



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Valley Forge National Historical Park
1400 North Outer Line Drive
King of Prussia, PA 19406-1009

January 24, 2018

I'm writing to share our plan to conduct a prescribed fire on 141 acres of meadows within Valley Forge later this spring, possibly as early as the week of March 11th. The park plans to burn five distinct meadows, located along PA Route 23 (Valley Forge Road) and Gulph Road, with the project taking up to one week to complete depending on field conditions. Prescribed fire activity would be completed no later than April 30th.

Field and weather conditions will ultimately determine the exact dates and duration of the operation, as we only conduct prescribed fires under specific parameters to ensure public safety. Vehicle traffic in the area may experience delays due to smoke, but fire operations will be scheduled to minimize impacts during commuting hours. Visitor facilities, trails, and public roads throughout the park are expected to remain open and the public will be invited to view the fire from designated areas.

Valley Forge conducted a successful prescribed fire on October 9, 2014 with minimal impact to visitors and neighbors, and we achieved our management goal to determine the effectiveness of fire in reducing invasive plant species in park meadows. The park contains over 1,500 acres of meadows which provide critical habitat for birds and mammals. Recently many meadows have been overtaken by exotic invasive plants that degrade habitat and cannot be adequately controlled by mowing or herbicide. Prescribed fire is a successful tool in managing invasive plants and promoting native species, especially when used in conjunction with other treatments. Several national parks in Pennsylvania regularly utilize prescribed fire, including Gettysburg National Military Park and Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

We are coordinating the prescribed fire 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 along with a Frequently Asked Questions document will be available in February at go.nps.gov/vafofire.

The ultimate start date of the prescribed fire will be publicly shared approximately one week prior the start of the operation. If you have any questions or concerns about this upcoming fire operation please contact me at 610-783-1037 or Jonathan Parker, Public Information Officer, at 610-783-1008.

Sincerely,

Steven Sims
Superintendent