

Prescribed Fire at Cumberland Gap NHP Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, Kentucky National Fire Plan – Fuels Reduction

On November 28, 2006 Cumberland Gap National Historical Park conducted the 45-acre Wilderness Road Campground Prescribed Fire. The burn unit, located within Lee County, Virginia along the south boundary of the Cumberland Gap National Historic Park, is also along the main entrance to the Wilderness Road Campground. Fuels included hardwood litter and timber understory and litter created by pine beetle kill.

The goal of the burn was to reduce fuel loading near the park boundary to help slow wildland fire spread and intensity and reduce fuel loading near government owned structures. The burn successfully treated approximately 70% of the unit and reduced litter by approximately 50 – 70%.

Despite the fact that most of the regional fire use module resources that usually help conduct prescribed fires were still on furlough, twenty-eight firefighters and two engines provided support from parks across the region including Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Kings Mountain National Military Park, and Mammoth Cave National Park.

This burn was the first opportunity to utilize the Type 6 engine, recently transferred to the region as a regional fuels resource and housed at Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.

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Firefighters treat fuels near park structures. NPS Photo by Nunally Benzing



The burn unit falls along the main entrance to the Wilderness Road Campground. NPS Photo by Nunally Benzing



Firefighters use driptorches to treat fuels with prescribed fire. NPS Photo by Nunally Benzing