

**APPENDIX G
DRAFT CSSA WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

An active wildland fire program at CSSA supports the military mission and contributes to the ecological management of CSSA lands. Management of Ashe juniper infestations are of concern to both the ecological management of CSSA, as well as the military mission. At CSSA, Ashe juniper encroachment has reduced visibility along fencelines, increased fuel loading for potential wildland fires, and overgrown existing fuel breaks, roads, and trails necessary to meet installation security requirements. As a secure and closed facility, CSSA security personnel require access and visibility along the installation perimeter. Since munitions storage is a primary component of the military mission, brush management to reduce fuel loading (and potential subsequent catastrophic wildfires) and maintenance of fuel breaks is necessary.

Ashe juniper encroachments are of ecological concern because they can reduce grazable area for livestock and wildlife, reduce production and diversity of plant species, restrict access to desirable forage plants, and reduce rainfall effectiveness. Interfering with grass and forb production by intercepting rainfall before it reaches the surface, Ashe junipers may out compete other plants. Further, Ashe junipers appear to be heavy consumers of soil nitrates, therefore, soil under and adjacent to Ashe juniper stands may be less favorable to other grasses, forbs and woody species.

Burning treatments will be applied to maintain or enhance grasslands, reduce fuel loading, enhance wildlife habitat, and to eliminate existing brush piles. Each prescription fire will have a Prescribed Burn Plan, as a part of the larger installation prescribed fire management program, which stipulates prior notification with county fire departments, cooperating agencies, and adjacent schools and neighborhoods.

CSSA has entered into a cooperative agreement with the Fire Management Office of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Blaques Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge. Under the cooperative agreement, the USFWS BCNWR Fire Management Officer will draft burn plans and conduct prescribed burn operations on CSSA lands.

1.2 FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prescribed fire can be used to reduce the incidence of wildfire, or can be used to meet management objectives. At CSSA, prescription fire will be used to improve habitat quality for rare species, and in other areas, prescription fire will be used to improve habitat for game species. Although fuel reduction is not the highest prescribed fire objective, because the installation contains wildland resources, and because the installation is adjacent to areas that are frequently burned, fuel reduction objectives may be included in the future. A tentative burn map is included as Figure G-1.

CSSA is currently developing a fire management plan, that will include the following:

- Reasons that prescription fire is needed,
- The potential areas to be burned,
- Specific objectives for each area burned,
- The frequency of burning in each area, and,
- The season in which each area will be burned;
- Prescription fire training needs.

1.2.1 Training Requirements

Immediate training needs for CSSA will be initially focused on the formal training of a wildland fire vehicle operator. To conduct prescribed fire on Federal Lands, personnel must be properly trained.

According to a Department of Defense Instruction about Fire and Emergency Services Programs (DoD, 2000):

Wildland fire preparation and response: Fire department and natural resources preparedness and response to wildland fires shall be in accordance with the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review of 1995 (updated 2001; Federal Fire Policy 2001). Further, the Department of Defense shall establish and maintain voting membership in the National wildfire Coordinating Group to facilitate the development of policy, standards, and training with the Federal wildland agencies.

The Department of Energy (DOE) has developed a Wildland Fire Management Program (DOE, 2004) based on the Federal Fire Policy (2001). This DOE program can be used as a model to develop the Fire Management Program at CSSA. Specifically in regard to training needs for personnel working prescribed fire, the following is stated:

A prescribed fire may be implemented only with trained and qualified personnel. No less than the organization described in the approved Prescription Burn Plan may be used to implement the project. The size and complexity of each prescribed fire will determine the size of the organization needed to safely achieve the objectives of the project. Workforce and equipment needs should be coordinated to ensure that fire use and contingency actions do not exceed site capabilities and are coordinated with mutual aid responders. A qualified burn boss should conduct each prescribed burn.

