Fire and Climate Change Outreach and Education

Laurel Kays, NC State Extension Forestry and Southern Fire Exchange
Where Can I Learn More?

- NCSU Extension Forestry
- NC Climate Office
Where Can I Learn More?

- Southern Fire Exchange
- Consortium of Appalachian Fire Managers and Scientists
- Joint Fire Science Program

Research Brief
Climate Change Projected to Reduce Prescribed Burning Opportunities in the South-eastern United States

Introduction
Prescribed fire is a critical tool for managing wildfire risks and meeting ecological objectives, but its safe and effective application requires that specific meteorological criteria (i.e., a burn window) are met. Given climate change projections and projected changes in key environmental factors that constrain prescribed burning, it is clear that predicting the future of fire will require a better understanding of whether environmental criteria defined by managers who conduct prescribed fires can still be met. Gaining this understanding is especially important because the use of prescribed fire is now so widespread in the United States that the total area burned annually by prescribed fires exceeds that burned by wildfires. In this article, researchers assess fire opportunities for prescribed burning would be influenced by projected changes in climate with a focus on the southeastern U.S.
Where Can I Learn More?

- Southeast Climate Adaptation Science Center (SECASC)
Other Topics

- Wildland fire and climate change is closely connected to other important issues including:
  - Development patterns
  - Structure building
  - Sea level rise
  - Budgets and capacity
How Do I Communicate With the Public?

- What issues are your constituents facing?
- Know your basics
- Pull in fire professionals
- Get ready for the future, including big picture questions
  - What does it look to mitigate impacts, not just adapt?
  - What resources or policies do we need?
How Do I Communicate With the Public?

• Program options in addition to “typical” programs
  – Learn and burns
  – Fire festivals or education days
  – Photos! And good media coverage that educates about fire
Find Partners

• People on this call
• NC Forest Service
• NC Parks
• US Forest Service
• US Fish and Wildlife Service
• The Nature Conservancy
• The Longleaf Alliance
• So many others!
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