



Open Understory

Natchez Trace Parkway Hosts Fire Interpretation Workshop

Right: NATR Superintendent Cam Sholly (center, hands on hips) used the workshop to recognize both the fire management and interpretation divisions with awards for interdivisional cooperation.



Tupelo, MS--On November 2, 3, and 4, thirty firefighters, park rangers, and public affairs officers gathered to share success stories and tactics for educating the public about fire as an ecological process. The meeting was the third annual fire interpretation workshop organized by the National Park Service Southeast Regional Fire and Aviation Management program and the first to be joined by participants from the NPS Midwest Region. Both regional offices, Natchez Trace Parkway, and 12 other national parks, including San Juan National Historic Site in Puerto Rico, sent staff to the workshop. Participants from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Forest Service, and county government also attended or presented.

Right: NATR Fire Management Officer Shawn Nagle (second from left, facing, in uniform) discusses ignition tactics at Chickasaw Village, a cultural site along the Trace that was maintained by human-caused fire. The site was one of three stops during a half-day of field trips that also showed the park's experiments with restoring black belt prairie using prescribed fire and cooperative burn operations with the Tombigbee National Forest.



Focus on Education Southeast Fire Program Releases New Visitor Center Video

Gulf Breeze, FL-- Last February, the Great Smokies Wildland Fire Module travelled to Gulf Islands National Seashore to conduct a prescribed burn near the Naval Live Oaks Visitor Center. During the burn, they helped staff from the Southeast Regional Office and GUIS produce a new video called "Fire in the Parks," which premiered November 4, 2010, at the Natchez Trace Fire Interpretation Workshop. The ten-minute video is intended for use in park visitor centers to teach audiences about prescribed fire. The video is posted on the national NPS fire web page at the link below. To get a copy on DVD, please call Rudy Evenson at 404-507-5628.

Watch it at
<http://bit.ly/fzndYX>

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND TRAINING

- Jan. 3-7: S130/190, Basic Wildland Firefighting (**KIMO**: York, SC)
- Jan. 10-14: Tennessee-Kentucky Fire Academy (Bell Buckle, TN)
- Jan. 19-21: Southern Area Incident Management Team Meeting (Isle of Palms, SC)

For a complete list, check our SharePoint site at
<http://bit.ly/bYeP1L>

Autumn Burns Successful at Everglades, Canaveral, and Great Smokies



Background photo: Aerial view of the 2,000-acre Context Road burn looking Northeast, Dec. 1. Homestead General Airport and the Miami skyline in the background show the complexity of burning in the Everglades wildland-urban interface. In addition to the obvious human infrastructure, firefighters also protected two nearby populations of Cape Sable Seaside Sparrows during this burn.

Left inset: Firefighters Rob Klein (driving UTV) and Cherie Cordell (far left) ignite Cemetery Fields near Elijah Olive parking area in Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, November 11.

Titusville and Homestead, FL; Gatlinburg, TN--Although spring is the typical season for most prescribed burning in the South, several parks conducted successful burns during the last two months. At CANA, northeast winter winds carried smoke away from neighbors in Oak Hill, allowing the park to burn 756 acres at Bills Hill on December 9. The burn reduced the chances of a severe wildfire and improved habitat for endangered species such as the Florida scrub jay and the gopher tortoise. At Cades Cove, a 700-acre fall burn helped GRSM staff make room in their spring schedules, when larger burns are planned. In addition, since fall burns also favor a different group of species than spring burns, mixing up the seasonality of the burns improves species diversity.

NPS AIRPLANE FOR HIRE

Manteo, NC--Got telemetry? How about surveillance?

Whether you are a biologist tracking radio-tagged animals or a law enforcement ranger patrolling for marijuana plantations, John Kimmel has a deal for you. Kimmel, a veteran pilot who joined the NPS last year after 20 years with the US Border Patrol, pilots a brand-new, state-of-the-art Cessna 206 at Cape Hatteras National Seashore. Based in Manteo, NC, the NPS-owned aircraft is already wired for radio tracking with built-in antennas. Kimmel's recent missions have included patrolling for poachers and helping the US Fish and Wildlife Service follow migratory birds from the Gulf oil spill.

Although the Cessna 206 is based at CAHA, Kimmel emphasizes that the aircraft is a regional resource. Any Park Service program at any Southeast park, such as wildlife monitoring, law enforcement or fire patrols, can utilize the plane at the rate of \$245 per hour of flight time. All you need is an account number! To find out more about how this aircraft can help your program, please call John Kimmel at 252-475-8306.