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March 1, 2024

Dear Neighbor,

The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County will be conducting controlled burns at select Preserves during the months of March and April. Controlled burns will again be conducted during the fall burn season beginning in October and running through the end of November. A controlled burn is an intentional fire, lit under very precise conditions, that is used to:

1. Recycle nutrients back into the soil
2. Stimulate and promote native plant communities
3. Reduce accumulation of forest debris
4. Control unwanted plant species
5. Promote seed production and viability

Controlled burns are conducted by trained District staff. Additionally, the District has met all guidelines required by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and possesses all of the required permits. More information regarding controlled burning can be found on our website (www.winnebagoforest.org) on the Ecological Restoration page. Through the use of controlled burning we can restore, preserve, and better manage our beautiful forests and prairies.

If anyone receiving this letter has medical issues, and or any other concerns regarding controlled burning, please contact me directly in advance. I can be reached by phone at (815) 516-2671 or by email at mgroves@winnebagoforest.org. Our website and social media accounts will also have notifications of when and where we are burning each day.

To speak with District staff regarding any other concerns, please call our front office at (815) 877 – 6100 or fill out a contact form at www.winnebagoforest.org/contact-form.

Sincerely,
Michael Groves
Natural Resource Manager