



Restoring Fire Adapted Ecosystems: 2006 Field Season Summary

A cooperative project with the USFWS, Maine Forest Service, ME ARNG, ME Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, USFS, local Volunteer Fire Departments, and the Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire Chapters of The Nature Conservancy

Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Project Update:

Results of WUI Projects and Partner Assists by the
So Maine TNC Conservation\Fire Crew

**Waterboro Barrens Preserve, S. Western, ME
Kennebunk Plains WMA, Kennebunk, ME**

Assisting Partners:

**Hollis Barrens: ME Army Nat. Guard, Hollis, ME
Albany Pine Bush Preserve: Albany, NY
Camp Edwards: MA Army Nat. Guard, Otis, MA
The Nature Conservancy: MA and NH Chapters**

The primary goal of this US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) funded project is to re-introduce fire into fire-dependent habitats in Southern Maine. Hazardous fuel reduction is a secondary goal as this protects populated neighborhoods from the threat of wild fires. In 2006, we continue to share our methods and crews to assist partners. Funds have made possible strategic thinning, habitat restoration, wildland fire monitoring, training and planning. Annually, since 2003, TNC conservation\ fire crews have coordinated ecological burns, measured fire behavior, quantified fire effects and fuel reduction, and have noted changes in plant and animal diversity.

Prescribed fire and mechanical thinning was applied to Kennebunk Plains WMA, Waterboro Barrens Preserve and Hollis Barrens Training Site in 2006. Ecological burns totaled **260 acres** at these three sites, completing **145, 75 and 40 acres**, respectively. Effective ecological burns this year were problematic because of periodic rains. Favorable breaks in the weather were found to train and team regionally with partners. In 2006, we assisted with fire applications on an additional **235 acres** of partner lands in Albany, NY, on Cape Cod and the Islands, MA. State Forests, and MA ARNG land in southeastern MA. A list of our team building activities across the region follow. Partners help us build depth and exchange measures of success. Each partner uses strategic forest treatments and prescribed fire in pitch pine and oak forests to study regeneration and to continue early successional maintenance of grasslands and shrubland thickets in order to:



1. reduce, remove excess fuel loads in Pitch Pine and Pine-Oak woodlands
2. decrease the chances of uncontrolled wildfire
3. provide defensible space near our neighbors
4. showcase prescribed fire as a safe and effective management tool
5. promote habitat improvement for wildlife
6. assess the health and regeneration of a range of fire-adaptive plant communities.
7. measure the success and effects of our actions with monitoring
8. increase structural and biological diversity
9. use adaptive management techniques gleaned from partners and academic research
10. support training opportunities and team building with our partners.

2006 Highlights Site Based Activities:

Rx = prescribed fire

Tx = mechanical or fuel reduction treatment

***Kennebunk Plains WMA**

5 burns

Rx: 135 acres (Sand plain grassland)

Rx: 10 acres (Pitch pine\Oak woodlands)

Tx: 50 acres brush management\fuel reduction

195 acres treated

***Waterboro Barrens Preserve**

5 Burns

Rx: 40 acres (Pitch pine\Oak woodlands)

Tx: 20 acres (ignition lines\MU edges\fuel reduction)

60 acres treated

New England WUI Site Partner Assists:

USFWS Western Wildfire Crew:

New England Refuge Crew # 1:
supported with personnel

Hollis Barrens: ME ARNG

6 Burns: supported with personnel & equipment

Rx: 75 acres (Pitchpine Scruboak\Gray Birch Barrens)

75 acres treated

Albany Pine Bush Commission

4 Burns: supported with personnel

Rx: 80 acres

80 acres treated

TNC MA and NH Chapters

4 Burns: supported with personnel & equipment

Rx: 31 Acres

31 acres treated

Camp Edwards: MA ARNG

3 Burns: supported with personnel

Rx: 50 Acres

50 acres treated



2006 Field Season Summation:

* = Kplains and Waterboro Barrens

*ME WUI Site number of burns: 10 Rx Burns
*ME WUI Site Tx: 70 acres
*ME WUI Site Rx (acres): 185 acres

Total WUI site treatments: **265 acres**

Assists on Partner WUI Sites:

Assist Site # of burns: 17 Rx Burns
Assist Site Rx (acres): 236 acres

Total Assist treatments: **236 acres**

ME TNC Sites plus Partner Sites

2006 total # Rx: 27 Rx Burns
2006 total Tx: 70 acres
2006 total Rx: 501 acres

Total Combined Treated Acres: **571 acres**

Other Significant 2006 Events:

Training:

Self Paced S-290 Training (Crew)
Rx-300 Training with MA TNC, NPS, MA ARNG (Crew)
S-131 Advanced Fire Fighter (Crew)
S-234 Ignition Operations (Crew)
S-230 Crew Boss (Crew)
S-212 Saw Operations
UMASS Fuel Modeling Workshop

Hosted with SMCC 130\190 Course
For 30 Volunteer Fire Department Local Students

Hosted Fire Learning Service Days for Southern Maine
Community College Fire Science Classes

Monitoring and Plans:

Fire Effects and Pitch Pine Recruitment Study
Fire in Oak Systems Conference
New England Fire Practitioners Conference
Pre-post fire monitoring
Photo plot monitoring
Rx-fire Planning and prescription writing
Fuel Mapping
Treatment and Rx-Plans for 2006-7
Depth Building and Training with Partners

