

BMP 13

Prescribed Burning

Purpose

Prescribed burning is used to modify a forest stand or to reduce forest residue to some desired level in a manner that minimizes soil erosion and protects nearby bodies of water from sedimentation. Prescribed burning can be used on forested sites for reduction of hazardous accumulations of fuel to lessen wildfire potential, for improvement of wildlife habitat, for discouragement of undesirable plant growth that can inhibit natural or artificial regeneration of a stand of trees, and for creation of a seedbed favorable to natural or direct seeding reforestation.

Definition

Prescribed burning involves the use of fire under conditions that will assure confinement yet produce the intensity of heat and behavior required to accomplish one or more management objectives.

Specifications

The prescribed use of fire involves careful planning and determination of specific weather and fuel conditions to achieve the desired environmental and management objectives. The prescribed burn is specifically located, confined in an area, carefully timed, and regulated in intensity. State laws regarding burning and air pollution must be followed.

Considerations for prescribed burning are:

- Is it the safer, cheaper, more efficient, and practical means of achieving desired results?
- Burn only with trained crews under carefully prescribed conditions of humidity, temperature, and wind.
- Fire lines should be planned and constructed before burning to assure burning will be confined to the prescribed area (see BMP No. 12).

Potential water pollution hazards should be recognized and control measures installed to include:

- Construction of water bars on fire lines in hilly or steep terrain.
- Provision for an adequate strip of undisturbed surface between the prescribed burn and perennial and intermittent water courses (see BMP No. 3).

Note: runoff from a burned-over area has the potential to transfer nutrients into the water system.

Summary: AWQA Minimum Requirements for BMP No. 13

The AWQA plan does not contain this BMP.
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