

Public Perceptions of Prescribed Fires in Coastal Alabama and Mississippi



Prescribed fires - a land conservation and management technique - are used in many locations. We are interested in learning about your perceptions and opinions related to prescribed fires in the public lands within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi. Even if you are not familiar with prescribed fires, your responses will help local policy makers improve community awareness and understanding of prescribed fires.

By completing the survey, you are consenting to participate in this research. Although we hope that you will answer every question, you are free to skip any questions. Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

You will not be individually identified, and your responses will be used for statistical purposes only. Data collection will be managed by an external vendor who will not collect or store names. Mailing addresses will be used exclusively by the vendor for distributing survey materials and will not be linked to individual responses. Additionally, NOAA will not have access to or retain any mailing address information.

Public Burden Statement

The public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated at 10 minutes per response. This burden estimate includes time for reading the instructions, reviewing the questions, and completing the survey instrument. Send comments regarding the accuracy of this burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: noaa.nccos.sstex@noaa.gov. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless a valid OMB control number is displayed.

To be completed by the adult (age 18 and over) in your household who has the next upcoming birthday.

Q1. Before today, had you heard about prescribed fires within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi?

- Yes
- No, but I had heard of prescribed fires, in general → SKIP to Q5
- No, I hadn't heard about prescribed fires before today → SKIP to Q6

Q2. Have you had any of the following experiences with prescribed fires within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi within the last five years?

	Yes	No
Worked with prescribed fire programs at my job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private property of myself or someone I know was affected by a prescribed fire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saw the flames of a prescribed fire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saw the smoke of a prescribed fire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experienced discomfort from the smoke of prescribed fire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saw parts of a forest or grassland that had recently been burned	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saw the regrowth of plants and trees after a prescribed fire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Changed my recreation plans because of a prescribed fire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Had family/friends tell me about prescribed fires	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other, please specify	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q3. Do you believe enough information is provided to residents about prescribed fires within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi?

- Too little information
- The right amount of information
- Too much information
- Don't know

Q4. How timely do you believe information is provided to residents about prescribed fires within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi?

- Not at all timely
- Slightly timely
- Moderately timely
- Extremely timely
- Don't know

Q5. In general, how knowledgeable do you feel about prescribed fires?

- Not at all knowledgeable
- Slightly knowledgeable
- Moderately knowledgeable
- Extremely knowledgeable

Q6. Given what you currently know about prescribed fires, what best describes your opinion about prescribed fires within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi?

- I support prescribed fires within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi → SKIP to Q8
- I oppose prescribed fires within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi → SKIP to Q8
- I have not made up my mind

Q7. Even if you have not made up your mind, which way are you leaning?

- To support prescribed fires within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi
- To oppose prescribed fires within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi
- I don't know

Q8. Prescribed fires are one strategy to achieve management outcomes on public lands. How important are the following management outcomes to you?

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Extremely important
Lower wildfire risk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Control invasive species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minimize spread of pest insects and disease	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve wildlife habitat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve plant diversity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve forage for grazing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve forest appearance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9. Thinking about the same list and given what you currently know about prescribed fires, how effective do you think prescribed fires are at achieving these management outcomes?

	Not at all effective	Slightly effective	Moderately effective	Extremely effective	Don't know
Lower wildfire risk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Control invasive species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minimize spread of pest insects and disease	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve wildlife habitat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve plant diversity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve forage for grazing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve forest appearance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10. Thinking about the same list again, how much do you trust that managers within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi are doing their best to achieve these management outcomes?

- ☐ Don't trust at all
- ☐ Slightly trust
- ☐ Moderately trust
- ☐ Completely trust
- ☐ Don't know

Q11. Given what you currently know about prescribed fires, how would you rate your concern about the following potential effects?

	Not at all concerned	Slightly concerned	Moderately concerned	Extremely concerned
Smoke and associated health issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wildlife mortality during burns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Possible escape to private property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decreased forest aesthetics shortly after burns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Limited recreational access during/shortly after burns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of conducting burns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q12. Thinking about the same list, how much do you trust that managers within the Gulf Coast region of Alabama and Mississippi are doing their best to minimize the potential effects of prescribed fires?

- ☐ Don't trust at all
- ☐ Slightly trust
- ☐ Moderately trust
- ☐ Completely trust
- ☐ Don't know

Q13. Are you...?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Transgender, non-binary, or another gender
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q14. What is your race and/or ethnicity? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Middle Eastern or North African
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q15. In what year were you born? _____ YYYY

Q16. What language do you prefer to use at home? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ English
- ☐ Arabic
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Korean
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Vietnamese
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Q17. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? Please check only one.

- ☐ Some high school, no diploma
- ☐ High school graduate/GED
- ☐ Vocational/trade school certificate
- ☐ Some college, no diploma
- ☐ Two-year college degree
- ☐ Four-year college degree
- ☐ Graduate or professional degree
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q18. Do you own or rent this residence (where this survey was mailed to)?

- ☐ Own
- ☐ Rent
- ☐ Other

Q19. Is this your primary residence?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q20. How long have you been a resident of your current town? _____ number of years

Q21. How long have you been a resident of your current state? _____ number of years

Q22. How many people, including yourself, live in your household? ____ number of people

Q23. How many of these people are at least 18 years old? ____ number of people at least 18

Q24. Which best describes your current employment status? *Please check only one.*

- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Homemaker
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Q25. What was your annual household income in 202X, before taxes? *Please check only one.*

- ☐ Less than \$25,000
- ☐ \$25,000 to \$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000 to \$149,999
- ☐ \$150,000 to \$199,999
- ☐ \$200,000 or more
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete our survey. If you have any additional comments, please feel free to include them in the space provided below.