

State Wildlife Grant Program

State of Illinois

Final Project Report

Date: January 22, 2014

Grant End Date: November 30, 2014

Project Number: T-79-M-001

Project Title: Southern Illinois Prescribed Fire Resources for Natural Area Management Project

Leader: Jody Shimp, Regional Administrator, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Region V

When the aforementioned project was entered into, its project goals were identified as:

- 1) Recruit resources, coordinate the training, and manage the distribution of eligible Type 2 firefighters to Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Certified Prescribed Burn Managers
- 2) Assist regional certified burn bosses to conduct controlled burns with the goal of enhancing high quality natural areas within the Cache River-Cypress Creek, Larue-Pine Hills-Western Shawnee-Trail of Tears, Eastern Shawnee COA, the Pyramid – Arkland Landscape COA, and the Prairie Ridge Landscape COA's
- 3) To have a minimum of 20 qualified Type 2 firefighters on the southern Illinois prescribed fire resource list and to be distributed to state or federal prescribed burns when requested
- 4) Provide annual prescribed fire training applicable for safe and effective fire management activities to anyone wishing to serve as a Type 2 firefighter and be listed as a seasonal resource for southern Illinois prescribed burn managers responsible for using prescribed fire to treat natural areas.
- 5) Utilize prescribed fire to restore natural ecological processes and functions, and to achieve land management objectives on a minimum of 6,000 acres
- 6) Recruit to provide opportunities for a minimum of 70 students and local citizens to become trained and eligible to serve as Type 2 firefighters and create opportunity to supplement income during tough economic times

To date, the project has met and exceeded each of the project goals, as well as exceeding the treatment acres goal of 6000 acres.

Progress on each goal is as follows:

Objective 1: The Shawnee RC&D will recruit resources, coordinate the training, and manage the

distribution of eligible Type 2 firefighters to Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Certified Prescribed Burn Managers.

Completed. Through the course of the project, recruitment was constantly ongoing. Eligible firefighters were referred to our agency by local educators, partnering organizations, and local burn bosses. Shawnee RC&D ensured that all firefighters working at burns were properly certified and eligible to work, and ensured contact information and availability was made available to project burn bosses. .

Objective 2: Assist regional certified burn bosses to conduct controlled burns with the goal of enhancing high quality natural areas within the Cache River-Cypress Creek, Larue-Pine Hills-Western Shawnee-Trail of Tears, Eastern Shawnee COA, the Pyramid – Arkland Landscape COA, and the Prairie Ridge Landscape COA's.

Completed. By not only ensuring a steady supply of qualified, and pre-certified, Type 2 Firefighters, but also providing administrative oversight, Shawnee RC&D made the burn process easier for all burn bosses involved. Because contractor time and pay was handled efficiently, and with minimal work from firefighters or burn bosses, the burn seasons were able to move quickly and accomplish project goals, while still being held accountable for dollars spent. Overall project approval from burn bosses, on this aspect of the partnership was extremely high, with several burn bosses taking the time to send in their thanks to Shawnee RC&D for overseeing the project administration.

Objective 3: To have a minimum of 20 qualified Type 2 firefighters on the southern Illinois prescribed fire resource list and to be distributed to state or federal prescribed burns when requested.

Completed: Use of the online materials and trainings has increased the number of available Type 2 fire fighters (FFT2) to 25-30 regularly available qualifying contractors and more than 60 total firefighters, including those referred by partner organizations.

Objective 4. Provide annual prescribed fire training applicable for safe and effective fire management activities to anyone wishing to serve as a Type 2 firefighter and be listed as a seasonal resource for southern Illinois prescribed burn managers responsible for using prescribed fire to treat natural areas.

Completed: The Shawnee RC&D developed a webpage to guide on-line training. <http://www.shawneercd.org/currently-funded-grants/item/20-fire-resources-prescribed-burn> Field day training was provided by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Additionally, many of the registered type 2 fire fighters on this project were recent graduates/students and worked within the SIUC Fire Dawg program, which provides regular and reoccurring training.

