

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



Patch-burning to enhance wildlife habitat

Use prescribed burning 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. Avoid burning during peak nesting season for targeted wildlife species.
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)⁵



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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.

**TENNESSEE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION FOR THIS ENHANCEMENT
ANM11 – *Patch-burning to enhance wildlife habitat***

PRIMARY NESTING SEASON

April 15 – August 15

DESIRABLE BURNING FREQUENCIES FOR WILDLIFE (same area burned in rotation)

Grassland birds – every 2 to 6 years

Deer and rabbits – every 3 to 5 years

Quail (grassland ecosystem) – every 2 to 3 years

Pine woodland; fully stocked (Deer, turkey, understory mammals) – every 3 to 5 years

Livestock forage quality (grassland ecosystem) – every 2-5 years (variability based on soils, aspect, relief)

Actual burning cycles should be variable based on specific site conditions and landowner objectives.

Rule of thumb:

- a. higher natural fertility and moister soils during growing season – burn more frequently
- b. poorer and droughty soils – burn less frequently
- c. heavier grass areas – burn more frequently to maintain higher forb population
- d. heavier forb areas – burn less frequently to slow grass expansion

PRODUCER NAME:				DATE:		
TRACT NUMBER(S):				COUNTY:		
Field Number	Field Acres	Planned Burn Acres	Burn Field Percentage	Planned Burn Year	Planned burn frequency (no. yrs. between burns)	Date 'Prescribed Burn Plan' completed

NOTE: MINIMUM ANNUAL PATCH BURN FOR EACH PLANNED PASTURE OR WOODLAND – 10%
MAXIMUM ANNUAL PATCH BURN FOR EACH PLANNED PASTURE OR WOODLAND – 40%

AT LEAST TWO PATCH BURNS REQUIRED WITHIN 5 YEAR CONTRACT (MINIMUM 20% OF FIELD OVER LIFE OF CONTRACT).