

JOHN VON BARGEN
U. S. Forest Service
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE SECOND PRESCRIBED BURN ON THE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER MANAGEMENT AREA LOCATED NEAR MIO, MICHIGAN, IN THE HEART OF THE HURON NATIONAL FOREST (██████████) (WAS) TOUCHED OFF THURSDAY (OCTOBER 27). THERE ARE SOME 250 ACRES TO BE BURNED AND THE WEATHER OVER THE PAST WEEK HAS PRODUCED THE CONDITIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PRESCRIBED TO ACCOMPLISH THIS BURN AND ACHIEVE THE DESIRED RESULT. THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS TREATMENT IS TO REGENERATE A NEW STAND OF JACK PINE WHICH WILL SERVE AS NESTING HABITAT FOR THE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER. JACK PINE NORMALLY REQUIRES HEAT TO OPEN ITS CONES SO SEEDS CAN BE RELEASED.

THE KIRTLAND'S WARBLER IS CONSIDERED TO BE IN DANGER OF EXTINCTION SINCE ITS TOTAL POPULATION NUMBERS LESS THAN 1,000 AND IT NESTS ONLY IN YOUNG JACK PINE STANDS IN A 12 COUNTY AREA IN THE NORTHERN PART OF MICHIGAN'S LOWER PENINSULA. THE U. S. FOREST SERVICE DESIGNATED A 4,010 ACRE TRACT IN 1963 ON THE HURON NATIONAL FOREST AS AN AREA TO BE MANAGED TO PRODUCE THIS TYPE OF NESTING HABITAT ON A SUSTAINED BASIS. WHEN A NEW STAND OF JACK PINE REACHES FIVE FEET IN HEIGHT (WHICH TAKES SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 7 AND 10 YEARS AFTER A BURN) THE WARBLERS BEGIN TO USE SUCH A STAND FOR NESTING. THEY CONTINUE TO USE THESE STANDS UNTIL THEY REACH A HEIGHT OF 18 TO 20 FEET (WHICH TAKES ABOUT ANOTHER 20 YEARS). THIS STAND WILL BE ALLOWED TO GROW TO MATURITY (60 YEARS) BEFORE CUT AND BURNED AGAIN, BUT BY THE TIME IT HAS GROWN PAST THE DESIRABLE STAGE FOR NESTING ANOTHER YOUNG STAND WILL BE READY TO SUPPLY ANOTHER NESTING AREA IN THIS TRACT. IN OTHER WORDS, APPROXIMATELY ONE THIRD OF THIS TRACT WILL BE IN THE DESIRED HEIGHT CLASS FOR WARBLER NESTING HABITAT ON A ROTATION BASIS. WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT LOGGING AND WILDFIRE IN JACK PINE DO PRODUCE DESIRABLE NESTING HABITAT INCIDENTALLY, THE MANAGEMENT

OF A PARTICULAR AREA FOR THIS PURPOSE DOES NOT LEAVE THE NESTING HABITAT FOR THESE BIRDS STRICTLY TO CHANCE.

THE FIRST PRESCRIBED BURN WAS MADE IN THE SPRING OF 1961 ON A 500 ACRE TRACT OF CUT-OVER JACK PINE. THERE WERE 10 TO 15 SEED TREES OF THE PINE LEFT PER ACRE. AFTER THREE GROWING SEASONS THE JACK PINE REPRODUCTION IS GOOD ON SOME PORTIONS WHILE IN OTHER PORTIONS THERE IS A LACK OF PINE SEEDLINGS AND THIS BURN HAS SO FAR NOT FULLY ACCOMPLISHED ITS OBJECTIVE. THERE COULD BE SEVERAL REASONS FOR THIS: (1) AN INADEQUATE SEED SOURCE, (2) DESTRUCTION OF SEED ON TREES WHERE FIRE BURNED WITH CONSIDERABLE INTENSITY, (3) UNFAVORABLE WEATHER FOR SEEDLING SURVIVAL, AND (4) IT MAY TAKE LONGER UNDER SOME CONDITIONS FOR THE SEED TO GERMINATE.

WITH THIS IN MIND THE FOREST SERVICE'S NORTH CENTRAL FOREST EXPERIMENT STATION'S RESEARCHERS HAVE SET UP A STUDY PLAN TO EVALUATE BURNING CONDITIONS, FIRING TECHNIQUES ON FIRE INTENSITY ON THE BASIS OF SEEDBED PREPARATION AND DESTRUCTION OF SEED. THE AREA WILL BE INSTRUMENTED AT RANDOM LOCATIONS TO MEASURE HEAT INTENSITIES. SEED TRAPS WILL BE PLACED OVER THE AREA IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE BURN TO MEASURE THE SEED RELEASED AND THIS SEED WILL THEN BE TESTED FOR VIABILITY.

Good!
Research along
with burning.

THE AREA HAS BEEN DIVIDED INTO FOUR BLOCKS WHICH WILL BE BURNED UNDER DIFFERENT METHODS. ONE BLOCK WILL BE BURNED BY SETTING FIRES ON ALL SIDES AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME (A METHOD TERMED "AREA IGNITION"). A SECOND BLOCK WILL BE BURNED BY STRIPS WITH THE WIND (STRIP HEADFIRE METHOD), THE THIRD BY BURNING STRIPS AGAINST THE WIND (STRIP BACKFIRE METHOD) AND ON A FOURTH BLOCK THE SLASH HAS BEEN WIND-ROWED AND WILL BE BURNED. THESE METHODS WILL BE DUPLICATED ON ANOTHER 250 ACRE AREA NEXT SPRING TO COMPARE POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SPRING AND FALL BURNING. THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE IS TO ATTEMPT TO REFINE A BURNING METHOD THAT CAN BE USED TO BETTER ASSURE SUCCESSFULLY REGENERATING

JACK PINE.

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TESTS ARE ALSO BEING MADE ON THE BEST WAY OF REGENERATING THE FIRST STAND THROUGH SITE PREPARATION AND SEEDING. IT MAY BE POSSIBLE THAT SOME OF THIS AREA WILL HAVE TO BE PLANTED TO JACK PINE IN A PATTERN THAT PRODUCES DESIRABLE WARBLER NESTING HABITAT.