



## Rice Lake Plains Prescribed Burn Open House on March 18, 2015

March 6, 2015  
Cobourg, Ontario

### MEDIA ADVISORY AND PUBLIC NOTICE

This spring, the Nature Conservancy of Canada is planning a series of prescribed burns as part of habitat restoration on the Rice Lake Plains, in Northumberland County. This will be the tenth year of prescribed burns, all part of a long-term program to restore tallgrass prairie habitat in the area.

Partners of the *Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative* are hosting a **Prescribed Burn Open House on March 18, 2015 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Harwood Fire Station (5424 Front Street)**. A short presentation will occur at 6:30 p.m. and representatives from organizations planning prescribed burns in Northumberland County will be available to answer questions.

Prescribed burns are intentionally set and professionally managed fires that burn across a pre-determined area under strictly controlled circumstances in order to restore natural habitat. Fire clears away scrub and brush, creating conditions that let sunlight penetrate to the ground. This stimulates dormant seeds and allows native prairie and savannah species to re-establish. Fire also extends the growing season for native plants and helps to manage and reduce invasive species. Burns will only take place under specific weather conditions that allow for a safe and controlled fire.

The prescribed burns conducted on the various Oak Ridges Moraine sites will be carried out by trained professionals including staff from Nature Conservancy of Canada, Alderville First Nation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and Lands & Forests Consulting, an independent prescribed burn consulting firm. Detailed burn plans, fire permits and insurance are obtained in advance for each site.

The prescribed burns are part of ongoing habitat restoration efforts of the *Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative* partners, which include the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Northumberland County Forest, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority, Lower Trent Conservation, Ontario Parks, Alderville First Nation, Willow Beach Field Naturalists, Tallgrass Ontario, Long Pine Marsh Land Trust and the Northumberland Land Trust.

### 2015 prescribed burns locations:

- Hazel Bird, Van Hove, Webber and Barr properties – Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Burnley Carmel property – Ontario Parks
- McEwen property – Northumberland Land Trust
- Alderville First Nation Black Oak Savanna
- Northumberland County Forest

**PLEASE NOTE:** Prescribed burns are weather-dependent and site-specific. Typically they occur in mid April to early May, after snow melt and once sites are dry.

**QUOTES:**

“Tallgrass prairie and savannah plant species depend upon fire to live. As natural fires have long been suppressed in southern Ontario, conservation scientists across North America use professionally-managed prescribed burns to bring new life to these wildlife habitats,” says Mark Stabb, Central Ontario’s Program Director, Nature Conservancy of Canada. “We encourage our neighbours to come to the open house to learn more about this season’s plans, and to address any safety concerns they may have.”

**ABOUT:**

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is the nation’s leading land conservation organization, working to protect our most important natural areas and the species they sustain. Since 1962 NCC and its partners have helped to protect more than 1.1 million hectares (more than 2.7 million acres), coast to coast.

**Learn More**

[www.natureconservancy.ca/on](http://www.natureconservancy.ca/on)

[www.ricelakeplains.ca](http://www.ricelakeplains.ca)

Follow us on Twitter: [twitter.com/NCC\\_CNC](https://twitter.com/NCC_CNC)

Become a fan on [Facebook](#)

**Media Contact:**

Rebecca Hull  
Communications Manager, Ontario Region  
Nature Conservancy of Canada  
Tel: 1-800-465-0029 ext.2250  
[rebecca.hull@natureconservancy.ca](mailto:rebecca.hull@natureconservancy.ca)

**Contacts:**

Todd Farrell  
Coordinator, Conservation Biology, Central Ontario  
Tel: 705 749-1806  
Cell: 705-761-6500  
[todd.farrell@natureconservancy.ca](mailto:todd.farrell@natureconservancy.ca)

Mark Stabb  
Central Ontario Program Manager  
Nature Conservancy of Canada  
Tel: 905- 862-2642  
Mobile: 905-621-5230  
[mark.stabb@natureconservancy.ca](mailto:mark.stabb@natureconservancy.ca)

Val Deziel  
Acting Conservation Biologist, Central ON  
Nature Conservancy of Canada  
Tel: 705-749-1806  
Mobile: 705-761-6500  
[val.deziel@natureconservancy.ca](mailto:val.deziel@natureconservancy.ca)