

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Prescribed Fire Awareness Week Jan. 24-30, 2016**



**Prescribed fire at Mallory Swamp, Dec 2015. Photo credit Doug Williams.**

LIVE OAK, FL, January 25, 2016 — The Suwannee River Water Management District (District) uses prescribed fire as part of its strategy to maintain natural resources and reduce the risk of wildfires. In recognition of 2016 Prescribed Fire Awareness Week, the District is providing information on the benefits of prescribed fire.

Prescribed fire helps facilitate overall ecological restoration by enhancing native upland and wetland vegetation and improving habitat for native wildlife. Prescribed fire is also used to reduce fuel levels in the forest to help lower the intensity of any possible wildfire. Other benefits of controlled burns include plant disease control, soil nutrient restoration and aesthetic improvement.

Prescribed burns are conducted under very specific conditions. Land managers seek out the best wind, temperature, and moisture conditions to reap the benefits of natural fire, while minimizing the risk of wildfire or smoke blowing into sensitive or densely populated areas.

Control burns on District lands are conducted only by personnel that are certified by the Florida Forest Service.

Prescribed burns may temporarily produce smoke or other hazardous conditions. On District lands roads will be closed and public access may be limited during controlled burns, for the safety of the public.

For more information visit <http://www.mysuwanneeriver.org> .

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