

PREScribed BURN PLANNED IN SOUTHERN UNIT OF UNCAS DUNES SNA

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources plans to conduct a prescribed burn this spring on an 11-acre area in the southwest corner of the southern unit of the Uncas Dunes Scientific and Natural Area, located within the Sand Dunes State Forest.

The burn, which will occur only if weather conditions are right, is aimed at restoring and enhancing the unit's existing prairie and savanna habitat by reducing encroachment of woody species and stimulating seed production of native grasses and forbs.

Prescribed burning is a common practice in these types of plant communities to maintain the ecological health of the system and mimic the fires that periodically swept through the area prior to settlement. Burn crews are experienced and they have received extensive training in safe use of fire as a vegetative management tool.

Letters providing notice of DNR's plan to conduct the burn will be sent to landowners within a quarter mile of the burn at least 40 days ahead of time, as required by recent legislation. County and township officials also will be notified. Neighbors will be alerted in-person on the day of the burn; if no one is home, a letter will be left at their door.

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