

March Management Recommendations

Fire Ecology

- Burning after bud break on woody stems (usually after March 1) appears to be the most effective means of reducing vigor of re-sprouting
- Consider burning stands of native grasses mixed with tame grasses as this time of the year.
- If it is a grassy year, use ignition patterns that result in less intense burns and minimize crown scorch, e.g. spot ignition, light flanks into the wind, and use backing fire, instead of strip head fires.
- Along major highways, minimize the distance burned along the highway edge in one day, and mop up aggressively.

Forestry

- Because it is a big mast year for longleaf on many properties. Put off burning for 1-2 years where capturing regeneration is needed.
- Initiate timber stand improvement thinning, hardwood removal and other cultural treatments in forest stands.
- Delay cutting in areas where heavy equipment will cause severe rutting.

Game Bird

- Drain duck ponds and take soil samples.
- Supplemental feed at 2 bu/ac/yr.
- Burn old-field lands now through April.
- Nest predator management should begin now if needed.
- Take time for dog training.

Land Management

- Prepare wider fire lanes when burning during the driest time of year and always have water tanks available for suppression.
- Avoid disking around wetlands and ponds as many reptiles and amphibians are actively moving to wetter areas for breeding.
- Plant native grasses, forbs, and legumes.
- Prepare for wildflower bloom season in late March in most parts of Florida as tubular flowers like honeysuckle will attract wildlife species, such as the ruby-throated hummingbird.
- De-water flooded areas to promote growth of wetland vegetation.
- Mow clover patches to stimulate re-growth while trying to avoid areas where ground nesting birds may lay eggs.

Vertebrate Ecology

- Check bat houses for warping, caulk or replace.
- Monitor gopher tortoise burrows in burned areas.
- Monitor bluebird and wood duck boxes.