

Title = Improving wildlife habitat using grazing and fire

Topic = Benefits of patch burn grazing and multi species grazing to wildlife habitat in oak savannahs.

What do I want the learners to be able to understand, or do, because of the session?

Audience = local natural resource managers, like TPWD Wildlife and State Parks Division district and nongame biologists, NRCS district conservationists, FWS partners biologists, and local NGO partners. Plus select “opinion leader” and innovative landowners.

Geography = Eocene Sands of the Post Oak Savannah Ecoregion (Priority Counties; Austin, Bastrop, Burleson, Colorado, Lavaca, Lee, Leon, Milam, and Robertson)

Desired Action = Natural resource managers feel comfortable recommending patch burn grazing and multi species grazing to landowners as tools that benefit wildlife while sustaining working lands.

How do I check they have learned?

Immediate: Pre and Post workshop questionnaire of participants to assess their knowledge, attitudes, experience, and intentions towards incorporating grazing in general, and patch burn grazing in particular, as part of a wildlife management plan.

Follow up: Survey the NR professionals for the number that report incorporating patch burn grazing and/or multi species grazing into 1-d-1 wildlife management plans. This would be a qualifying activity under section 1. Habitat Control, grazing management, and prescribed burning.

What learning activities will lead learners to the desired result?

Combo desk and field learning experience, that merges theory and practice. Need to identify a collaborating ranch near our target geography.

Could do it at Gus Engeling WMA and/or Gary Costlow’s property in Anderson County.

Inside/Talks and Laptop Exercises

TALK – Intro to and benefits of patch burn grazing to wildlife habitat and wildfire mitigation.

TALK – Determining appropriate stocking rates for the ecoregion based on acreage and forage production, under various weather conditions (above normal, normal, and below normal), various brush densities, vegetation composition (improved vs. native) etc.

Practical – Exploration of RAP and ESDs for planning.

Practical – Exercise to design a grazing management plan for a POS property.

TALK – Designing a patch burn grazing management plan.

TALK - Brush management approaches, cost benefits of mechanical, chemical, and herbivore.

Field

Guided Tour of Property and habitat management discussion.

Activity - Field site measurements of forage availability.

Activity - Comparison biomass and species composition of grazed and ungrazed, burned and unburned, habitat units.