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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Visitors to Princess Place Preserve may have limited access Thursday through Sunday due to prescribed-fire operations

January 25, 2023 – Park visitors to Princess Place Preserve may experience limited access Thursday through Sunday as Flagler County Land Management will be conducting prescribed-fire operations over four days – January 26 through 29 – to restore ecologically necessary fire back into ecosystems and remove hazardous fuels.

Prescribed fires are implemented under strict guidelines based on weather conditions and circumstances on the ground. Authorizations to burn are requested and provided through the local Florida Forest Service office. A successful prescribed fire, sometimes also referred to as a “controlled” fire, restores habitat, promotes biodiversity and removes the hazardous level of fuel within the controlled area.

“By managing the vegetative fuel with fire under controlled conditions, the risk of an unplanned wildfire is reduced, said Public Lands and Natural Resource Manager Michael Lagasse. “Unplanned wildfires have a greater risk of being destructive because the accumulation of vegetation serves as the fuel for these hotter, faster moving fires. By burning under controlled conditions, wildfires are less likely to occur in these areas.”

Land Management has utilized partners from local, state, and federal agencies, as well as internal staff to prepare for and implement these planned burns, weather conditions permitting. The exact acreage and location of each of the prescribed fires will be determined daily as the weather forecast is analyzed.

“Fire is a natural and necessary component of ecological health within nearly all of Florida’s ecosystems,” said Prescribed Fire Program Manager and Aerial Ignitions Specialist Mike Orlando, who typically serves as “burn boss” during these prescribed fires. “Also, it is vital to our local ecological management and wildfire mitigation practices.”

Portions of Princess Place will be open as usual, such as the historic areas and lodge, but some trails and the kayak launch will be closed for the duration. Expect the possibility of smoke in the area if a visit is planned.

Land Management maintains about 10,000 acres within Flagler.

Andy Dance
District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Leann Pennington
District 4

Donald O’Brien, Jr.
District 5

Flagler County's goal with prescribed fire in Princess Place Preserve is to restore fire back into ecosystems that have adapted over millennia to thrive because of periodic natural fire. A thriving ecosystem promotes needed biodiversity while enhancing habitat for native plants and animals.

For more information on prescribed fire, view "Good Fire" a short video developed by Flagler County Land Management, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and other state and local partners. Watch it at <https://www.flaglercounty.gov/departments/land-management/good-fire>.

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