

# Scientists plan Amazon forest fire

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Woods Hole Research Center scientists are planning to burn a one and one-half square-mile area of Amazon forest to study the effects of fires in that area.

The researchers want to determine the forest's ability to recover from repeated burnings, The controlled burn will take place in northern Mato Grosso state beginning late in August.

The scientists say they want to better understand the impact of fires on the transition forests, which lies between the tall dense rainforests at the core of the Amazon and the "Cerrado" savannas of central Brazil.

"By studying the characteristics of fires in this transitional forest on the edge of the Amazon rainforest, center researchers hope to learn how accidental fires affect the vigor, health, biodiversity, and animal habitat in these forests," said Daniel Nepstad, a senior scientist at Woods Hole's Maine headquarters.

The burn is the second within a year in the area that is already slated for destruction to expand soy fields.

Among measurements to be taken are inventories of trees cataloged by species and size, surveys of seedlings and censuses of mammals, amphibians, and birds.

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