

# WHAT ARE THE TRADEOFFS?

Prescribed fire does produce smoke and ash and the area may look unsightly for a month or two. Local residents can expect to experience these inconveniences for only a day or two about once every two to three years.

But, the protection afforded by these prescribed burned areas is invaluable when a raging wildfire threatens.

Prescribed burning on a regular rotation provides an inexpensive insurance policy that local residents should not turn down.



Florida Department of

Agriculture and Consumer Services

CHARLES H. BRONSON, Commissioner



Division of Forestry

3125 Conner Boulevard

Tallahassee, Florida

32399-1650



IN THE



Interface



## **WHAT IS THE WILDLAND/URBAN INTERFACE?**

The Wildland/Urban Interface refers to that geographical point where two diverse systems – wildland and urban – meet and affect each other and give rise to conflicts between societal values and expectations concerning the management of natural resource systems.

From a wildfire standpoint, a rather simple definition of the interface is areas where homes are built in the rural wildland – in other words, where combustible homes meet combustible vegetation.

## **WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?**

Florida is unique in that weather and topography vastly differ from

other parts of the nation. Relatively flat terrain and abundant rainfall normally afford firefighters an opportunity to control interface fires in a timely and effective manner. However, when the rain doesn't come, or a killing frost decimates the vegetation, or vegetation is allowed to accumulate, disaster is ripe. When these extreme fire conditions exist, large uncontrolled flame fronts in heavy fuels can and will destroy lives, property and natural resources.

## **WHAT IS A SOLUTION?**

Fire managers recognize that not all forest and wildland fires are bad. Sometimes forests and wildlands really need a good fire – not a

wildfire, but one that comes at the right place at the right time and is under very careful control. This scientific use of fire by prescription is a useful tool for fire managers to protect resources.

The most common use of prescribed fire is to reduce wildland fuels, such as grass, weeds, pine needles, and hardwood leaves. These fuels build up rapidly in Florida and increase the potential threat of wildfire. Studies and experience have shown that wildfires occur less frequently, burn less intensively, and cause less damage when fuels have been reduced by prescribed burning.

