration and Maintenance



Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Provides technical assistance:

- to make science-based resource and land management decisions
- at the local level through a cooperative relationship with landowners and partners

Provides Farm Bill program financial assistance:

- Through voluntary enrollment to qualified producers to implement land management decisions



Natural Resources Conservation Service

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NRCS Farm Bill Programs for Landowners Include:

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

NRCS also works with other agencies such as the Farm Service Agency (FSA). FSA Programs for Landowners Include:

- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

All NRCS Activity Begins With A Conservation Plan

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To Keep Things On Track!

What is Involved?

- Site Evaluation
- Environmental Compliance Review
- Development of Alternatives
- The Landowner is the Decision Maker - the Plan is a Record of the DECISIONS they Have Made

NRCS Financial Assistance Programs

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Things they have in common.....

- Funding is Dependant Upon Ranking
- Participants Must Have an Approved Contract and receive financial assistance for Practices that are Completed According to NRCS Specifications
- Financial Assistance is based on regionally developed Payment Schedules
- Contracts are with individual landowners who meet Eligibility Requirements
- Contracts Support Implementation of the practices in the Conservation Plan

Financial Assistance - Specifics

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Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- All EQIP contracts on Forestland must have a Forest Management Plan
- Herbaceous, In-Stand (forest) and Site Prep Burns are all Eligible
- 2-5 Year Contracts Typical
- All Applications must be evaluated to assure that Rx fire is needed and feasible
- Once Rx fire is included in a Conservation Plan a Prescribed Burn Plan must be developed by a Certified Burner

Prescribed Burning



Financial Assistance - Specifics

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Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)



Prescribed Burning

- CSP Rewards Participants that are Good Stewards
- Regular Prescribed Burning can Factor into the Base CSP Stewardship Payment for Forestland
- Participant Should Answer CSP Questions Carefully if they Depend on USDA Programs to get Burns Accomplished
- Getting Stewardship Credit for Prescribed Burning may Make a Participant Ineligible for FA Under Other USDA Programs
- At Least One Enhancement Required.

Financial Assistance - Specifics

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Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)



Prescribed Burning

- Farm Services Agency (FSA) is lead for CRP
- Land Must Have Cropping History
- NRCS and state forestry agencies provide technical assistance for CRP
- 10 or 15 Year Contracts
- Annual Payment and Cost Share to Establish and Manage Cover
- Prescribed Fire is Utilized to Meet 'Management' Requirements within a Contract
- Site Prep and In-Stand Allowed (no other programs can be utilized to do prescribed burning on active CRP!)

Technical Service Providers (TSP's)

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NRCS certifies TSP's to complete technical planning for prescribed burning.

Technical Assistance (limited funds, even without payment can be value added service for clients/participants)

- Prepare specifications for burn
- Certify that burns have been complete according to burn plan and NRCS standards.

Planning (funds available-FA)

- Prescribed Burn Conservation Activity Plan (CAP-112)



For More Information on TSP's; or, To Apply To become a Certified TSP

[Search the term – 'TECHREG'](#)

State of the Union

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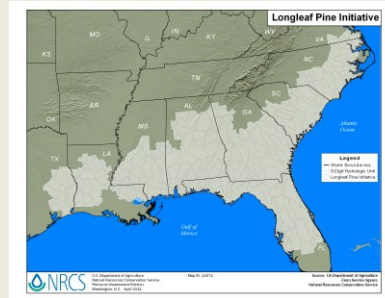


- Financial Assistance for Longleaf Pine & Forestry Have Increased
- Prescribed Burning has the Highest Rate of Contracting Issues Compared to all Other Practices Offered
- Quickly Reaching Capacity – but Still Have Enormous Interest
- Be Aware: When you Have Clients with a Contract; Help Keep Them on Schedule
- Communicate!!! (remember that participant has ultimate responsibility to complete the work!)

Longleaf Specific Projects

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- The Longleaf Pine Initiative (LLPI) was established under NRCS with the goal of restoring & maintaining longleaf pine ecosystems
- There are several “core conservation practices” that are vital to the success of the LLPI
 - ✦ Forest Stand Improvement
 - ✦ Prescribed Burning
 - ✦ Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitats
 - ✦ Tree/Shrub Establishment



Liability Protection

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- Risk of liability is often cited as one of the main reasons that landowners & consultants are unwilling to conduct prescribed burns
- There are several ways to reduce your risk of liability including:
 - ✦ Understanding your state’s laws and policies regarding smoke and fire associated with a prescribed burn
 - ✦ Becoming a certified burner
 - ✦ Obtaining insurance specific for prescribed burns



Liability Protection:

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Understanding your state's laws and policies:

State	Fire		Smoke	
	Negligence	Gross Negligence	Negligence	Gross Negligence
AL	X		X	
FL		X		X
GA		X		X
LA	X		X	
MS	X		X	
NC			X	
SC	X			X
TX	X	X	X	X
VA			X	

This 2013 table depicts liability policies for smoke and fire damages in the 9 longleaf states.

