



Monongahela National Forest Plans 726 Acres of Fall Prescribed Burns in Pocahontas and Tucker Counties, West Virginia, From Mid-October Through Mid-November

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The U.S. Forest Service says Monongahela National Forest crews plan prescribed burns on 726 acres in West Virginia — 464 acres at Upper Greenbrier North in Pocahontas County and 262 acres at Nursery Bottom and Upper John B. Hollow in Tucker County — from mid-October to mid-November, weather permitting, with burn areas closed on burn days and smoke possible for several days.

The U.S. Forest Service says crews on the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia plan prescribed burns on 726 acres in Pocahontas and Tucker counties from mid-October through mid-November 2026, weather permitting. The forest announced the plan on October 9, 2026 from its Elkins headquarters.

The Forest Service says the burns are meant to restore fire's natural role in the forest, improve forest health and wildlife habitat, and reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire.

Where the burns are planned

- Upper Greenbrier North: 464 acres, Pocahontas County.
- Nursery Bottom: 52 acres, Tucker County.
- Upper John B. Hollow: 210 acres, Tucker County.

What residents and visitors should expect

- Closures: each burn area will be closed to the public on the day of the burn, and may stay closed for several days after for safety.
- Signs: posted on roads near all burn areas before and during burning.
- Smoke: residents and visitors may see and smell smoke for several days.
- On the road: if you drive into smoke, slow down, turn on your headlights and drive for the conditions.

When a burn goes ahead

Prescribed burns are lit only under set conditions. The forest says it weighs temperature, humidity, smoke dispersion and wind, and will postpone a burn if any of them are outside its limits. That is why the dates are a window, not a fixed schedule.

Why it matters

Low-intensity fire on a planned day clears built-up brush and dead fuel that could otherwise feed a hotter, harder-to-control wildfire later. For people who live near these units, the short-term tradeoff is a day or two of closures and smoke.

Where to check

- Monongahela National Forest: fs.usda.gov/r09/monongahela and the forest's Facebook page.
- Media contact listed by the Forest Service: Andrea Brandon, 304-635-4456.

Source

- USDA Forest Service, Monongahela National Forest news release, "Monongahela National Forest Plans Fall Prescribed Burns," Elkins, W.Va., October 9, 2026 (fs.usda.gov/r09/monongahela/newsroom).

Notes

- Image: Smoke rises from a prescribed burn on the Monongahela National Forest, West Virginia, May 1, 2018 (file photo, not this fall's burns). Photo: USDA Forest Service via Wikimedia Commons (Public domain).
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