

Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
JN “Ding” Darling National  
Wildlife Refuge Complex  
1 Wildlife Dr.  
Sanibel, FL 33957

# Information Bulletin



Contact: Kevin Godsea 239-673-2807

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## **JN “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge Plans to Conduct Prescribed Burning on Sanibel Island during the week of July 1, 2025.**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans to conduct a prescribed burn next week on the J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge Legion Curve Unit, on Sanibel Island. When suitable weather conditions are presented, a highly qualified staff of interagency professional fire specialists will implement the prescribed burn. The primary reasons for conducting this burn are to remove the over accumulation of vegetation acting as fire fuel along our wildland-urban interface to protect our community private property and residents, and for ecological purposes aimed at mimicking a natural fire in the freshwater marsh habitat. This activity creates a defensible space between refuge lands and private property that helps to prevent or reduce the threat of wildfires by reducing fuel loads. Restoration and maintenance of the fire-dependent freshwater marsh habitat is essential for a healthy ecosystem. Prescribed burns are important for the continued survival of local species such as the swallow-tailed kite and Sanibel Island rice rat, which have evolved to be dependent upon fire.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff will be stationed and available at Sanibel Recreation Center on the burn day between 10am-2pm to answer questions regarding these events to the community and media.

This burn operation will be conducted for one day, but anyone with smoke sensitivity may want to leave the island for the day while the burn is conducted. Please close all windows, cover all personal belongings as ash may travel beyond the burn area. Residual smoke may linger for days following the burn on the refuge lands but be assured the burn area will be monitored by fire personnel.

If you would like to be added to the City of Sanibel’s Smoke Sensitive List please contact Joel Caouette at ([joel.caouette@mysanibel.com](mailto:joel.caouette@mysanibel.com)) or (239) 267-4726

To receive updates about burn unit locations and potential closures, Sanibel Island residents and visitors can:

- Sign up for the City’s [News You Can Use](https://www.mysanibel.com/408/Sign-Up-For-City-Announcements) email announcements at <https://www.mysanibel.com/408/Sign-Up-For-City-Announcements>
- Visit the JN “Ding” Darling NWR website <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/jn-ding-darling>, or Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/dingdarlingrefuge>.
- Visit the Sanibel Island Fire Task Force webpage: <https://www.sanibelfire.com/sanibel-island-fire-task-force>

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/>.

# Prescribed Burns Planned for JN “Ding” Darling Refuge

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plans to conduct prescribed burning within the Legion Curve Unit of the Refuge July 1, 2025.

Map of Legion Curve Unit highlighted below.

