

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

New Jersey Addendum



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 (**April 1st – July 15th in New Jersey**).
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 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.