

Mercer County Park Commission

Historic Hunt House
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www.mercercountyparks.org

Abbott Marshlands

Baldpate Mountain

Boathouse on Mercer
Lake

Howell Living History
Farm

Ice Skating Center

Mercer County Park

Mercer County Park
Marina

Mercer County
Stables

Mercer Meadows

Mercer Oaks
East & West

Millyard Park

Mountain View

Princeton
Country Club

Roebling Park

Rosedale Park

South Riverwalk
Park

Tennis Center

Tulpehaking
Nature Center

Waterfront Park

Wildlife Center

February 4, 2020

Via Email and Regular Mail

Honorable Kristin McLaughlin, Mayor
Township of Hopewell
Hopewell Township Municipal Complex
201 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road
Titusville, NJ 08560

Honorable Jim Kownacki, Mayor
Township of Lawrence
Lawrence Township Municipal Building
2207 Lawrence Road, P.O. Box 6006
Lawrence Township, NJ 08648

Subject: Mercer County Park Commission Prescribed Burn Notice

Honorable Mayors McLaughlin and Kownacki:

The Mercer County Park Commission (MCPC) will be collaborating with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service (NJFFS), a unit of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry, to conduct prescribed burns within the Pole Farm section of Mercer Meadows this year. Prescribed burns are tentatively planned for 336 acres of the park. The burns are expected to take place between February and June 15, with the exact dates to be determined by the NJFFS Section Forest Fire Warden.

The primary goal of the prescribed burn is to reduce the hazard for wildfires through the removal of accumulated vegetative fuels. Other goals include the control of non-native invasive species and the enhancement of wildlife habitat. The Prescribed Burn Plan for the Pole Farm area has been prepared and approved by the NJFFS and the MCPC.

This comprehensive plan describes the proposed burn areas and addresses issues such as topography, necessary weather and wind conditions to allow the burn to proceed, fuel load, smoke management considerations, site preparation needs, necessary agency notifications, emergency medical procedures, necessary staffing levels, execution procedures, contingency plans, and safety precautions. The NJFFS conducts the prescribed burn while operating under the highest safety standards to minimize risks to staff, the public, and property. The prescribed burns will take place prior to June 15, 2019 only when conditions are in accordance with the approved burn plan.

Brian M. Hughes, County Executive

Aaron T. Watson, Executive Director

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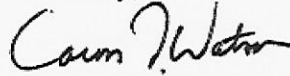
There will be two areas receiving a dormant season burn, to happen prior to April 15. These burns will occur over a two to four-day period. One area will undergo a growing season burn later this spring (prior to June 15). This burn will take place over a one to two-day period. The Section Warden will determine when the conditions are appropriate and will notify the Park Commission and Township emergency response officials within 48 hours before the burn will begin. The Pole Farm section of the park will be closed to the public during the burns. The closure will be posted at all entrances, crossings and trail heads, as well as on the Park Commission website and social media pages.

The Section Warden for the NJFFS has already alerted township police and fire departments about the coming prescribed fire at Mercer Meadows. These departments will also be given a 48-hour notice once a date for the prescribed burn is confirmed, as required by state regulations.

More information about the NJFFS Prescribed Burning Program can be found online at: http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/fire/prescribed_burning.htm. Burn area maps, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and other educational information about the prescribed burns taking place in MCPC parkland can be found on our website at: www.mercercountyparks.org.

Should you have any questions about the burn plan, please contact me, at 609-303-0703 or awatson@mercercounty.org; or Jennifer Rogers, Director of Stewardship, at 609-303-0706 or jrogers@mercercounty.org.

Sincerely,



Aaron T. Watson
Executive Director
Mercer County Park Commission

ATW:ac:hm

C: Joseph Pizza, Deputy Director, Mercer County Park Commission
Anthony Cucchi, Superintendent of Parks, Mercer County Park Commission
Elaine Borges, Administrator/CFO, Township of Hopewell
Lance Maloney, Chief of Police, Hopewell Township Police Department
Andrew J. Fosina, Fire Official, Township of Hopewell
Kevin P. Nerwinski, Esq., Municipal Manager/QPA, Township of Lawrence
Brian Caloiaro, Chief of Police, Lawrence Township Police Department
Edward Tencza, Fire Official, Township of Lawrence