



News Release

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DEAL PROCLAMATION PROMOTES HEALTHY FOREST FIRE

Governor Nathan Deal is helping raise awareness about the importance of fire to healthy forests by proclaiming February 2-8, 2015, "Prescribed Fire Awareness Week."

"Prescribed burning of Georgia forest lands is a valuable tool for protecting the forest from devastating wildfires and managing valuable wildlife species," states the proclamation, to be signed February 4 at the State Capitol. The document notes that professional foresters and other land resource managers use prescribed burning for improving forest health, reducing hazardous fuels and enhancing reforestation.

"The Georgia Forestry Commission is charged with protecting the state from wildfire," said Robert Farris, Director of the Georgia Forestry Commission. "Prescribed fire reduces hazardous tinder on the forest floor that can fuel wildfires and threaten homes and property."

Prescribed Fire Awareness Week was established in 2005 through the efforts of the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) and the Georgia Prescribed Fire Council. It is observed annually during the first full week in February as a time to recognize this safe way to apply a natural process, ensure ecosystem health and reduce wildfire risk.

"Healthy forests provide clean air and water, and diverse wildlife populations for Georgia's residents and visitors," said Neal Edmondson, Prescribed Burn Coordinator for the Georgia Forestry Commission. "Prescribed fire benefits reforestation, aesthetics and forest access. It is also the most economically feasible land management tool for maintaining wildlife habitats for many species, including bobwhite quail, eastern wild turkey, white-tailed deer, the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker and countless songbirds."

"Georgia Prescribed Fire Council members treated 104,000 acres with prescribed fire just last week," said Shan Cammack, who chairs the council and leads prescribed fire efforts for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Nongame Conservation Section. "Georgians can be proud that its elected officials are promoting healthy ecosystems and wildlife diversity by supporting this safe and natural process."

For more information on prescribed burning, visit the GFC website at GaTrees.org or contact your local GFC office. To learn more about the Georgia Prescribed Fire Council and how prescribed fire is being used in Georgia, visit www.garxfire.com.

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