



Eve A. Cullinan
County Administrator

Board of Chosen Freeholders County of Burlington

Department of Resource Conservation

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Burlington County Freeholders

Felicia Hopson, *Director*
Tom Pullion, *Deputy*
Linda A. Hynes
Daniel J. O'Connell
Balvir Singh

March 16, 2020

Dear Neighbor,

The Burlington County Department of Resource Conservation has been working with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service (NJFFS) to develop a prescribed burn plan to manage the Barkers Brook Natural Resource Area, the undeveloped portion of the County Fairgrounds property.

In 2018, Gov. Phil Murphy signed The Prescribed Burn Act, which expanded acceptable uses of prescribed fire from reducing traditional hazard fuels to recognizing the benefits of habitat management as well as other forestry and ecological needs. This legislation also made the services of the NJFFS more accessible to local governments.

Properly conducted prescribed burns encourage native seed germination, reduce invasive plant pressure, and cycle nutrients into the soil. These effects all aid in increasing habitat quality and diversity, while promoting forest regeneration and grassland establishment. The Department anticipates the burn to have additional benefits, including reduction of hazardous fuel loads to prevent unplanned and potentially damaging wildfires. Prescribed burns have also been successful in reducing tick and insect pest populations.

While a prescribed burn is a new tactic for the Department of Resource Conservation, land managers throughout the State have been using this management tool for its ecological benefits and to reduce the chance of forest fires. Approximately 35,000 acres were designated to be burned in New Jersey by the NJFFS in 2019 alone.

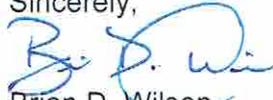
The prescribed burns at Barkers Brook are expected to take place during the week of March 23rd, (weather dependent) as determined by the Section Forest Fire Warden. If weather and site conditions are not ideal the burn will be moved to the week of March 30th. If the weather and site conditions are optimal, the burn will occur in less than one day. Conditions may result in the burn being conducted over a matter of days. A second area will undergo burn later this fall or next spring. The Section Warden will determine when the conditions fall within safe range and will notify the Department of Resource Conservation and appropriate township and emergency response officials with 48 hours' notice before the burn will begin. The park will be closed to the public during the burns. The closure will be posted at all entrances.

The fire will be lit, monitored and managed by the Forest Fire Service officials who have undergone rigorous training and are experienced in conducting safe and effective prescribed burns. All appropriate safety measures and precautions will be taken by those performing the burn. Fire breaks will be installed prior to the burn which will serve to contain the burn area. While the burn is in progress and until the Section Warden has deemed the fire out, there will be law enforcement and fire personnel, equipment and vehicles present at Barkers Brook and the surrounding areas. Specific conditions must be met in order to for the burn to occur, including temperature, relative humidity, and wind speed and direction.

A map of the two proposed burn areas is attached to this notice.

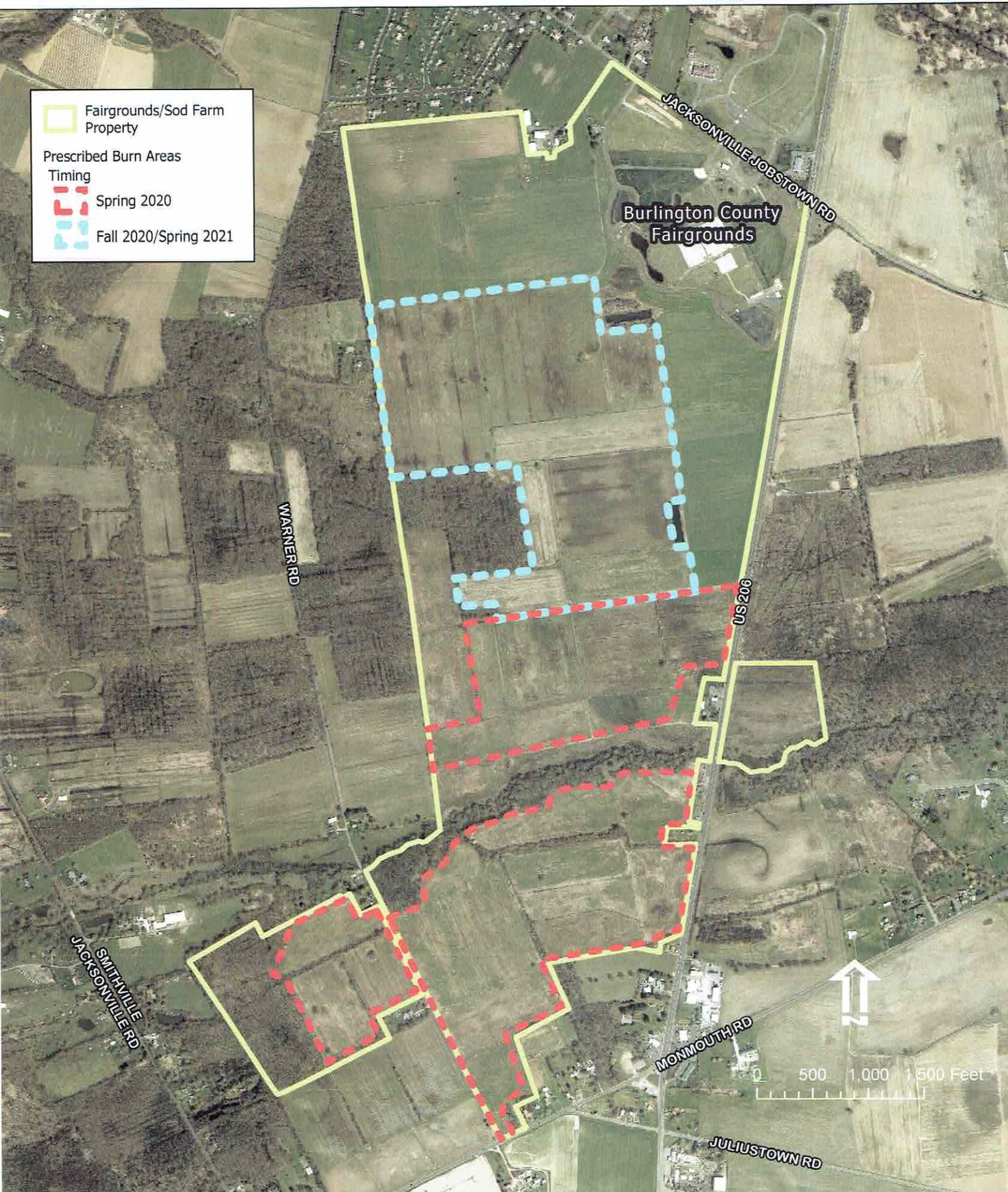
If you have any questions or issues, please do not hesitate to contact me at bwilson@co.burlington.nj.us or 856-642-3850

Sincerely,



Brian D. Wilson

Administrator, Burlington County Agriculture Development Board



Fairgrounds/Sod Farm Property
 Prescribed Burn Areas
 Timing
 Spring 2020
 Fall 2020/Spring 2021

Prescribed Burn Locations

Sod Farm Property, Springfield, NJ

3 March 2020
 Burlington County Office
 of Resource Conservation