



Cherokee National Forest
2800 Ocoee Street N.
Cleveland, TN 37312
Web: <http://fs.usda.gov/cherokee>

News Release

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Prescribed Burns Planned Cherokee National Forest

CLEVELAND, TENN – March 15, 2019--- USDA Forest Service officials say If weather conditions permit prescribed (controlled) burns will be conducted in various locations in Cherokee National Forest during the period of March 18-24, 2019. Smoke may be visible in surrounding areas.

Prescribed fire is used in the Cherokee National Forest for several reasons including: 1) **Hazardous Fuel Reduction:** Fuels (vegetation) such as grass, leaves, brush, downed trees, and pine needles accumulate and create a fire hazard. By burning an area under favorable conditions these fuels are removed, decreasing the amount of vegetation that is available to burn during a wildfire. Reducing heavy vegetation build up helps protect communities from the threat of wildfire, as well as being beneficial to the forest. 2) **Site Preparation:** Certain trees cannot tolerate shady conditions created by other species. In areas being managed for pines, prescribed fire reduces certain types of vegetation that compete for light, moisture, and nutrients. Prescribed fire also reduces the leaf litter on the forest floor which often prevents seed germination for natural reproduction of desirable vegetation, including native grasses. 3) **Wildlife Habitat:** Prescribed fire promotes new sprout and herbaceous growth that serves as beneficial food and cover for many animals.

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AREAS TO BE BURNED - March 18-24, 2019

South Cherokee National Forest

Ocoee Ranger District: (423-338-3300)

Coon Creek Rx Burn—1,436 acres in Polk County located 4 miles north of the junction of Hwy. 64 and Hwy. 30. The **burn unit lies within Clear Creek Road (NFSR #185)** to the north, Clear Creek to the west and south, and Coon Creek to the east.

Smith Mountain Rx Burn—3,496 acres in Polk County located approximately 4 miles west of Turtletown, TN. The burn unit lies within Smith Mountain Road (NFSR #80) to the west, East Fork Wolf Creek and McFarland Road (NFSR #23) to the east, and FS Trail #81 to the north.

Buck Bald Rx Burn—15 acres in Polk County on the top of Buck Bald, 6 miles south of Coker Creek, TN.

Tellico Ranger District: (423-253-8400)

Huckleberry Rx Burn—999 acres in Monroe County approximately 5 miles north of the Tellico Ranger Station. The burn unit lies within Shingletree Branch to the north, Huckleberry Road (NFSR #4252) to the east, and Smoky Run Branch to the South.

Cow Camp Rx Burn—4,209 acres in Monroe County approximately 3 miles northeast of the Indian Boundary Campground. The burn unit is bordered by the Doublecamp Loop Road (NFSR #2659) to the north, east, and south, and bordered by Citico Creek Road (NFSR # 35-1) to the west.

McIntyre Rx Burn—1,422 acres in Monroe County located south of Hwy. 165 approximately 3 miles west of the TN/NC border. The burn unit lies within Hwy. 165 to the north, Indian Branch to the east, North River Road (NFSR #217) to the south, and Laurel Branch to the west.

Buck Branch Rx Burn—160 acres in Monroe County located adjacent to the Tellico Ranger Station. The burn unit lies within Hwy. 165 to the north, River Road (NFSR #10) to the south, and Caney Branch to the east.

North Cherokee National Forest

Unaka Ranger District (423-638-4109)

Fed Fork - N 35 88.6797 W 82 57.3361: 512 acres in Cocke County approximately 6 miles east of Del Rio, TN and 5 miles west of Hot Springs, NC.

Jackson Island - N 36 11.1155 W 82 31.597 : 90 acres in Washington County approximately 8 miles southwest of Jonesborough. This burn is an island in the Nolichucky River where Jackson Bridge Rd crosses the river.

Watauga Ranger District (423-735-1500)

Big Creek - N 36 29.9915 W 83 4.8356 : 900 acres in Sullivan County approximately 7 miles southeast of Bristol. This burn is located on the southeast end of South Holston Lake.

Grandfather Knob I, II, and III - N 36 32.5106 W 83 2.3483 : 600 acres in Sullivan County approximately 7 miles southeast of Bristol. This burn is located on the east side of South Holston Lake approximately 1 mile north of Little Oak Campground.

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Heaberlin - N 36 33.6495 W 81 55.0426 : **390 acres** in Johnson County approximately 3.5 miles north of Shady Valley along McQueen Gap Rd.

Harp Mountain - N 35 54.9701 W 81 53.6856 : **710 acres** in Sullivan County approximately 6.5 miles southwest of Damascus, VA .

If you have questions about the Cherokee National Forest prescribed fire program in your area please contact one of the following Ranger District Offices: Ocoee/Hiwassee (Benton, TN) – 423-338-3300; Tellico (Tellico Palins, TN) – 423-253-8400; Unaka (Greeneville, TN) – 423-638-4109; Watauga (Unicoi, TN) – 423-735-1500.

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