**Dakota Farm Talk – Prescribed Fire**

**Pam Geppert**

The Great Plains evolved with fire, naturally controlling invasive vegetation so native plants could thrive. Today, prescribed fire can do the same thing in a safe and controlled manner. State Rangeland Management Specialist Emily Helms with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, explains Prescribed fire requires thorough planning.

**Emily Helms**

We want to be able to control the fire the entire time without it getting out of hand. So that we can accomplish our goals and not spend a lot of time cleaning up other messes.

**Pam Geppert**

NRCS offers prescribed fire resources to guide landowners with burn plans. Helm states planning is best done well in advance of the intended fire so every aspect can be considered.

**Emily Helms**

Like timing, what time of the year, what type of weather you want to have during the fire? So like wind speed, wind direction or temperature. Also, where fire breaks will be and what escape routes, safety measures that need to be in place in order to have a safe burn. So fire breaks, fuel breaks. Making sure you're aware of what's inside the unit.

**Pam Geppert**

CRP often utilizes prescribed fire as a management tool, but prescribed fire on CRP must be reviewed by NRCS, states Helms.

**Emily Helms**

We have until April 30th to complete prescribed burns for CRP. So the sooner you get your burn plan approved, then you don't have to wait for that piece to be done before you can actually start burning.

**Pam Geppert**

NRCS offers prescribed fire templates as well as technical assistance for prescribed burning. Visit any USDA service center to learn more. I'm Pam Gabbert reporting for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Helping people Help the land.