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U.S. ARMY MANEUVER CENTER OF EXCELLENCE



## **MCoE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**

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**March 21, 2012**

### **COMMUNITY NOTICE: Fort Benning conducting controlled burning March 21.**

**FORT BENNING, Ga.** – The Directorate of Public Works is conducting a controlled (prescribed) burn in the eastern portion of post today. Winds are favorable and smoke is expected to stay relatively close to the installation according to environmental officials.

Each morning during burn season (December through May), Land Management Branch foresters and technicians coordinate with the Georgia Forestry Commission and review local weather forecasts to gauge whether conditions are conducive for a controlled burn. Rainfall amounts, humidity and wind speed and direction are among the many variables that must be considered before conducting a controlled (prescribed) burn.

Prescribed fire is viewed as one of the most versatile and cost-effective tools land managers can use to reduce hazardous fuel build-up (brush and scrub that is left unmanaged) according to environmental officials. Other uses include disease control in vegetation, improving habitat for wildlife, range management, preservation of endangered plant and animal species and the maintenance of fire-dependent ecosystems. Prescribed fire also plays an important role in helping manage longleaf pine, which requires fire to grow, survive and regenerate, and habitat for the red-cockaded woodpecker.

Statistics show that in areas where there is prescribed burning, the less it will be prone to an out-of-control wildfire. Since Fort Benning's controlled burn program started, the installation has gone from approximately 600 wildfires per year to less than 100.

For questions or concerns about the controlled burning at Fort Benning, please call 706-545-2238, or visit <https://www.benning.army.mil/garrison/smokeandsound/>.

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**Editor's Note:** News media who would like more information on controlled (prescribed) burning, should call 706-545-6674 or 706-545-8970.