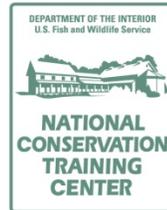


News Release

National Conservation Training Center

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For Immediate Release:

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NCTC Conducting a Controlled Burn to Improve Wildlife Habitat

SHEPHERDSTOWN, WV. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans on conducting a controlled burn this Wednesday, March 9, 2016 to improve wildlife habitat at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). NCTC is located at 698 Conservation Way, off of Shepherd Grade Road, north of Shepherdstown. Local residents and visitors may smell or see smoke in the area for a brief period of time, according to Phil Pannill, Land Manager for NCTC.

“Grass fires such as this usually burn quickly and then go out,” Pannill said. “Fire breaks have been created to ensure the fire is contained and wildland firefighting equipment will be on hand. All needed permits and approvals are being obtained.” Since such burning is weather-dependent, the burn could be rescheduled from Wednesday to Thursday or Friday.

During the controlled burn, three fields of tall grass, approximately 35 acres in size, will be burned by experienced firefighters from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, and other agencies. The goal is to remove invading trees and shrubs, control non-native plants, and promote the growth of native warm-season prairie grasses that provide important wildlife habitat.

This controlled burn will be NCTC’s fifth since the beginning of this highly successful program in 2011”, said Jay Slack, NCTC Director. “Since we have started controlled burning, our native habitat for wildlife has improved tremendously, especially for small mammals, ground nesting birds and pollinating insects.” For more information and photos about the burn, visit <http://nctc.fws.gov/campus/prescribed-fire/>

The National Conservation Training Center is the home of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a leader in environmental sustainability. The center provides exemplary training tailored to support Service employees and conservation partners in the accomplishment of the agency’s mission. For more information about NCTC, or our green practices, visit <http://nctc.fws.gov>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov>.