

Contribute to the management of prescribed burning as part of vegetation management

Overview

This standard is about contributing to the management of prescribed burning as part of vegetation management. It has been developed so that it can be applied to areas of heather and grass habitat. This standard is aimed at those who work in game, forestry, farming or conservation management, on either a full- or part-time basis.

To meet this standard you will be able to:

- contribute to the development of prescribed burning plans
- organise the practical requirements associated with safe burning
- control vegetation burning activities
- supervise individuals and teams in support of burning activities
- react appropriately, within organisational procedures, to a fire escape incident.

For you to fully understand the content of the standard, and the activities it describes, it is important that you are able to understand the terms used within the standard. See Glossary for some definitions that should help you with this.

Contribute to the management of prescribed burning as part of vegetation management

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. contribute to establishing the need for burning through an assessment of the potential burn area
2. contribute to the establishment of the prescribed burn plan taking account of land management objectives and site factors that will affect fire behaviour
3. ensure that the prescribed burn plan specifies all burn requirements and conforms with relevant legal and environmental constraints
4. contribute to the operational and resource requirements to support the implementation of the prescribed burn plan
5. contribute to the establishment of contingencies to control any deviation from the planned burn
6. liaise with people to confirm the prescribed burn plan (e.g. neighbours, agencies)
7. use maps to give and receive accurate grid references, estimate distances and identify features
8. use weather forecasts to establish if conditions are favourable to the planned burn
9. ensure the availability of resources to support the planned burn
10. organise the establishment of fire breaks and controls
11. implement a test burn to confirm appropriateness of burn conditions and to identify any adjustments required to the prescribed burn plan
12. brief all those involved on the planned burn and associated safety matters
13. supervise the controlled igniting of vegetation, according to specified lighting pattern
14. control the burn according to planned burning requirements
15. take immediate action to deal with any variations from the planned burning requirements
16. maintain effective communications with others throughout the burning process, including the use of radios where appropriate
17. organise resources to suppress fires and achieve the planned burn
18. evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the burn.

Contribute to the management of prescribed burning as part of vegetation management

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the legal restrictions controlling vegetation burning
2. the hazards associated with vegetation burning operations
3. the relevant codes of practice
4. the fire plan of the organisation that you work for and its associated operating procedures
5. the importance of burn planning
6. the resources and equipment required to support safe burning activities
7. how to assess the characteristics of heather and grass habitat in relation to burn planning and management
8. the elements (heat, fuel, oxygen) that are required for fire to exist
9. the factors that affect fire behaviour
10. fuel types and loads
11. how the weather, fuels, aspect and terrain can affect the spread, intensity and severity of fires
12. the tools and equipment used to control and extinguish vegetation fires
13. the potential impact of prescribed burning activities on other aspects of the natural environment including air and water quality, sensitive habitats and plant species, and other game and wildlife
14. why vegetation is burnt as part of habitat and wildlife management
15. the purpose, construction and value of firebreaks
16. the health and safety requirements associated with vegetation burning
17. map reading skills for 1:50,000 scale Ordnance Survey maps
18. the use of checklists, maps and diagrams as important management tools
19. the information required by fire and rescue service control rooms and on-site.
20. how to implement and analyse test burns
21. how aspect and topography can affect the spread, intensity and nature of fires
22. the way different ignition patterns work and how they can impact on the burn
23. the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency
24. the legal basis for your lawful presence on the land in order to carry out prescribed burning
25. the fire groups and their role in controlling emergencies.

Glossary

Prescribed burning – The planned application of fire under pre-determined environmental conditions, within boundaries, to achieve resource management objectives

Aspect – The direction towards which a slope faces

Topography – The shape of the land, especially its slope and aspect

Fire weather – Predicted climatic conditions covering the period of the burn, especially wind, air temperature and relative humidity

Fuel – The type, quantity, arrangement, distribution, and moisture content of the vegetation. This can be ground (peat), surface (heather/grass and litter layer) or aerial (trees) fuels

Fire type – Either a ground fire, surface fire or crown fire, the most common type is a surface fire

Fire intensity – The pulse or rate of energy release that travels upwards from the fire

Burn severity – The heat pulse, and consequent impact on vegetation and soil, which travels down below the litter layer of a fire

Fire escape – A burn that exceeds the fire prescription, often a runaway fire or wildfire

Wildfire – A fire that is not controlled

Burn plan – The preparation made for the controlled burning of vegetation in a specific area

Codes of practice – Documents giving methods developed to assist compliance with acts and regulations in the performance of work e.g. Muirburn Code (Scotland), Heather and Grass Burning Code (England and Wales)

Contribute to the management of prescribed burning as part of vegetation management

Developed by	Lantra
Version Number	2
Date Approved	January 2017
Indicative Review Date	January 2021
Validity	Current
Status	Original
Originating Organisation	Lantra
Original URN	O29NGa24
Relevant Occupations	Estate Worker; Gamekeeper
Suite	Gamekeeping and Wildlife Management
Keywords	heather; burning; fire; burn