

NEWS RELEASE

MS Dept. of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi 39530



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ENHANCE ★ PROTECT ★ CONSERVE

DMR to conduct prescribed burn on Deer Island

BILOXI, Miss. – Officials with the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources will conduct a prescribed burn on Deer Island on Friday, Dec. 9.



Depending on weather conditions, the burn will begin between 10 a.m. and noon and last up to four hours; however, some of the trees could smolder for up to two days.

The burn will take place on a 41-acre section on the eastern end of Deer Island.

DMR officials are encouraging residents and tourists to stay off that side of Deer Island for at least a week because dead trees will continue to give way and fall after the burn is complete.

DMR will partner with the U.S. Forest Service to plant about 2,000 trees to replenish this area of Deer Island.

"Deer Island suffered mass pine mortality following Hurricane Katrina, with only 10 trees surviving on the far eastern portion of the island," said Ali Leggett Robertson, director of DMR's Coastal Preserves Bureau. "The depleted seed bank and isolation of this area has delayed the forest regeneration that is evident on the remainder of the island."

"The prescribed fire is planned in preparation for replanting Slash pine," Robertson said. "Burning off the dense, grassy understory will reduce competition and give the pine seedlings a greater chance of survival."

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Robertson added that USFS collected and grew out genetically local Slash pine seed as part of a genetics research project. USFS will continue to monitor the health of the seedlings as part of this research."

Photos courtesy Mississippi Department of Marine Resources



Deer Island underwent a prescribed burn in 2010. Another prescribed burn is scheduled for Friday, Dec. 9.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at dmr.ms.gov.

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