



● WILLIAM GOODRICH JONES STATE FOREST ●

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 11, 2023

Media Advisory: Prescribed Burning on the W.G. Jones State Forest

Conroe, Texas - Texas A&M Forest Service is planning to conduct prescribed burning operations on the W.G. Jones State Forest on **January 13, 2023**.

Considered a standard forest management tool for endangered species habitat restoration, undergrowth vegetation reduction, and providing for community safety; the prescribed burning will take place as weather permits.

The area is located between I-45 and SH 242, south of FM 1488 within the state forest boundaries.

Objectives:

- Vegetative reduction/reduce the potential of devastating wildfire on state forest land/reduce fuel load
- Restoration of forest ecological habitat for endangered Red-cockaded woodpecker populations
- Improve access and visual landscape aesthetics for safety
- Enhance wildlife habitat by increasing sunlight to the forest floor and desirable flora species
- Inter-departmental training between state and local emergency response resources

W.G. Jones State Forest
1328 FM 1488 Road
Conroe, TX 77384

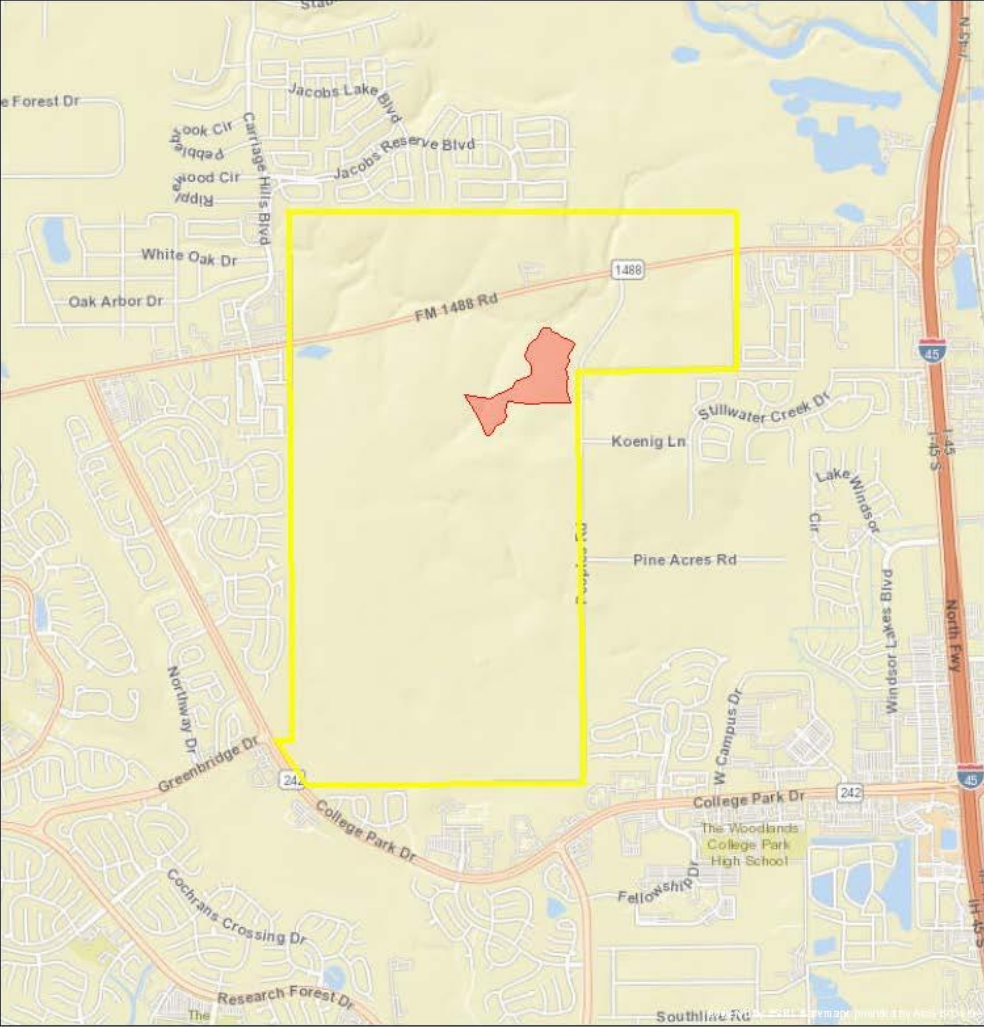
LAT 30.229547 N
LONG 95.484968 W

Texas A&M Forest Service will notify the surrounding city and fire officials, as well as area residents and groups who frequent the forest, by email and posting notification signs in adjoining right-of-ways. Agency firefighters and equipment will be stationed at the forest as a precautionary measure.

In the interest of public and firefighter safety, certain areas of the forest will be closed to the public.

W.G. Jones State Forest Prescribed Burn

January 13, 2023



Fire Information: Overview of Prescribed Burning

Considerations:

In understory burning, fire intensity must be carefully controlled. It must be adequate to consume unwanted dead brush and litter, and to either kill or to only renew the understory vegetation, depending upon the objective, while not intense enough to kill or damage the overstory pines. Although southern yellow pines have thick bark with good insulating qualities, the roots and the growing tips of the pines are always vulnerable to hot fire. Low to moderate flame heights and a steady wind within the stand are often desired to keep heat from rising into the crowns. Cooler temperatures also allow more heat to be generated at flame level before killing temperatures are reached in the tree canopy. Generally, needle scorch up to one-third of the crown will cause little damage or loss of growth. Adequate moisture in the uppermost layer of soil is also needed to prevent fire from roasting the fine roots, which feed and support the trees. This moisture is critical in previously unburned stands as the fine roots may have grown up into the above-ground pine litter.

In controlling fire intensity, fuel loading, fuel moisture, temperature, relative humidity, wind, and burning technique must all be considered. Various burning techniques are used to get the fire intensity needed in a particular stand with the weather conditions existing that day.

Dormant season burns every 2-3 years will reduce fuel loading and top-kill woody brush. The basal and root sprouting that will occur from the top-killed woody vegetation will likely produce browse that is more palatable and attainable to wildlife than was present before the burn. Dormant season burns are typically done from December through February.

Growing season (spring) burns will greatly reduce the number of woody stems that regenerate and will promote more native grasses in the understory. Burning during this time can, however, temporarily interrupt nesting and feeding areas for game birds if conducted over a very large area. Growing season burns can be successfully done if the canopy is fairly open, if the fuel load is not heavy, and if the vegetation is not too green or spotty to carry a fire. It is typically necessary to conduct multiple dormant season burns over several years to prepare a site for a growing season burn. Growing season burns may be done in May and early June if the weather conditions are appropriate and if there is not heavy fuel loading. With warmer temperatures and usually drier weather, growing season burning

requires extra precaution. Growing season burns are often done on a three to five year cycle or as needed.



Precautions:

Prescribed burning should always be done by a certified burn vendor. An acceptable burning plan should first be formulated with appropriate documentation prior to conducting the burn. This plan should detail all information regarding the planned prescribed fire and should be followed as closely as possible. Fuel dryness, wind speed and direction, humidity, topography, fuels, and smoke management all play a part in conducting a safe and successful burn. Tree mortality and wildfire escape can occur in cases of high fire intensity.

Before a prescribed burn is conducted, neighbors, the local fire department and the Texas A&M Forest Service should be informed. The Texas A&M Forest Service will need to know the type burn (fuel reduction), location, number of acres, landowner name, person responsible (person conducting the burn), and a telephone number. Weather conditions and fire forecast information may be obtained from Texas A&M Forest Service Dispatch Offices.