

Neville Creek Prescribed Fire Project
USDA Forest Service, Land Between The Lakes NRA
Stewart County, Tennessee
Request for Comment
October 2008

The proposed Neville Creek prescribed burn area is located west of the intersection of The Trace (FSR 100) with Neville Bay Road (FSR 214) in Stewart County, Tennessee. See the map below. The project area contains open lands with warm-season native grasses and forbs (89 acres total open lands).

Purpose and Need for Action

The focus of this action is to support Land Allocation Prescription 1.A. for General Forest areas, as prescribed in the LRMP. The prescribed fire will maintain existing native grasses and forbs, and early successional conditions, within the project area by reducing weedy competition from non-native species. It will contribute to the diversity of habitat types by maintaining early successional conditions adjacent to mature forests; more habitat diversity will in turn support a wider diversity of wildlife. Fire will enhance wildlife viewing adjacent to the road for dispersed recreation by improving habitat for eastern bluebirds and deer, and nesting habitat for ground-nesting birds including bobwhite quail, common yellowthroats, and others. It will enhance hunting opportunities by improving habitat for game species such as deer, turkeys, and quail. The fire will reduce plant litter on the ground; excessive plant litter diminishes the quality of habitat for some early-successional wildlife species. The fire, combined with additional management efforts, will retard the growth of non-native invasive plants at the site, such as Chinese yam and *Sericea lespedeza*, and will help to reduce woody growth in the open lands.

This project is instrumental in achieving LRMP Goal 5... *“Use a collaborative approach to maintain and restore: 1) a diversity of plant and animal communities that support viability of associated plants, fish, and wildlife; and, 2) sustainable levels of habitat and wildlife populations to support public demand for wildlife-related recreation”* (LRMP pg. 51-54). It also will support LRMP Goal 7... *“Enhance dispersed recreational and environmental education opportunities throughout the LBL”* (LRMP pg. 55).

This action will also support goals and objectives of the 2007 Open Lands Revised Environmental Assessment (OLEA). These goals and objectives are for the maintenance of early successional habitats and control of non-native invasive and undesirable species. It calls for the use of prescribed fire as one means of controlling non-native invasive species (OLEA 1.3 and 2.1.2).

This project will help to achieve the following LRMP objectives:

- OBJ5i: Maintain approximately 10,600 acres in open lands – cultivated and grassland cover types – to support game species, early successional species, and watchable wildlife.

- OBJ5j: Restore and maintain fire regimes and fire return intervals in fire dependent communities by prescribed burning an average of approximately 10,000 acres per year by the end of the first decade, with a long-term objective of 21,000 acres per year on average. Some acres will incur repeat fire application during the planning period.

Proposed Action

The Forest Service is proposing a single prescribed fire of 89 acres in the Neville Creek burn area. This prescribed fire will burn open, warm-season grass fields. See below for a map of the proposed prescribed burn area. This action will require a tractor and disc to restore portions of temporary fire lines made during previous prescribed burns in the area. The total fire line, including the existing road, will be 3.34 miles long. The disked part of the fire line will be 1.49 miles long. This part of the fire line will naturally revegetate into native grasses and forbs. Additionally, hand lines will make up 0.025 mile of the fire line, and an ephemeral stream will make up 0.86 mile of the fire line.

