

## Mark Twain National Forest 2012 Highlights

### Forest Continues to Use Prescribed Fires for Restoration

Many of Mark Twain National Forest's prescribed burns are located near communities to help reduce the threat of future wild fires. In addition, Missouri's natural communities, plants and animals rely on periodic fires to generate and maintain conditions favorable for their survival.



- The Forest's 5-yr average is **30 prescribed fires** per year totaling **28,500 acres**. On average, 6 of those prescribed burns are ignited by helicopter.

- In 2012, the Forest accomplished more than 41,500 acres of prescribed burning.
- Mark Twain National Forest's 2005 Land and Resource Management Plan calls for prescribe burning 40,000-60,000 acres annually to achieve long term restoration objectives.

### Removing Accumulated Fuels Helps Minimize Wild Land Fire Intensity

Mark Twain National Forest removes an average of **3,700 acres per year** of excess fuels through a combination of contracting, Forest Service employees, stewardship contracting, and partnerships with AmeriCorps-St. Louis and Mingo Job Corps.

In the last two years, wild fires that burned into areas that had prescribed burns had less intense wildfires, didn't spread as fast, and fires in those areas were easier, and faster, to control.

### Prescribed Fire Used to Restore Pine-Oak Woodland in Southern Missouri

In 2012, about 12,000 of the 40,500 acres with prescribed burns were within the 116,000 Missouri Pine-Oak Woodland Restoration project area. In addition, the Forest also partnered with the National Park Service to accomplish about 5,000 acres of aerial ignited prescribed fires for the Ozark National Scenic Riverways and their partner Missouri Department of Conservation.

### Key Partners Recognize Importance of Restoring Missouri's Pine-Oak Woodland Area

- **Missouri Chapter of The Nature Conservancy** considers restoration of this natural community its highest priority. <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/missouri/newsroom/pine-oak-woodlands-forest-restoration-project.xml>
- The woodland ecosystem is also a focus area within **Central Hardwoods Bird Conservation Region**. [http://www.chjv.org/CHJV\\_area\\_map.html](http://www.chjv.org/CHJV_area_map.html).
- **NatureServe** ranks shortleaf pine/bluestem woodland as critically imperiled.
- In August 2009, conservation leaders representing **Central Hardwoods Joint Venture, USFS, Natural Resource Conservation Service, RCS, USDI Fish and Wildlife Service, Missouri Department of Conservation, and Missouri Department of Natural Resources** developed a proposed project that identified core areas in the Current River Hills Conservation Opportunity Area as the top priority for woodland landscape restoration in the Ozarks.