

WildFire/Prescribed Burning On the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Southern Region

Prescribed Fire

Fire plays a significant role in the protection and management of the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests. A natural element of the forest ecosystem, fire poses both benefits and threats. Prescribed fire is used to reduce fuel loads and to restore and maintain the ecological health of Georgia's national forests.

Oak-pine forests in the mountains and longleaf pine forests on the Oconee National Forest as well as many rare plant species need fire to be sustained within an area. To meet these goals and reduce the occurrence of wildfire, controlled burning and fuel reduction treatments are planned on approximately 30,000 acres this year.

Prescribed burns are carefully controlled and planned for days when conditions allow Forest Service managers to achieve the objectives of a successful burn without the danger of the fire becoming an uncontrolled wildfire.

Wildfire Threat

Wildfire increasingly threatens forestland and surrounding communities in the wildland-urban interface. Homes and other facilities built in heavily wooded areas prone to wildfire present a risk to public safety and property. During the 2007 "Spring and Fall" fire season, 92 wildfires burned 3,912 acres of Georgia's national forest land.

With the continued drought, the outlook for 2008 is for another season with potential severe fire occurrences throughout Georgia as well as an increase in the complexity of the suppression effort. The Forest Service is teaming up with the Georgia Forestry Commission to inform the public during times of extreme fire danger, to enact burning bans as appropriate, and to respond quickly to wildfires while they are small in size. Both agencies are also working with local communities and homeowners living near forested areas to inform individuals about the importance of creating a defensible space around their home to protect themselves from wildfire.

*30,000 acres will be prescribed burned this year on the two national forests in Georgia

*In 2007, 92 wild fires burned 3,912 acres of national forest land in Georgia.



Forest Service employee using drip torch during a prescribed burn.

For additional information, call Karen McKenzie at (770) 297-3061 or Terry Stolz at (770) 297-3090.

**Chattahoochee Oconee National Forests – Georgia
Winter 2008 www.fs.fed.us/conf**

Forest Supervisor's Office
1755 Cleveland Highway
Gainesville, GA 30501
Phone: 770-297-3000