

**Resource Management Guides  
Clark State Forest  
30-day Public Comment Period (February 20 – March 21)**

The Indiana State Forest system consists of approximately 160,251 acres of primarily forested land. These lands are managed under the principle of multiple use-multiple benefit to provide forest conservation, goods, and services for current and future generations. The management is guided by scientific principles, guiding legislation and comprehensive forest certification standards which are independently audited to help insure long term forest health, resiliency, and sustainability.

For management and planning purposes each State Forest is divided into a system of compartments and tracts. In general terms compartments are 300-1,000 acres in size and their subunits (tracts) are 10 - 300 acres in size. Resource Management Guides (RMGs) are then developed for each compartment or tract to guide their management through a 15-25 year management period. There are approximately 1,600 tracts in the State Forest system. During annual planning efforts 50-100 tracts are reviewed and RMGs developed based on current conditions, CFI data or inventories and assessments.

The RMGs listed below and contained in this document are part of the properties annually scheduled forest management activities under review for Clark State Forest.

**Prescribed Fire RMG – Compartment 12 (Tornado Area)**

**To submit a comment on this document, go to:**

<https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/state-forest-management/public-comment/submit/>

You must indicate the State Forest Name, Compartment number and Tract number in the “subject or file reference” line to ensure that your comment receives appropriate consideration. Comments received within 30 days of posting will be considered and review posted at:

<https://www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/state-forest-management/public-comment/>

Note: Some graphics may distort due to compression.

**Indiana Department of Natural Resources**  
**Division of Forestry**  
**PRESCRIBED FIRE**  
**RESOURCE MANAGEMENT GUIDE**

**Clark State Forest**  
**Forester:** Dustin Alwine

**Compartment:**12  
**Date:** February 9, 2023

**Tract(s):** 1, 2, 5  
**Acres:** 470

Fire has been present on the landscape since the arrival of the first peoples in North America. Native Americans commonly used fire to influence their landscape to help with agriculture, hunting, and making woodlands easier to travel by having less brush. In the early 1900s, the country went through a period where fire was viewed as the enemy of nature and was extinguished wherever it was found. It was not realized until the end of that century, that the natural systems in Indiana evolved with fire and require it to thrive, especially many of our oak-hickory dominated forests.

Today, prescribed fire (fire in a controlled setting administered by trained professionals) is used to maintain and enhance our oak-hickory forests. When used under the right circumstances it can provide many ecological services which would be otherwise more difficult to achieve. Prescribed fire can lower the density of shade tolerant species such as beech and maple, reduce leaf litter to provide conditions more favorable for the establishment of species like oak and hickory, release nutrients being held in dead plant matter, and lower fuel loads to help minimize the risk of uncontrolled large-scale wildfires.

Compartment 12 tracts 1, 2, and 5 (6301201, 6301202, and 6301205) are located north of Bartle Knob Road and east of Jackson Road by Jackson Trailhead in Clark County, Indiana. They have respective acreages of 222, 179, and 69 acres.

In 2012, the Henryville Tornado came through and heavily impacted over 3,000 acres of Clark State Forest including these tracts particularly 6301201. Salvage timber harvests were conducted in these tracts following the tornado to capture the damaged trees. Following these harvests, Clark State Forest had the largest continuous area of young forest found on any State Forest in Indiana. With the goal of helping this area develop back into an oak-hickory forest, a prescribed fire was implemented in the area in 2015. Evidence can be seen of the benefits provided by the 2015 prescribed fire on these sites. Round Knob has a noticeably lower density of residual maples and beech as compared to unburned areas. A prescribed fire regime is recommended for this area to ensure this goal is achieved. Prescribed fire would be used on a 3 to 5-year cycle. Prescribed fire should focus on the existing areas of young forest located within these tracts. The young forest of this area is composed of residual American beech and maple which are outcompeting the chestnut oak, scarlet oak, black oak, white oak, and hickories on the landscape. Prescribed fire is the most cost-effective method of promoting oak-hickory forests on a large scale. Additionally, prescribed fire should serve to lower the concentration of invasive species which have a low tolerance to fire such as ailanthus, oriental bittersweet, and Japanese honeysuckle which are found within this area.

