

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



### Enhancement Description

Use prescribed burning with livestock grazing to create patches of different vegetation structure and species composition for the benefit of wildlife.

### Land Use Applicability:

Pasture, rangeland and forestland

### 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. Producers who want to conduct prescribed burning for other purposes on their forest land should consider enhancement PLT04.
2. Burn at least 10% and not more than 40% of the pasture in any year
3. Annual application by burning a different patch each year is acceptable and desirable for many wildlife species.
  - a. A minimum of two burn treatments should be applied during a 5 year period.
  - b. For vegetation types with a historic fire frequency greater than 10-15 years, minimum treatment should be two burns applied during a 10 year period.
4. Avoid burning during peak nesting season for targeted wildlife species.
5. 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. Monitoring and adaptive management considerations to address potential multiple years overuse of burned areas, especially for those pastures not receiving some amount of annual burning.





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**References:**

**338 – Prescribed Burning**

- ***Biology TechNote 13: Planning and Conducting Prescribed Burns in Minnesota***

**528 – Prescribed Grazing**

Avoid burning during the peak nesting season, which is **May 1 to July 15.**

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