


GLRI Grant Transforming the Rouge from Mowed Down to Grown Up

**Controlled Burns at:
Valley Woods Nature Preserve, Southfield
River Rouge Park and Eliza Howell Park, Detroit**




Why Do Controlled Burn?



- Maintain and restore native habitats for plants and animals
- Control phragmites and other invasive species
- Promotes diversity, enriches the soil and lengthens the growing season



Rouge Park prairie before



Valley Woods wetlands before



Planning a Controlled Burn

- Determine goals
- Identify the burn unit
- Create a burn plan
- Secure your permits
- Work with neighbors and manage the smoke
- Identify crew and equipment
- Prep the site



Rouge Park



Planning a Controlled Burn

Identify the Burn Unit: Based on habitat and “natural” breaks



Planning a Controlled Burn

Changes in fuel type make excellent burn lines or breaks



Controlled Burn Plan

- Provides ownership and emergency contact information
- Outlines goals of prescribed burn
- Describes physical characteristics of site
- Identifies neighbors and potential smoke concerns
- Establishes weather parameters for burn
- Lists crew and equipment needs
- Provides emergency (contingency) planning information
- Incorporates map of unit and surrounding



Controlled Burn Plan

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Burn Plan

Site: Rouge Park On Site Cell Phone: (734) 649-4367
 Location: Wayne Co., City of Detroit T.25 R.10E, Section 4 (NE)

Fire Control Access: Along Outer Dr (at Trowan) or from Parkland (at Bebon)

Nearest Water Source: Portable pump for drawing water from Rouge River (runs along Outer Dr adjacent to burn unit)

Nearest Fire Hydrants: Along Parkland at Dakota, Lamphere, Belton, Constance, and Beveland; on Outer Dr at north end of southern burn unit.

Ownership: City of Detroit

Prescribed Burn Leader: David Mindell (Plant/Wise, LLC)

Fire Jurisdiction: City of Detroit Fire Department

Emergency assistance: 911

Other Numbers: Detroit Captain Steven Elard 313-743-8548
 Detroit Police 313-586-5900

Site Description: Two units containing prairie and old field vegetation. Northern unit contains shrub growth along west edge.

Total acreage: two units totalling 7 acres

Slope & Aspect: Flat

Fuels: northern unit: Prairie to north; mowed turf to east and west; old field to south.

Burn Objective: Eliminate invasive vegetation to allow re-growth of native prairie plant species.

Fire Sensitive Animal Species of Concern:

Scientific name	Common name	State Rank
None Known		

Window of opportunity to burn: Spring, late February through mid May.

Before burning notify:

- Detroit Fire Department Dispatch 313-596-1620
- Detroit Police (Western 7) District 313-586-5900
- Detroit City Communications Department-Chris Coppock 313-724-2758
- Recreation Department, Keith Forestry 313-479-4629
- MDEQ Land & Water Mgmt Division-Maria (acting director) 386-753-1463



Controlled Burn Plan

- Discuss Burn Plan with Local Fire Marshal or designated local fire authority
- Obtain, complete and submit Burn Permit Application for approval



Smoke Management

- Requires understanding of how wind will effect smoke



Valley Woods



Rouge Park



Crew and Equipment

- Size of crew and type of equipment are determined prior to implementing prescribed burn



Site Preparation

Prior to, and during burning, we ensure that the site is properly prepared for example:

- Removing bird boxes
- Wetting around fencing, turtle enclosures, hibernacula, nests, and other “obstacles.”



Controlled Burn Implementation

Backfire or Back burn:

A backfire is set at the downwind edge of the burn unit and is perpendicular to the wind.



Controlled Burn Implementation

Head fire:

A head fire is set at the upwind edge of the burn unit and is pushed by the wind.



Controlled Burn – Detroit Parks



Eliza Howell Park

River Rouge Park



- Restore ten acres in Eliza Howell and River Rouge Park
- Overtaken by one native species or degraded by an overgrowth of non-native plants
- Eliza Howell Park – south of Fenkell at north end of the park adjacent to the nature trail
- River Rouge Park – north of Tireman, east of Parkland
- Funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative



Purpose & Need - Detroit Parks

Restore Native Plant Communities



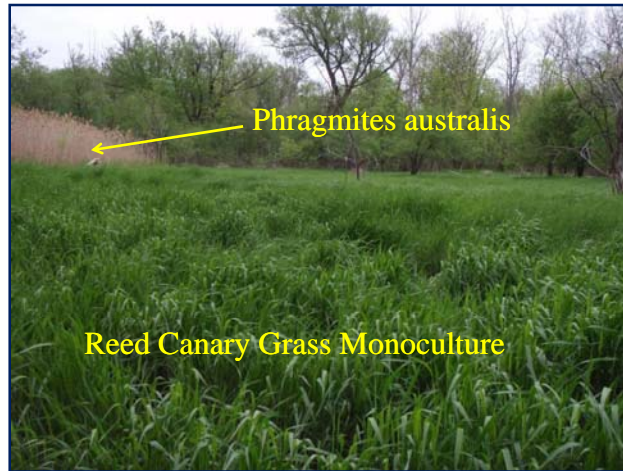
Controlled Burn – Valley Woods



- 27 Acre preserve along the Rouge River
- Contains mature floodplain forests
- Project will restore 7 acres of degraded wetlands
- Funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative



Purpose & Need – Valley Woods



Considerations - Detroit Parks

- Weather conditions
- Proximity to residential areas
- Traffic concerns
- Migratory bird habitat
- Existing native plants
- Proximity to schools
- Public perception



Considerations – Valley Woods

- Weather conditions
- Proximity to residential areas
- Proximity to businesses
- Sensitive air intakes
- High traffic location
- Public perception



Outreach to Address Considerations

- Neighborhood newsletters/liaisons
- Public meetings
- Council meetings
- Press releases
- News coverage
- Road signage
- Timing of burn
- Met with area businesses



[WDIV Coverage of Valley Woods Controlled Burn](#)



Next Steps

- **Volunteer seeding at Eliza Howell and Rouge Park**
 - Partners include Greening of Detroit, Detroit Public Schools, Friends of Rouge Park, Friends of Eliza Howell Park, Friends of the Rouge and Neighbors Building Brightmoor
- **Contractor seeding and installation of native aquatic plants at Valley Woods**

