

HARDWOOD

CORNER

TO BURN OR NOT TO BURN

An Introduction

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When I started submitting articles to *Alabama's TREASURED Forests* publication, it was never my intent to present my dominating opinion as the final authority on the topics that are covered. For those who know me, that might be a humorous statement for me to make, much less put in print, because I do have an opinion on things, if you ask.

On the subject of prescribed burning in hardwood stands, I have tried to discuss it from a perspective focused on timber production; after all, that is my career training and background. I also try to keep an open mind while broadening my education, and I learn something every day. As part of that continuing education process, I attended a three-day conference at the University of Alabama (imagine that!) entitled "Fire in Eastern Oak Forests." Above all else, it rekindled my thought process and the fact that all landowners have their own reasons for doing what they do, right or wrong.

Another point is that southeastern hardwood management is different than northeastern hardwood management, while upland hardwood management differs from bottomland hardwood management. Managing hardwoods for endangered species habitat is very different from managing for timber production. I could go on and on.

With that in mind, I would like for you to read and absorb the following two articles (pages 10-13), written by two different Alabama-registered foresters who live in the same area of North Alabama. I highly respect both of them, consider both men as friends, and cherish their opinions.

Please, before you conduct prescribed burning in your hardwood stands, study the issues, understand what might happen, and what the effects may be versus your desired outcome. 🙏