

## **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)<sup>5</sup>



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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.