

## Image: Prescribed fires abound in Southeast U.S.

March 12 2014

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It is March 2014. Growing season is right around the corner, as well as wildfire season, and hundreds of prescribed fires dot the landscape of the southeastern portion of the United States. These fires are used by farmers to clear fields of debris and overgrowth. They are also used by the Forestry Service as a way to clear brush and undergrowth and a means to control wildfires. Getting the detritus under control before a

fire breaks out makes them easier to contain when they do.

The U.S. Park Service website claims: "Wildfires can be caused by nature—like lava or lightning—but most are caused by humans. As many as 90 percent of [wildland fires](#) in the United States are caused by humans. Some human-caused fires result from campfires left unattended, the burning of debris, negligently discarded cigarettes and intentional acts of arson. The remaining 10 percent are started by lightning or lava."

According to the U.S. Forestry Service: "Did you know fire can be good for people and the land? After many years of fire exclusion, an ecosystem that needs periodic fire becomes unhealthy. Trees are stressed by overcrowding; fire-dependent species disappear; and flammable fuels build up and become hazardous."

NASA's Aqua satellite collected this natural-color image with the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer, MODIS, instrument on March 10, 2014. Actively burning areas, detected by MODIS's thermal bands, are outlined in red. NASA image courtesy Jeff Schmaltz LANCE/EOSDIS MODIS Rapid Response Team, GSFC. Caption by Lynn Jenner

**More information:** For more information on managing wildfires, go to: [www.fs.fed.us/fire/management/rx.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/management/rx.html)

Provided by NASA

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