

## **Practice Specification Prescribed Burning (Code 338)**

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### **I. SCOPE**

The work shall consist of controlled fire to burn undesirable plants within the area as shown on the plan(s) or drawing(s) or as staked in the field.

Clients will have obtained the permits and prior clearance from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) or responsible fire district and the Air Pollution Control District prior to burning.

### **II. PREPARATORY WORK**

All planned FIREBREAKS will be installed prior to starting the prescribed burn. The measures are to be installed according to the Practice Specification for 394 - Firebreaks.

Buffer strips will be utilized in all prescribed burns adjacent to all stream courses that are indicated on the drawings. The minimum width will be 50 feet plus 4 times the slope percentage (converted to feet).

The determination of the status and to insure that necessary mitigation is provided for threatened and endangered species and historical and archaeological resources is the responsibility of the Lead Agency conducting the burn.

Wetlands – Cattails/Bullrush, knotgrass (*Paspalum distichum*) only

1. Pre-burn treatment – Cattails/Bullrush:
  - a. Draw down water in area to be burned in March. Keep area dry.
  - b. Pre-burn ground disturbance treatments will not begin until after the critical nesting period for resident shorebirds, waterfowl, and passerines (Tri-colored blackbirds), usually in mid-October. With a disc or other implement opened slightly, crush the vegetation in a predetermined mosaic pattern when pond bottom will support tractor and stubble disc. Two passes may be required to knock down standing cover.
  - c. Allow to air dry.
  - d. Pre-burn treatment – knotgrass
2. Draw down water in area to be burned in March. Keep the area dry through summer.
3. Mow areas of thickest knotgrass
4. Allow to air dry.

### **III. BURN PLAN**

The landowner or client shall contact the “Lead Agency” for a burn plan, which will, at a minimum, contain:

- A. Dates for burning. Burn dates will not interfere with locally identified nesting periods.
- B. Method of burn
- C. Fire protection
- D. Other data as may be required

The landowner or client shall provide NRCS with:

- a) a copy of the burn plan
- b) prior to the burn a copy of required permits

### **IV. POST BURN MANAGEMENT**

A post burn investigation will be conducted of each burn. The burn area treatment plan will be evaluated and modified where necessary to protect the resource.

1. Forest land
  - a. Plant or seed tree species according to Field Office Technical Guide, Vegetative Guide, and

- appropriate TREE/SHRUB ESTABLISHMENT specifications.
- b. Natural regeneration may be adequate if intensity of the burn, seed source, soil, and reduction of potential brush completion favors reproduction.
  - c. Grazing will be withheld until tree seedlings are established and damage by domestic livestock will be negligible.
2. Grazingland
    - a. A specification for Range Seeding and/or Critical Area Planting is attached.
  3. Wetlands – Cattails/Bullrush, knotgrass
    - a. Cattails/Bullrush

Post burn treatment (normally disking) will be scheduled to optimize the effects of summer heat on the rhizomes and tubers of the emergent vegetation that is being controlled. By burning and disking in late October, followed up by several weeks of hot summer temperatures on the exposed rhizomes, is critical to long term control of hardstem bulrushes and cattails.

      - i. Cross-disk burned areas to turn up the roots and rhizomes in all the previously disked and burned areas.
      - ii. Allow at least two months drying time.
      - iii. Re-disk in late August or very early September.
      - iv. Do not flood up until October.
    - b. Knotgrass - Reflood as soon as possible with at least 1 foot or more of water.

#### **V. BASIS OF ACCEPTANCE**

After the burn has been completed, an on-site inspection will be conducted to determine if a minimum of 85 percent of the designed land area has been burned, and/or that the undesirable species have been destroyed or controlled.

#### **VI. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Maintenance shall include monitoring of the burned site and adjacent areas until such time as ash, debris and other consumed material are at pre-burn temperatures.

At least annually, the area will be inspected, and determination made of 'spots' where additional treatment is necessary; and if so, the work will be conducted during the same year, unless the time has passed for proper treatment.

Specifically, attention should be given to areas to:

- A. Reduce erosion
- B. Repair fire breaks
- B. Monitor the status of new growth to aid in follow-up treatment
- C. Water management. Proper draining techniques and flooding up depths will aid in controlling emergent plants.

## Specific Site Requirements