



Meridian Township
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Okemos, MI 48864

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Township Board:

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Township Trustee

Frank L. Walsh
Township Manager

February 27, 2023

Dear Township Resident:



The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our plans to conduct a prescribed ecological burn planned for this winter/spring on the Township-owned Red Cedar Glen Land Preserve, located at 1400 Sylvan Glen Road, Okemos MI 48864. More specifically, the burn will be conducted on a 4.6 acre plot that is encompassed by the trail system at the west end of the preserve. The goals of this burn would be to stimulate herbaceous vegetation and provide better habitat for insects as we expand stewardship in this area, which entails invasive species removal and native plantings of woodland flora. There is a desire to increase sunlight in this area to improve growing conditions for native woodland flowers. An ideal fire would top kill many of the small maple, ash, and aspen saplings, and shrubs and vines that dominate the ground layer in this forest. The burn will be taking place between now and April 10th if conditions are favorable. If conditions are not favorable this fall, the burn will commence in the spring of 2024 and be completed by April 7th, 2024.

This burn will be safe and carefully controlled by trained personnel with Appel Environmental Design. The Meridian Township Fire Department will be on site to provide aid, if needed.

“Why Burn?” Fire was a regular and frequent component of our landscape here in southern Michigan. Many of our local ecosystems such as prairies, dry oak-hickory woodlands and certain wetlands burned frequently. The fire stimulated many of the plant species to grow more vigorously and discouraged others who were not adapted to the heat from the fire. Today, many non-native plant species have invaded our natural fire-adapted ecosystems, decreasing the diversity of native plants and animals. By bringing fire back to these sites we encourage the competitive advantage that native species have evolved with and restore the site to its former ecological health.



The prescribed burn is safe. The burn is done in cooperation and approval of the local fire department, which has issued a permit for this burn to be conducted. The company performing the burn has outlined the weather conditions, personnel, equipment, and other parameters needed for the burn to be conducted safely. Prior to burning, “burn breaks” will be created around the area to be burned to help control the fire. The burn is done in a slow and deliberate manner, with safety equipment on hand to monitor and control its spread. The burn will also be conducted in such a manner as to minimize the amount of smoke produced and to direct any smoke away from smoke-sensitive areas as much as possible. Due to the burn being weather-dependent, it is impossible to predict exactly when it will occur, though if conditions are favorable then we will notify homeowners 1-2 days prior to the burn over social media, on our website, and through the constant contact email list.

If you have any questions, concerns, or if you have any special needs that require you to be notified by phone on the day of the burn, you may contact me at 517-853-4614 or, ecampbell@meridian.mi.us.

Sincerely,

Emma Campbell
Land Stewardship Coordinator