National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

George Washington
Carver National Monument

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George Washington Carver NM News Release

For Immediate Release

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PRESCRIBED BURN PLANNED AT GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER NATIONAL MONUMENT

Superintendent James Heaney announced today that George Washington Carver National Monument will be conducting a prescribed burn in the park sometime between September 12 - 30, 2010. Because prescribed burns are so dependent on weather conditions, a 20-day block of time has been identified.

Approximately 100 acres of forest and grassland will be burned at the park. The burn will be conducted under the guidance of National Park Service fire personnel. The objective of the controlled burn is to reduce wildfire risk and enhance the tallgrass prairie and woodland habitats through the reduction of fuel loads and woody species. Most of the park will remain open to visitors during the burn, although temporary closure of portions of the trails will be necessary to ensure visitor safety. The burn is expected to last one day.

Tallgrass prairie once covered more than 140 million acres of the United States. Nearly all of it is gone, plowed under for agriculture. Prairies respond to their environment, which include soil type, water availability, and natural processes such as grazing and fire. Most ecologists agree that for the last 5,000 years, prairie vegetation would have mostly disappeared if it had not been for the burning of these grasslands. Areas of restored tallgrass prairie can be found at George Washington Carver National Monument. With prescribed fire, these fragile ecosystems will be preserved for generations to come.

Administered by the National Park Service, an agency of the Department of the Interior, George Washington Carver National Monument preserves the birthplace and childhood home of George Washington Carver, scientist, educator, and humanitarian. All activities and events are free to the public.

The monument is located two miles west of Diamond, Missouri on Highway V, then ½ mile south on Carver Road. For further information on the prescribed burn, contact Superintendent James Heaney or Park Ranger Curtis Gregory at 417-325-4151

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