

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

PRESCRIBED BURNING

(Ac.)

CODE 338

DEFINITION

Controlled fire applied to a predetermined area.

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.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies on all lands as appropriate.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

All prescribed burns shall address the following items:

- Location and description of the burn area.
- Pre-burn vegetation cover.
- Resource management objectives.
- Required weather conditions for prescribed burn.
- Notification check list.

- Pre-burn preparation.
- Equipment checklist/personnel assignments and needs/safety requirements.
- Post-burn evaluation criteria.
- Firing sequence.
- Ignition method.
- Approval signatures

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

Integrate into the timing, location and expected intensity of the burn the expected weather conditions, human and vehicular traffic that may be impeded by heat or smoke, liability (e.g., utility lines) and safety and health precautions into the certified prescribed burn plan. Timing of burning will be commensurate with soil and site conditions to maintain site productivity and minimize effects on soil erosion and soil properties (structure, soil moisture).

Monitor weather parameters and other data that affect fire behavior during the burn. Minimize carbon release by the timing and burn intensity.

Consider the location of utilities such as electric power lines and natural gas pipelines to prevent damage to the utility and avoid personal injury.

Consider smoke impacts before the burn and monitor them during the burn.

CONSIDERATIONS

Manage burning with consideration for wildlife and pollinator needs such as nesting, feeding and cover, but more heavily weight the primary

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](#).

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purpose of the burn.

Existing barriers such as lakes, streams, wetlands, roads and constructed firebreaks are important to the design and layout of this practice.

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

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Certified individuals shall prepare specifications for each site using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes, and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation. Obtain all necessary permits and develop a burning plan before practice implementation. NRCS employees developing burn plans must have appropriate job approval authority and shall use the 338 Prescribed Burning Jobsheet.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Monitor 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) during the implementation of this practice. Make available sufficient fire suppression equipment and personnel commensurate with the expected behavior of these factors during the burn to prevent 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. Complete post-burn evaluation to determine if the burn objectives were met.

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