



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E338A

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Strategically planned, patch burning for grazing distribution and wildlife habitat

Conservation Practice 338: Prescribed Burning

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Forest, Pasture, and Range

RESOURCE CONCERN: Plants

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 1 year

Enhancement Description

Patch burn grazing is the application of prescribed fires on portions of an identified grazing unit at different times of the year. Patch burn grazing allows grazing animals to select where they want to graze creating a mosaic of vegetation structures and diversity that will maintain or enhance the wildlife habitat desired for the identified wildlife species and maintain livestock production.

Criteria

Each burn event will cover 10% to 50% of any grazing unit’s acreage. Subsequent individual burn events will occur during different seasons (as defined by the state NRCS office), whether conducted during the same year or a subsequent year as the prior burn event.

The following examples are to be used for illustration purposes only:

- Grazing unit A is burned in March. Another part of grazing unit A is burned in August of the same year.
- Grazing unit A is burned in March. Grazing unit B is burned in August two years later.
- Grazing unit A is burned in March. Grazing unit C is burned in August of the same year.
- At least two burn applications will be applied during the contract period.

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- Annual application by burning different patches each year or different patches in different seasons in one year is acceptable and desirable for many wildlife species.
- Prescribed burning will be planned and applied in a manner to meet the habitat requirements for wildlife species of concern as determined by the state's NRCS Wildlife Habitation Evaluation Guide (WHEG).
- Conduct treatments during periods of the year that accommodate reproduction and other life-cycle requirements of target wildlife and pollinator species.
- Evaluate wildlife habitat with the state NRCS Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) and manage for a WHEG value of 0.60 or greater.
- A written prescribed burn plan for each burn that meets or exceeds NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribe Burning (Code 338) criteria.



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Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- Y Prior to implementation, obtain a written grazing plan with guidelines and recommendations for matching the forage quantity and quality produced with the grazing and/or browsing demand and clearly identify the wildlife species of concern for the area that includes a Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide.
- Y Prior to implementation, obtain a written prescribed burn plan with map delineating the areas that will be burned, burn prescription, timing of burn, and method of burn.
- Y During implementation, keep grazing/herd in/out records,
- Y During implementation, keep prescribed burn documentation such as date, weather conditions, etc.
- Y After implementation, make the following items available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement:
 - o Written grazing plan, including Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide with before and after evaluation values.
 - o Grazing /herd in/out records
 - o Prescribed burn plan with documentation of conditions during implementation.

NRCS will:

- Y Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribed Burning (Code 338) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
- Y As needed, provide technical additional assistance to the participant as requested.
- Y After implementation, complete forage utilization jobsheet for NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribed Grazing (Code 528).
- Y After implementation, verify implementation of the written grazing plan, by reviewing plan and grazing/herd in/out records kept during enhancement implementation.



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Y After implementation, verify the completed and certified Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) has a total score after implementation of equal or greater than 0.60.

WHEG score after = _____

NRCS Documentation Review:

I have reviewed all required participant documentation and have determined the participant has implemented the enhancement and met all criteria and requirements.

Participant Name _____ Contract Number _____

Total Amount Applied _____ Fiscal Year Completed _____

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature

Date



SOUTH DAKOTA (SD) SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY E338A

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Strategically planned, patch burning for grazing distribution and wildlife habitat

Additional Criteria for SD:

In addition to the criteria specified in the national job sheet E338A, the following additional criteria apply in SD:

- No burning allowed in Sage Grouse Focal Areas.
- Criteria related to the written grazing management plan:
 - Start of grazing period will be changed by a minimum of two weeks in each pasture/paddock each year during the growing season.
 - Adequate recovery periods must be provided:
 - Minimum of 30 days between grazing events on pasture, 45 days on range.
 - Longer recovery periods will be needed during slow growth period and during drought.
 - Maximum utilization will not exceed 50 percent (%) by weight of the total current year's growth.
- Grazing should not commence before the following minimum heights are reached:
 - 4 inches: little bluestem, sideoats grama.
 - 8 inches: big bluestem, Indiangrass, intermediate wheatgrass, pubescent wheatgrass, prairie sandreed, sand bluestem, tall wheatgrass.
 - 12 inches: switchgrass.
 - 6 inches: all other species.
- Maximum seasonal utilization rates will be based on the vegetation structure needed by the targeted wildlife species for nesting/fawning. In the absence of species-specific or guild-specific guidelines obtained from scientific literature or knowledgeable technical specialists, planners may use the 40-50% utilization guideline for grassland nesting birds as referenced in Table 4 of the Range Tech Note, No. 9.
- Nesting/fawning dates in SD are May 1 through August 1.



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Additional Documentation Requirements for SD:

In addition to the documentation requirements specified in the national job sheet E338A, the following additional documentation requirements apply in SD:

- Complete the SD Prescribed Burn Plan (SD-ESC-9) or equivalent forms as necessary.
- Complete the SD Range Tool (SD-CPA-39, Forage/Animal Inventory Grazing Schedule, using the SD-CPA-15 a-d or similar form, and SD-CPA-16, Record of Livestock Grazing). The SD-CPA-16 will be completed annually.
- Complete a drought contingency plan using the SD Drought Tool or provide the participant with a copy of the example drought contingency plan located within the SD Prescribed Grazing Technical Note.
- Complete SD Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (SD-CPA-19).