

News Release

Wayne National Forest • Public Affairs Office • 13700 US HWY 33
Nelsonville, Ohio 45764-9880 • Voice (740) 753-0101
• Web: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/wayne/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kevan Moore, Fire Management Officer (740) 753-0574

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Wayne National Forest Plans Spring Prescribed Burns

Purpose is to reduce hazardous fuels

Nelsonville, OH—March 16, 2009 The Wayne National Forest plans to prescribe burn two areas on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week, March 17 or 18. According to Kevan Moore, Fire Management Officer on the Forest, these two areas both lie about 5 miles north-northwest of the Wayne National Forest office on U.S. 33. One area is 400 acres in size and the other is 1400 acres.

The 400-acre area will be burned to maintain the grassy component in the stand and reduce the encroachment of woody trees and shrubs. The burn will reduce fuel hazards and maintain habitat for grassland species. In the larger burn the fire will reduce the build up of natural fuels on the forest floor so the Forest can reduce the danger of uncontrollable wild fires. He explains fire is also part of the ecosystem and helps maintain the balance of native species. Fire favors oaks and hickory which are beneficially to many wildlife species on the Wayne. “Without fire,” he explained, “many of these ecosystems become stagnant and lose their biological diversity.”

This week appears to be an excellent window of opportunity for these burns according to Moore but the exact date of the burns will be dependant on weather and fuel conditions. Ignition will be primarily by hand using drip torches. Moore said the Forest has contacted the surrounding neighbors to alert them of plans to burn the area. “Spring burns normally don’t have a lot of impacts from smoke, but we want to do everything we can to minimize affects on our neighbors,” noted Moore.

For questions on the prescribed burns please contact the Nelsonville office at 740-753-0101.

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