Finally, the Texas Natural Resources Code Ann. §§ 153.001 – 153.081 (2002) outlines the duties to the Prescribed Burning board within the Department of Agriculture that includes establishing standards for prescribed burning and certification, education, training, and insurance requirements. Specifically, the minimum standards established by the board for prescribed burning must ensure that:

...prescribed burning is the controlled application of fire to naturally occurring or naturalized vegetative fuels under specified environmental conditions in accordance with a written prescription plan. Further, by conducting burns under the guidance of the board, ...limits owner liability by stating that an owner, lessee, or occupant of agricultural land is not liable for property damage, injury, or death resulting from prescribed burning conducted on the land if the prescribed burning is conducted under the supervision of a certified prescribed burn manager.

1.2.2 Prescription Burn Plans

This fire management plan will be the overriding document for each prescription fire, but each prescribed fire will have a burn plan. The Texas Department of Agriculture has developed a burn plan checklist that will enable natural resources managers and certified burn managers to adequately plan and conduct prescription fires. This is an example that can be modified as CSSA develops their fire management program.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Susan Combs, Commissioner

P.O. Box 12847 = Austin, Texas 78711= (512) 463-7476

Internet Address: <http://www.agr.state.tx.us>

For the hearing impaired: 1-800-735-2988 (voice) or 1-800-735-2989 (TDD/TT)

**TEXAS PRESCRIBED BURNING BOARD
PRESCRIBED BURN PLAN**

Prepared by Prescribed Burn Manager: Certificate No. _____

Signature: Date _____

County: Ranch/Site Name: _____ Pasture Name: _____

Land Owner: Address: _____

Acres to be burned: _____ Longitude/Latitude _____

Record of Previous Burning: _____

Previous Burning Date: _____ Results: _____

Burn Justification (goals, objectives, rationale, purpose): _____

Notifications

TNRCC County Sheriff TFS Regional Fire Coordinator Others including _____

Description of Area

Live Fuels: _____ Type, Density, Size: _____

Dead Fuels: _____ Description, moisture, time-lag: _____

Topography/elevation: _____

Previous treatments: _____

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Preburn Factors

Fire guards: _____ specify width (attach map). _____

plow mow wet line blackline other _____

Crew size: _____ Minimum number required: _____

Pumpers (number / names): _____

Ignition crew: _____

Hand tools: _____

Weather monitor: _____

Equipment needs:(describe) _____

Protection needs:(buildings, powerlines, oil/gas facilities, hunting blinds, etc.; see map) _____

Ignition Procedures (see map):

Smoke sensitive areas: (see map) No Yes

Special Precautions: (see map) No Yes

Prescription

Date of burn (blacklines): _____ Time of burn (blacklines): _____
Date of burn: _____ Time of burn: _____

Desired Prescription Range (blacklines) Actual

Temperature (OF) _____
Relative Humidity _____
Wind Direction _____
Wind Speed _____
Fuel Load _____ (lbs/acre) _____ (tons/acre)
Dead fuel Moisture _____ (1-hr) _____ (10-hr) _____ (100-hr)
Live fuel Moisture _____

Desired Prescription Range (headfire) Actual

Temperature (OF) _____
Relative Humidity _____
Wind Direction _____
Wind Speed _____
Fuel Load _____ (lbs/acre) _____ (tons/acre)
Dead fuel Moisture _____ (1-hr) _____ (10-hr) _____ (100-hr)
Live fuel Moisture _____
Smoke Management _____
Mixing height _____
Transport windspeed _____

ACTIVITY PERSONNEL ASSIGNED

Maintain close observation of the burned area until the fire is completely extinguished: _____
Maintain contact with weather station until the fire is extinguished: _____
Take immediate positive action to ensure safety of the fire should a dangerous change in the weather occur or be forecast: _____
Check perimeter for firebrand sources such as trees, posts, cow chips, logs, etc: _____
Misc. Notes/Comments: _____

Other considerations:

- Consider not burning log-littered areas if the weather forecast is for strong winds within 3 days following a burn.
- Consider not burning within 12 hours of a predicted wind shift.
- When graded or bladed strips are used as fireguards, rolls of soil should be left on the side of the area next to the fence or away from area to be burned.
- Continuously monitor weather factors affecting fire behavior.

Map(s) of Area to be Burned

- Include items such as legend, magnetic north, water sources, roads, gates, safety zones, escape routes, fire guards, areas to be protected, ignition area, smoke sensitive areas, special precautions etc.