



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service
Valley Forge National Historical Park
1400 N. Outer Line Drive
King of Prussia, Pa. 19406-1009

IN REPLY REFER TO:

March 6, 2019

Dear Elected Official:

Final preparations are underway for prescribed fire meadow treatments at Valley Forge National Historical Park that are planned to take place in April or early May. Last year we had a successful burn in four meadows located between and along Route 23 and Gulph Road. This year, the potential area to be burned includes two fields totaling 135 acres and could take from two days up to one week to complete, depending on field conditions.

The specific dates of the prescribed fire depend on weather conditions falling within required parameters, such as wind, temperature, and relative humidity. Visitor facilities, some trails, and roads will remain open throughout the burn. Traffic on Route 23 and Gulph Road may experience delays but the burn will be timed to minimize impact during commuting hours. National Park Service staff will monitor air quality and smoke impacts as well as visibility on Route 23 and Gulph Road.

Valley Forge contains over 1,500 acres of meadows which provide extremely important habitat for birds and mammals. In recent years, however, the meadows have been overtaken by exotic invasive plants which degrade the habitat and cannot be adequately controlled by mowing or herbicide. Prescribed fire has proven to be a successful tool to manage non-native vegetation and to promote native species, especially when used in conjunction with other treatments. Several national parks use prescribed fire regularly including Gettysburg National Military Park, Antietam National Battlefield, and Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

We are coordinating the burn with staff from the Mid-Atlantic Fire Management Area as well as with local emergency response units. We will begin reaching out to park neighbors and stakeholders, as well as the local media, over the next few weeks to share additional information about our fire plan. A map of the proposed fire locations is enclosed. The prescribed fire plan will be available on the park's website, at www.nps.gov/vafo.

For further questions, please contact that park's Public Information Officer, Jonathan Parker by email or phone: Jonathan_Parker@nps.gov or 610-783-1008.

Sincerely,

Steven Sims
Superintendent

enclosure