

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

PRESCRIBED BURNING

(Ac.)

CODE 338

DEFINITION

Controlled fire applied to a predetermined area.

Management Guidelines and any other applicable Federal, State or local laws and regulations.

PURPOSE

- Control undesirable vegetation.
- Prepare sites for harvesting, planting or seeding.
- Control plant disease.
- Reduce wildfire hazards.
- Improve wildlife habitat.
- Improve plant production quantity and/or quality.
- Remove slash and debris.
- Enhance seed and seedling production.
- Facilitate distribution of grazing and browsing animals.
- Restore and maintain ecological sites.

Policy for NRCS participation in prescribed burning is in the General Manual Title 190 Part 413.

Notify adjoining landowners, local fire departments and public safety officials as appropriate within the air shed prior to burning.

Liability and safety precautions are to be planned before the burn and monitored during the burn.

The procedure, equipment, and the number of trained personnel shall be adequate to accomplish the intended purposes.

The expected weather conditions, human and vehicular traffic that may be impeded by heat or smoke, liability and safety and health precautions shall be integrated into the timing, location and expected intensity of the burn.

Timing of burning will commensurate with soil and site conditions to maintain site productivity and minimize effects on soil erosion.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies on all lands as appropriate.

CONSIDERATIONS

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

All prescribed burns shall address the following items:

- Have a written burn plan prepared by the person or organization conducting the burn.
- The fire manager must comply with SCFC Notification/Precautions Law and contact SCFS the day of the burn
- Be in compliance with SC Smoke

- To qualify for liability protections under the Prescribed Fire Act the prescribed burn must have at least one certified prescribed fire manager present and supervising the burn from ignition until it is declared safe. Certified prescribed fire manager includes consulting foresters, contractors, landowners, industrial foresters, S.C. Forestry Commission or other agency personnel who have satisfactorily completed the Certified Prescribed Fire Manager course and obtained certification from the SC Forestry Commission.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact your Natural Resources Conservation Service [State Office](#) or visit the [Field Office Technical Guide](#).

**NRCS, SC
July 2012**

- Complete a Forest Management plan that outlines the objective of the burn.
- Burning should be managed with consideration for wildlife and pollinator needs such as nesting, feeding and cover.
- Existing barriers such as lakes, streams, wetlands, roads and constructed firebreaks are important to the design and layout of this practice.
- Consider cultural resources threatened and endangered plants and animals when planning this practice.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

It is recommended by the SCFC that a prescribed burn plan be prepared prior to the firing operation by the person or organization conducting the burn. The prescribed fire plan should be on site during the operation and adhered to by personnel conducting the burn.

Specifications for applying this practice shall be prepared for each site and recorded using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes, and narrative statements in the conservation plan/prescribed burn plan.

All necessary permits must be obtained and a burn plan developed before implementation of the practice.

As a minimum, the prescribed burning plan will include:

- Landowner name, address, phone number and location of the burn.
- Purpose of the burn.
- Site description and environmental effects including vegetation, soil, water, air, human health, wildlife,

References:

1. **A Guide for Prescribed Fire in Southern Forests.** 1997. USDA Forest Service, Technical Publication R8-TR11 http://ncprescribedfirecouncil.org/pdfs/guide_for_prescribed_fire.pdf
2. **Oak regeneration using the shelterwood- burn technique: management options and implications for songbird conservation in the Southeast.** J.Drew Lanham, Patrick D. Keyser, Patrick H. Brose, and David H. VanLear. 2002 www.treesearch.fs.fed.us/pubs/19098
3. **Tall Timbers Stewards of Wildlife & Wildlands** www.talltimbers.org/location.html
4. **South Carolina Smoke Management Guidelines for Vegetative Debris Operations in the State of South Carolina** www.state.sc.us/forest/smgobj.htm
5. **NRCS Prescribed Burning Policy-General Manual Title 190 Part 413** <http://directives.sc.gov.usda.gov/>

aesthetics, cover, fuel description, topography, and soil.

- Weather and Fuel Considerations that define acceptable range of weather parameters.
- Smoke Management Plan and Special Precaution areas.
- Preparation of the area for burning. Acreage to burn and amount of fire line to construct.
- Equipment/personnel and public contact needs/safety requirements.
- Burn execution plan including firing technique and on site weather.
- Mop-up requirements and contingency plan.
- Post-Burn Evaluation

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

The kinds and expected variability of site factors (e.g., fuel condition and moisture content, weather conditions, human and vehicular traffic that may be impeded by heat or smoke, liability, and safety and health precautions) shall be monitored during the operation of this practice. Sufficient fire suppression equipment and personnel shall be available commensurate with the expected behavior of these factors during the time of burning to prevent a wildfire or other safety, health or liability incident.

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

NRCS, SC

July 2012

