

**Indiana Department of Natural Resources - Division of Forestry**  
**Clark State Forest**  
**DRAFT Amendment to Resource Management Guides**  
**Compartment 12 Tract 1-4**  
**Compartment 11 Tract 4**  
**02/09/2015**

These tracts were heavily impacted by severe damage from a tornado in March of 2012. This extreme weather event was subsequently followed by salvage harvest and road and trail improvements. Much of this area has since established the sapling stand of a future forest.

As this area has re-grown, potential for the use of prescribed burning as a management tool has been observed. Burning under a controlled setting could greatly improve and future forest composition and diversity across the tornado affected area, as well as reduce hazardous fuel loads from the remnant tornado damage and salvage. Thin barked and fire sensitive species, such as maple, beech and Virginia pine, which are abundant in this area, are often controllable through the use of prescribed burning. These species are currently out competing and over topping much of the preferred oak regeneration. Given the individual life history strategies of the species concerned; the use of controlled fire could greatly improve the survival and persistence of current and future oaks in this stand.

The reduction of heavy shade casting species, such as beech and maple, from the stand will also help to enhance the diversity of non-timber understory species through a change in disturbance type and augmented light regime. Special review and consideration of the affects of burning on sensitive or protected species will be done in coordination with DNR specialists for such species known or found in this area.

All prescribed burns in this area will be done under the close supervision of the Division of Forestry, Fire Control Headquarters and pre-qualified staff. Existing roads and trails from previous salvage operation and restoration activities will provide access and control points for prescribed burning. Weather conditions, as well as any affects on adjacent landowner, will be taken into consideration when planning and choosing burn periods. The project will also involve local outreach to property neighbors and coordination with various state and local governmental agencies.

A detailed initial burn plan has been developed for the project which will affect approximately 8% (123 acres) of the 1,500 acre tornado affected area. This project will be monitored and studied for its short and long term results. The project also has significant interpretive potential at kiosks and the Deam Lake Forest Education Center. Timing of this application is sensitive to weather and fuel moisture conditions. A spring 2015 burn is planned at this time, but this may be adjusted due to weather and site conditions.

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[www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/8122.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/8122.htm)

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# Clark State Forest Tornado Burn Area (123 acres)

