Period

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

2016 – 1
2017 – 1 Renewal

Plant Enhancement Activity – PLT28 – Prescribed burning to promote and enhance conifer forests and maintain a healthy understory

Enhancement Description
This enhancement is to conduct a single prescribed burn in a conifer forest, but to only burn portions of the area each year creating a patchwork burn. The patchwork of burning creates a diverse habitat in several stages of development.

Land Use Applicability
Forestland

Benefits
Many species of conifers and their associated plant community have been associated with periodic burning. The health of conifer forests, longleaf pines in particular, and the appropriate understory is dependent upon fire or some other means of control to minimize woody vegetation and favor the herbaceous plant community. A healthy longleaf pine forest, as well as shortleaf pine forests or other pine species, supports a wide array of wildlife species including pollinators and several endangered or threatened species.

Conditions Where Enhancement Applies
This enhancement applies to conifer forest land use acres.

Criteria
Implement the following**:**

1. Develop a forest management plan in consultation with NRCS personnel and a professional forester, wildlife biologist or consultant.
2. Develop a prescribed burn plan which supports the forest management plan.
3. Selected areas of the enrolled land use acres must be burned annually for a minimum of three consecutive years to create a mosaic burning patchwork.
4. Re-burning of selected areas during the consecutive year period is prohibited.
5. Over the consecutive year period, all acres will be burned.
6. Firebreaks must be prepared in advance of the prescribed burning and in accordance with the prescribed burn plan and forest management plan.
7. Prescribed burning must follow state and federal regulations and appropriate agencies notified prior to the burn.
8. The prescribed burn must be implemented by a certified prescribed burner following the burn plan.

Adoption Requirements
The enhancement is considered adopted when the above criteria have been applied to the land use acre.

Documentation Requirements

1. Copy of the forest management plan
2. Copy of the prescribed burning plan
3. Stand map showing the location of the tract and the portions to be burned each year.
4. Documentation of the dates of the prescribed burn and other activities.
5. Documentation that prescribed burn was completed, e.g. photos, receipt for contractor or state forestry agency.

References

Alabama Forestry Commission. Prescribed Burning Longleaf Pine PBLP022704

Kush, J.S., R.S. Meldahl, and W. D. Boyer. 2000. Understory plant community response to season of burn in natural longleaf pine forests. Pages 32-39 in W. Keith Moser and Cynthia F. Moser (eds.) Fire and forest ecology: innovative silviculture and vegetation management. Tall Timbers Fire Ecology Conference Proceedings. No. 21. Tall Timbers Research Station, Tallahassee, FL

Roth, L. and R. Franklin. Timing of Prescribed Fire in Longleaf Pine Management: Benefits, Risks, and Roles by Season. Clemson University Extension, Forestry Leaflet 32, Clemson, SC

Strickland, B., S. Edwards and R. Hamrick. 2012. Prescribed burning in southern pine forests: Fire Ecology, Techniques and Uses for Wildlife Management. Extension Publication 2283 Mississippi State University in cooperation with US Dept. of Agriculture. Starkville, MS.