Understanding Liability

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• Simple Negligence

- Liability may not be imposed if the party exercised all reasonable care
 - ✦ In the case of prescribed burns, the landowner may only be liable if they showed negligence, or did not take care that a “reasonably prudent” person would

• Gross Negligence

- Liability may not be imposed if the party exercised all reasonable care
 - ✦ In the case of prescribed burns, the landowner may be liable if they showed an intentional failure in exercising all necessary care

State Prescribed Burning Act

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- What is a prescribed fire act?
 - Laws written to promote the use of prescribed fire, inform landowners of their rights regarding burning, and address liability issues
- Who has prescribed fire acts in the Southeast?
 - Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina
 - States that do not have specified acts still have laws that address the same topics as the prescribed fire acts, but are usually part of a general civil code or forestry act.
 - Check the laws in your state!

Burning Offenses – Alabama Example

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- **Alabama has enacted several statutes that would cause an individual to be guilty of a misdemeanor if any of the following occurs:**
 - Recklessly allowing a fire to escape and another's property is injured or destroyed
 - Conducting a burn without taking the necessary precautions to prevent the fire from escaping
 - Starting a fire with inflammable material in the burn area
 - Not establishing a fire line or leaving a fire before its fully extinguished
 - Not notifying adjacent landowners a five day notice, unless all care has been taken to not allow the fire to escape

Most tickets are given for allowing fire to escape due to insufficient burn resources or insufficient monitoring of burn site

Next Steps

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What do you need to conduct burns safely?

- Education
- Onsite Training
- Experience



Free Online Prescribed Fire Training Courses

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<http://campus.extension.org/>

Brought to you by experts from the nation's largest and oldest network of universities.

Welcome to the online campus of eExtension, a national collaborative initiative of the Cooperative Extension System. To find a course, click a category name to see courses in each, or search by name or topic area by entering a keyword or phrase in this search box.

Search courses: Search

Agriculture & Animals	Community & Economics	Energy & Environment
4H & Youth	Home & Family	Pest Management
Yard & Garden	Organizational Training	Admin (limited access)

Sub-categories

- Forestry
- Rangelands

Introduction to Prescribed Rangeland Burning
Teacher: ashwin stodd

Texas Rangeland Ecology and Management
Teacher: ashwin stodd

Basic Prescribed Fire Training
Teacher: John Viles
Course Specialists: Dwayne Turner

Note: These courses provide basic information and do not provide certification.

Becoming a Certified Burner

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Becoming a Certified burner is a way to significantly reduce liability by gaining protection under your state's Prescribed Burning Act.

Every state has different requirements to become a Certified burner but most include, at a minimum, a training course and relevant burn experience.

Steps to Becoming a Certified Burner

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Example of the process required to become a Certified burner (note that not all states follow this process):

- **Step 1: Attend training and pass any required assessments**
- Step 2: Prepare a burn plan with all necessary information
- Step 3: Obtain all burn permits (if necessary in your state) and authorizations
- Step 4: Notify nearby residents and emergency response agencies about the burn
- Step 5: Conduct the prescribed burn under your state's Smoke Management Guidelines and/or air quality regulations following the developed burn plan with the help of certified burner
- Step 6: Work with a certified burner until you have met the requirements for the state certification

Prescribed Burner Schools

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- **When?**
- **Where?**
- **Costs?**
- **Registration?**
- **Check with your state!**



Typical Course Content

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- State Laws
- Smoke Management Guidelines
- Fire Behavior
- Techniques
- Fire Weather
- Fire Safety
- Burn Plan
- Liability
- Field Portion

Steps to Becoming a Certified Burner

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- Step 1: Attend training and pass any required assessments
- **Step 2: Prepare a burn plan with all necessary information**
- Step 3: Obtain all burn permits and authorizations and notify nearby residents and emergency response agencies about the burn
- Step 4: Conduct the prescribed burn under State Smoke Management Guidelines following the plan while observed by a certified burner on site
- Step 5: Work with a certified burner until you have met the requirements for the state certification

Burn Plan

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Who can Write a Plan?

- Certified Prescribed Burners
- Technical Service Providers
- Agency Staff (NRCS, state agency, and others)



Resources:

- State Forestry Agency
- Prescribed Fire Smoke Management Pocket Guide
 - <http://smokeapp.serppas.org>
- Southern Fire Exchange (Plan your burn)
 - http://www.southernfireexchange.org/Plan_your_Burn.html
- USDA Forest Service (Intro to Prescribed Fire in S. Ecosystems-pg. 55)
 - <http://www.southernfireexchange.org/etc/ITPFISE.pdf>



