



Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

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Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor, NY is planning a prescribed burn on site in the Oak Unit between July 15 – November 30, 2021. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), in collaboration with the Division of Environmental Stewardship and Planning and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation have approved the necessary plans to conduct a prescribed burn on NY State Parks land. The prescribed burn plans have been completed by experienced and nationally certified specialists in wildland fire management and all considerations have been made to prioritize public safety.

Thirty acres in the Oak Unit will be managed by prescribed burning in 2021. This acreage may be reduced depending on the highly specific weather conditions required to complete the burn. The Oak Unit is located west of Ganondagan's Rt-444 gravel parking lot. Road closures are not expected.

The objectives of the prescribed burn are to:

- 1) Establish warm-season grasslands and oak savannas that reflect the historical landscape of the late 1600s when the Onöndawá'ga (Seneca people) were living at Ganondagan
- 2) Reestablish fire as an ecological driver and management tool on the landscape to support native plant communities described/observed in reference ecosystems.
- 3) Support target grassland breeding birds by maintaining open grassland habitats.
- 4) Increase the regeneration of oak, hickory, and understory flora in forest and savanna communities.
- 5) Enhance connectivity of ecosystems sitewide, reducing hard edges across habitats.

Enhancing and preserving natural areas and historic places is an integral part of OPRHP's mission while interpreting the culture and history of the Seneca people is the primary goal of Ganondagan State Historic Site. In Western New York, prescribed burns were first used by the Seneca people as a tool for maintaining agricultural land and promoting healthy grassland and forest ecosystems. For these same purposes, prescribed burns are still utilized by land managers today. After years of intensive invasive species and habitat management, the application of prescribed fire to the Oak Unit will help to portray a landscape reminiscent of the 1700s when the Seneca people were settled at Ganondagan.

The prescribed burn at Ganondagan State Historic Site is now in its fourth year and includes a public information meeting for neighbors, first responders, and press. Meeting information is advertised on the Town of Victor website and in local publications and is scheduled for Monday, June 28th at 5:30 p.m. The meeting will be held over Zoom; to RSVP and receive the link please email Samantha.Calus@parks.ny.gov. If you have questions, would like to stay informed of future public meetings, or would like to be contacted prior to the prescribed burn, please contact Kira.Broz@parks.ny.gov or (585) 742-1732.