

May Management Recommendations

Fire Ecology

- Continue to conduct prescribed burns as needed.
- Burning during the growing season promotes native seed production.
- Choose appropriate conditions and extinguish by sunset to keep smoke off of major roads.

Forestry

- Conduct longleaf cone crop and flower counts.
- Where adequate longleaf cone crops are available begin conducting burns to capture seed fall that will occur later in the year. Some regrowth of understory vegetation will lower seed predation.
- Continue timber stand improvement thinning, hardwood removal and other cultural treatments in forest stands.
- Conduct timber harvests in suitable areas. Avoid harvesting timber in active Red-cockaded woodpecker nesting areas
- Retain a few large upland hardwoods in the uplands (5-10 square feet basal area) for Sherman's fox squirrel.

Game Bird

- Complete burning of native ground cover areas where quail management is the focus.
- In areas with few fields on old field land conduct some burns to provide late season brood habitat or to achieve hardwood re-sprout control.
- Finish post-burn mowing and chopping by June 1, mowing in areas needing hardwood re-sprout control.
- Supplemental Feed at 2 bu/ac/yr.
- Nest predator management if needed, especially important if avian predation has been higher than normal.
- Complete timbering and clean-up activities on quail management areas.

Land Management

- After May 15, begin treating cogongrass infestations as weather permits.
- Begin planting summer food such as corn, peas and grain sorghum.
- Apply lime according to soil test results.
- Begin early herbicide applications.
- Begin to mow roads.
- Check water control structures and dikes on managed wetland areas for needed maintenance.
- Plant dove fields.
- Plant duck ponds.
- Plant Chufa fields.

Vertebrate Ecology

- The Red-cockaded Woodpecker nesting season gets underway in late April in the Red Hills region. Clear fuels away from cavity trees that have heavy sap build-up before you burn. Clearing fuels helps to minimize damage to the tree and the nesting site.
- Installing inserts into pine trees provides valuable nesting habitat for the red-cockaded woodpecker.
- Sherman's fox squirrels can be seen digging in the dirt this time of year sniffing around for subterranean fungi (truffles). The tasty morsels keep squirrels going, but the process also helps the forest by dispersing nitrogen-fixing bacteria over large areas. Home range estimates for fox squirrels range from 10-40 acres, so these squirrels can distribute the fungus over very large areas.
- Monitor gopher tortoise burrows in burned areas.
- Monitor bluebird boxes.
- Monitor wood duck boxes.