Burn Plan – What to Include

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- Site Information (landowner information, location, etc.)
- Burn Objectives
- Existing Conditions (stand description, safety concerns, etc.)
- Desired Future Conditions
- Burn plan map
- Pre-burn Factors (equipment needs, crew size, ignition procedure, etc.)
- Notification checklist
- Smoke management plan
- Desired, Predicted & Actual Weather Factors (wind, humidity, temperature, etc.)
- Desired, Predicted & Actual Fire Behavior (type of fire, flame length, intensity, etc.)
- Post-burn evaluation (acres burned, escapes, objectives met, etc.)
- Certificate or license
- Approval signatures

Steps to Becoming a Certified Burner

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Notifications

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When conducting a prescribed burn, there are several parties that may need to be notified, including:

- State forest service
- Local or county sheriff
- Local or county fire department
- Any other fire suppression entities
- Any nearby residents
- Local or county government

Steps to Becoming a Certified Burner

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Smoke Management

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- Smoke management is key in a successful burn!
- Understanding the smoke management regulations in your state allow your burn to be conducted legally & responsibly
- Smoke can be dependent on fuels, weather, topography, firing technique, size of the burn and the duration of the burn
- Laws & policies vary between states regarding smoke, but management is always important
- Smoke Management Pocket Guide: <http://smokeapp.serppas.org>

Steps to Becoming a Certified Burner

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Certification

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Although you do not have to be a Certified burner to conduct burns, you may not receive protection from your state's Prescribed Burn Act if you are not Certified.

Costs of Burning

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Costs of burning may vary by the area being burned, ignition type, and the burning purpose

Relative costs of conducting prescribed burns in the Southeast.

Ignition Type	Burning Purpose	Acres Reported	Southern Coastal Plain	Northern Coastal Plain	Piedmont	Overall Average
			Average cost per acre			
Ground drip torch	After chemical site preparation	16,293	53.44	*	38.82	51.26
Ground drip torch	Mid rotation hardwood control	27,402	21.08	*	*	21.12
All types	All	46,203	32.21	26.32	38.26	32.42



Dooley and Barlow. 2013. 2012 Cost and Cost Trends for Forestry Practices in the South. *Forest Landowner*. July/August 2013.

Example EQIP Payments for Burns (North Carolina, 2014)

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Category	Cost per acre
Actual Cost – Mid-Rotation Hardwood Control	\$21.12
Understory Burn NRCS Payment	\$42.03
Understory Burn HU NRCS Payment	\$50.44
Site Preparation NRCS Payment	\$41.05
Site Preparation HU NRCS Payment	\$49.26
Native Grass Burn NRCS Payment	\$50.19
Native Grass Burn HU NRCS Payment	\$60.23
Site Preparation Coastal/Piedmont – Forest Service	\$30
Site Preparation Piedmont – Forest Service	\$40
In-Stand Burning – Forest Service	\$15

Insurance Options

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Insurance Agency/Broker	Website
C.D. Rigdon & Associates, Ltd.	http://cdrigdon.com/
Davis-Garvin Insurance Agency	http://www.davisgarvin.com/index.php?page=consulting-foresters
Ledkins Insurance Agency LLC	http://ledkinsinsurance.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=86&Itemid=155
Lockton Affinity	http://www.locktonrisk.com/forestlandowners/
Outdoor Insurance Group	http://oigcorp.com/
Outdoor Underwriters, Inc.	http://www.outdoorunderwriters.com/prescribed_burning_liability.html
Sportsmans Insurance Agency, Inc.	www.siai.net

Insurance Costs

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- Prices vary widely between companies
 - Do your homework-which works best for you?
 - Member of ACF? SAF? Discounts apply!
- Burn less than 200-300 acres?
 - Member of the NWTF or LLA?
Discounts apply!
 - Per burn policies available



Prescribed Fire Resources

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- America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative
- Association for Fire Ecology
- Coalition of Prescribed Fire Councils
- Extension Agents
- eXtension Prescribed Fire Community of Practice
- State Forestry Agency
- State Prescribed Fire Council
- Southern Fire Exchange
- Southeast Prescribed Fire Update
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Longleaf Alliance
- Universities
- And more!



http://southernfireexchange.org/etc/SERPAS_Prescribed_Fire_Resource.pdf

Prescribed Fire Councils


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- Organized at the state & local level
- Connect individuals from public agencies and institutions, non-governmental organizations & the private sector who use prescribed fire
- Typically meet 1-2 times/year
- Meetings can consist of presentations, reports, field trips, and updates; continuing education credits are often available for attendees
- Check to see if your state has one!

A list of the southeastern prescribed fire councils and their information can be found at: <http://www.southernfireexchange.org/PFC.html>

Conclusion

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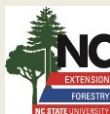
- Prescribed burning is becoming increasingly utilized
 - BUT.....More is necessary!
- Multiple benefits of prescribed fire
- Funding is available 
- More TSP's, forestry consultants, and/or Certified burners are needed!!




Questions & Discussion



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 @SE_RxFire

 Southeast Rx Fire

Blog: <http://cnr.ncsu.edu/blogs/southeast-fire-update/>

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