

Animal Enhancement Activity –ANM11- Patch-burning to enhance wildlife habitat



Patch-burning to enhance wildlife habitat

Use prescribed burning with livestock grazing to create patches of different vegetation structure and species composition for the benefit of wildlife.

Land Use Applicability: This enhancement is applicable to pastureland, rangeland and forest land.

Benefits

Patch-burning is a grassland management activity for landowners interested in improving habitat for wildlife

while still maintaining forage production for livestock. This management activity helps create a mosaic of diverse vegetative structure and plant composition in the same pasture. Livestock also benefit as different plant species may be available, especially during mid-and late growing season vegetation slumps. Patches of different vegetation composition can extend and/or supplement livestock during the grazing season.

Criteria for Patch-burning to enhance wildlife habitat

1. Burn at least 10% and not more than 40% of the pasture in any year.
2. Annual application by burning a different patch each year is acceptable and desirable for many wildlife species. A minimum of two burn treatments should be applied during a 5 year period. For vegetation types with a historic fire frequency greater than 10-15 years, minimum treatment should be two burns applied during a 10 year period.
3. Avoid burning during peak nesting season for targeted wildlife species.
4. A written grazing management plan that identifies:
 - a) Wildlife management objectives describing how patch burning will accomplish those objectives.
 - b) Percentage of area planned to be burned by year.
 - c) Locations, total acres, planned year and season of burns.
 - d) The desired frequency of burning (example: burn same area once every 4 years) should be stated and based on the desired plant community's adaptation and response to fire.
 - e) Stocking rates that will allow for proper forage utilization.
 - f) Monitoring and adaptive management considerations to address potential multiple years overuse of burned areas, especially for those pastures not receiving some amount of annual burning.
 - g) Areas where fire is to be excluded for habitat considerations, such as desirable shrub stands, stream sides, etc.
5. Prepare a written prescribed burn plan for each prescribed burn that identifies:
 - a) Locations to receive burn treatment and level of patchiness desired



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- b) Time of burn
- c) Firebreaks locations, if needed
- d) Weather parameters for the burn (temperature, wind speed, relative humidity)⁵
- e) Burn plans must be conducted in accordance with all state laws.

Documentation Requirements for Patch-burning to enhance wildlife habitat

- Written prescribed burn plan identifying pasture, acres and dates of prescribed burn.
- A map showing where the activities are applied.



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State Criteria

1. Burn at least 10% and not more than 40% of the pasture in any year.
2. Avoid burning during peak nesting season for targeted wildlife species.
 - a) Avoid burning from May 1 – July 15 in Nebraska.
3. A minimum of two burn treatments should be applied during a 5 year period. Annual application by burning a different patch each year is acceptable and desirable for many wildlife species.
4. A written grazing management plan that identifies:
 - a) Wildlife management objectives describing how patch burning will accomplish those objectives.
 - b) Percentage of area planned to be burned by year.
 - c) Locations, total acres, planned year and season of burns.
 - d) The desired frequency of burning (example: burn same area once every 4 years) should be stated and based on the desired plant community’s adaptation and response to fire.
 - e) Stocking rates that will allow for proper forage utilization.
 - f) Areas where fire is to be excluded for habitat considerations, such as desirable shrub stands, stream sides, etc.
5. Prepare a written prescribed burn plan for each prescribed burn that identifies:
 - a) Locations to receive burn treatment and level of patchiness desired
 - b) Time of burn
 - c) Firebreaks locations, if needed
 - d) Weather parameters for the burn (temperature, wind speed, relative humidity)
 - e) Burn plans must be conducted in accordance with all state laws.

Documentation Requirements:

- Written grazing management plan identifying criteria related to patch burning.
- Written prescribed burn plan for the area receiving patch burning.
- Map showing where and how patch burning is being scheduled and applied.

I certify that the following information meets specifications and has been provided to NRCS:

1. Written grazing management plan identifying criteria related to patch burning.
2. Written prescribed burn plan for the area receiving patch burning.
3. Map showing where and how patch burning is being scheduled and applied.

I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain all necessary permits and to comply with all laws, regulations and ordinances pertaining to the application of these activities.

Certified by: _____ **Date:** _____