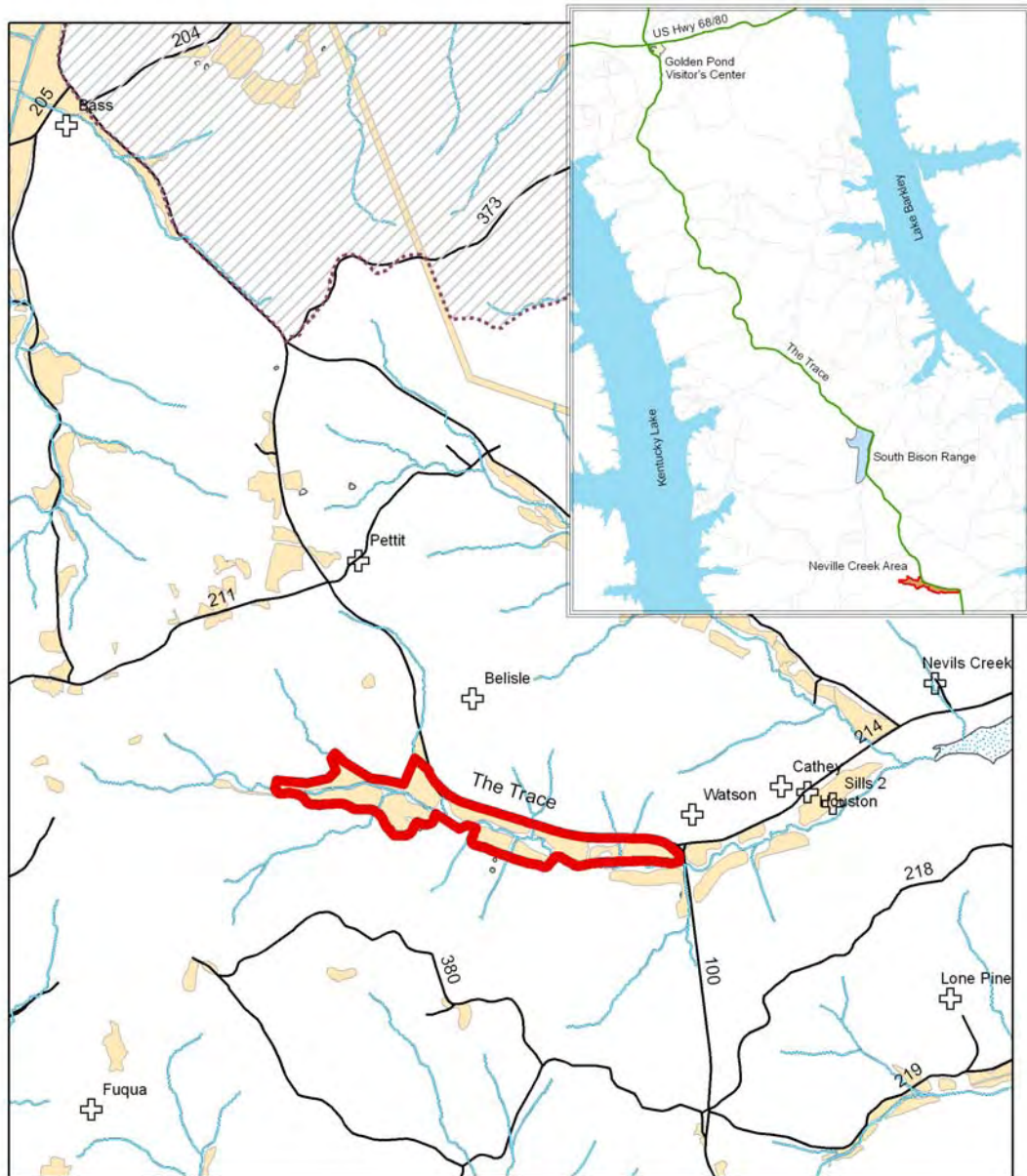
The category of these actions is Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Chapter 30, 31.2 Category Number 6, “Timber Stand and/or wildlife habitat improvement activities which do not include the use of herbicides or do not require more than one mile of low standard road construction.”

How to Comment

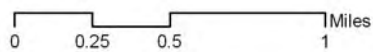
For the Neville Creek project, please send comments by e-mail in common digital format to: comments-southern-land-between-lakes@fs.fed.us; please include “Neville Creek” in the subject line. You may also send comments by postal mail to: Steve Bloemer, Land Between The Lakes NRA, 100 Van Morgan Drive, Golden Pond, KY 42211; or telephone (270) 924-2069. Comments can be hand delivered to this address between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. To be most useful, your comments must be relevant to the actual project location, supported by any evidence you can provide, and should be received as soon as possible. Only those providing comments or otherwise expressing interest by the close of the comment period will have eligibility for appeal purposes (36 CFR 215.6). In order to have appeal eligibility, each individual or representative from each organization submitting comments must either sign the comments or verify identity upon request; and, **comments must be postmarked or received within 30 days following the date of publication of the Request for Comments Notice in the legal notices of the Paducah Sun.**

Approved by:

/s/ William P. Lisowsky
WILLIAM P. LISOWSKY
Area Supervisor



Neville Creek Prescribed Fire Project Area



Legend

- Fire boundary selection
- Oak Grassland Area
- Open lands
- Stream
- Road
- + Cemetery