Objective 5. Utilize prescribed fire to restore natural ecological processes and functions, and to achieve land management objectives on a minimum of 6,000 acres.

<u>Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Acres Burned</u>
Chauncey Marsh – prairies	Lawrence County	2/20/2012	67
S.A. Forbes State Park –stagecoach prairie	Marion County	2/22/2012	213
Hanging Rock	Wabash	02/23/2012	97
Sam Parr State Park - west prairies	Jasper County	2/23/2012	50
CRSNA – Boss Island	Johnson County	2/27/2012	200
Pyramid State Park – Captain Unit -	Perry County	2/28/2012	1417
Pyramid State Park – Denmark Unit -	Perry County	2/28/2012	1106
Beall Woods State Park – prairie	Wabash County	3/1/2012	5
Collier Glade	Hardin	3/5/2012	29
LaFarge Glade	Hardin	3/5/2012	21
Ramsey Lake State Park - savanna	Fayette County	3/13/2012	245
CRSNA – Cave Creek Glade	Johnson County	3/13/2012	15
Lake M’boro Hill Prairies LWR	Jackson Co.	3/14/2012	90
Ramsey Lake State Park (Prairie Ridge)	Fayette County	3/15/2012	470
S.A Forbes State Park – barrens	Marion County	3/19/2012	213
Mermet Lake Demo Prairie	Massac County	3/19/2012	18
CRSNA – Wildcat Bluff, West Unit	Johnson County	3/20/2012	30
Ballard Nature Center prairie	Effingham County	3/21/2012	44
Beall Woods NP & State Park	Wabash County	3/21/2012	187
CRSNA – Wildcat Bluff, East Unit	Johnson County	3/21/2012	60
Cretaceous Hills West	Pope County	3/27/2012	160
Cretaceous Hills East	Pope County	3/27/2012	100
Red Hills Woods NP – exotics	Lawrence County	4/11/2012	10
Brown Barrens NE & Cedar Bluff L&WR	Jackson Co.	3/8/2013	21
Cedar Bluff L & WR	Jackson Co.	3/9/2013	230
Victor Satas Burn Prep	Jackson Co.	3/13/2013	28
Pyramid State Park	Perry County	3/14/2013	2200
Gibbons Creek Barrens	Pope County	3/15/2013	110
Prairie Ridge State Natural Area	Jasper County	3/25/2013	487
Susans Glade	Pope County	3/28/2013	39
Spivey Valley Glade	Sangamon County	4/3/2013	50
Trail of Tears	Pope County	11/14/2013	300
Trail of Tears	Pope County	11/14/2013	130
Barkers Bluff RX	Hardin County	02/21/2014	162
Boss Island	Johnson County	02/21/2014	150
Cave Creek Glade	Massac County	03/03/2014	12
Cret. Hills East	Massac County	03/23/2014	421
Trail of Tears State Forest	Pope County	11/14/2014	172

Total Acres Burned 9359

Objective 6: Recruit to provide opportunities for a minimum of 70 students and local citizens to become trained and eligible to serve as Type 2 firefighters and create opportunity to supplement income during tough economic times.

Completed: The Shawnee RC&D and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources developed the program registration and reimbursement forms. All forms were available to be submitted electronically or by mail, for greatest convenience. The Shawnee RC&D developed a webpage to guide training and recruit firefighters. <http://www.shawneercd.org/currently-funded-grants/item/20-fire-resources-prescribed-burn>

The Shawnee RC&D and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources have met with local conservation groups, Southern Illinois University, the Southeast Illinois Prescribed Burn Association and the Shawnee National Forest to describe program and recruit firefighters. Program details and employment opportunities have been presented to over 150 students and local citizens.

Project Summary:

Each of the project objectives, including areas treated, have been met and exceeded during the course of this project. Additionally, the importance of prescribed burning and its impact on the control of natural lands has been dispensed to a larger audience.