There are several recreational features in or near this burn area including a variety of trails. The Jackson Trailhead of the Knobstone Trail is located on the west side of the burn unit. Sections of the Knobstone Trail are located within the proposed prescribed fire area. The area between mile markers 5 and 9 would require public access restrictions when a burn is administered. Sections of the Clark-Deam Cross

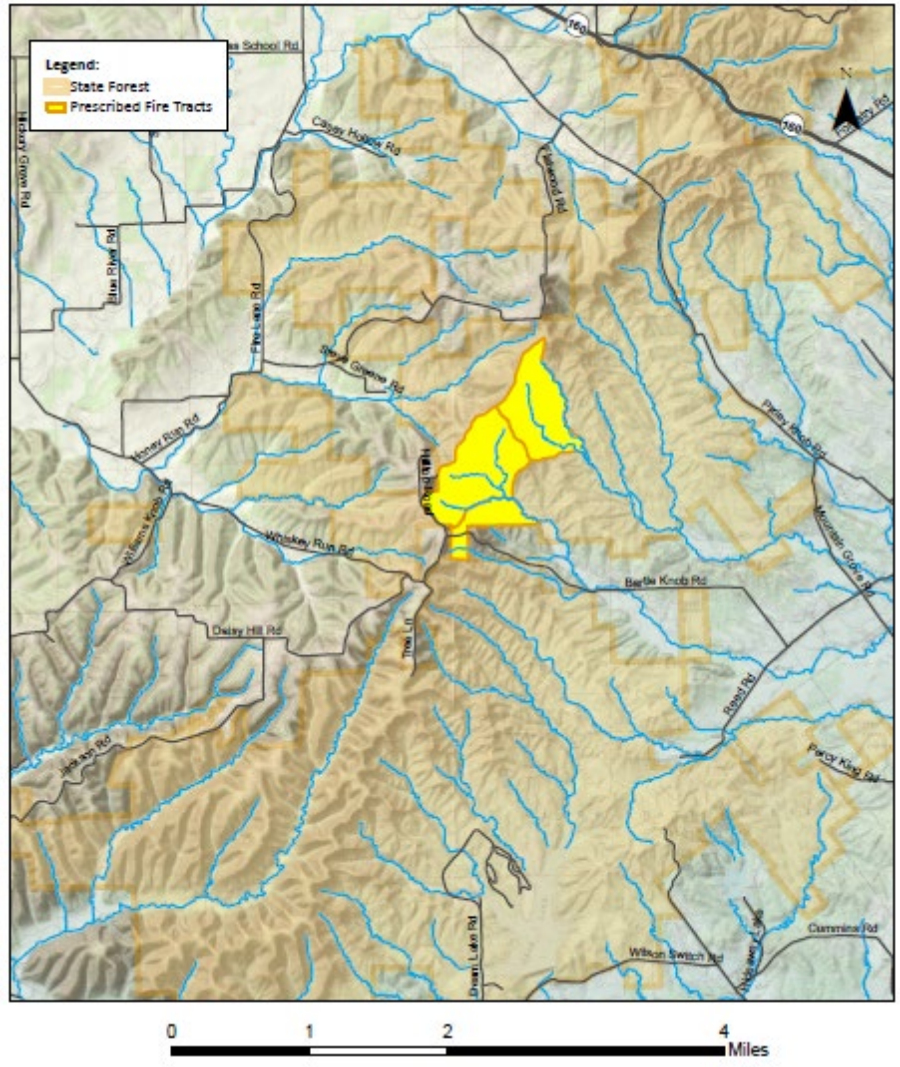
County Trail and Mountain Grove Loop are located within the proposed prescribed fire area and would require access restriction as well. The affected sections of these trails would likely be closed for the duration of each burn, which is expected to be 1-2 days. Hunting is likely a common recreational activity in this area but should not be directly affected since there are few legal hunting seasons during the spring, specifically February, March, and early April.

Smoke management will consider the presence of residential homes in the area during the planning and execution of the prescribed fire.

Cultural resources may be present, but their location is protected. Adverse impacts to significant cultural resources will be avoided during the prescribed fire.

A Natural Heritage Database review was completed for this area. If Rare, Threatened or Endangered species (RTE's) were identified or encountered for this area, the activities prescribed in this guide will be conducted in a manner that will not threaten the viability of those species.

# Clark State Forest Location Map Tornado Area Prescribed Fire



Clark State Forest  
Tornado Area  
Prescribed Fire Map

