
JOB APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR MISSOURI NRCS EMPLOYEES THAT PLAN AND APPLY PRESCRIBED BURNING

PRESCRIBED BURNING ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY

1. The State Resource Conservationist (SRC) will designate an employee or employees with at least a Level 2 Job Approval Authority to be the “State Prescribed Burn Specialist (SPBS)” and to act as the SRC representative, when directed, concerning Prescribed Burning issues in Missouri.
2. The Area Conservationist will designate an employee with at least a Level 2 Job Approval Authority, from within their area, to be the “Area Prescribed Burn Specialist (APBS)”. The APBS will represent the Area Conservationist in issues concerning Prescribed Burning within the area.
3. The State Resource Conservationist will determine and grant all prescribed burning job approvals and/or changes. This authority, within Missouri, is delegated to the SPBS.

PROCESS FOR ACQUIRING JOB APPROVAL AUTHORITY

1. Requests for job approval and changes in job approval originate with the employee and are submitted on NRPH Example Form MO A-2 to the APBS.
2. If the APBS concurs, the APBS will forward the original with a recommended job approval level to the SPBS. If the APBS does not concur, the request is returned to the employee with the reasons for non-concurrence and what actions are needed before resubmitting.
3. If the SPBS concurs, the SPBS will record the information, and return the original form MO A-2 to the APBS who then returns it to the employee. If the SPBS does not concur, the SPBS will return the request to the APBS with the reason for non-concurrence and what actions are needed before resubmitting.

4. The SPBS and APBS will make copies from the original for their files as needed and record the information on a Missouri approved electronic format. By October 1 of each year, each APBS will forward copies of their electronic data base to the State Grassland Conservationist who will maintain a statewide database of Job Approval Authorities.
5. Following job approval, employees will maintain, on a standardized form, a record of prescribed burning activity for each fiscal year.
6. The APBS will review this record and at least one burn plan with the employee once every three years. The SPBS will review the activity of the APBSs, and an APBS will review the activity of the SPBS. This will assure that all employees are keeping their job approval up to date.
7. A request for change in level of job approval will be made by submission of a copy of the original request form, with the accumulated record of activity, through channels as in 1-3 above.
8. Copies of the request form with approval action will be distributed as in 3 above.

JOB APPROVAL LEVELS

Level A: A Level A (Awareness) job approval authorizes the employee to incorporate prescribed burning as a practice in the conservation planning process. This level of job approval is required for any employee who discusses prescribed burning as an alternative with a landowner or incorporates prescribed burning as a practice in a conservation plan, regardless of whether they write the actual burn plan. Refer to (190-GM, Part 413, Amend. 7, September 2003) for additional information.

To Qualify for Level A approval, the employee must attain 16 hours of awareness training by attending an approved Missouri NRCS Prescribed Burn Awareness classroom instruction and participating in the application of two prescribed burns as a member of the holding crew while under the supervision of a qualified NRCS or MDC burn boss.

Once an employee receives Level A job approval there will be no further requirements to maintain his/her job approval.

Level 1: A Level 1 job approval authorizes the employee to prepare prescribed burning plans on private land with <60 acres in one firing sequence (plan could cover more than 60 acres) and fuels that include:

- all herbaceous species
- non-volatile woody species
- a limited number of live volatile woody species* less than 4 feet tall that will not contribute to a significant change in fire intensity or behavior
- dead woody fuel that will not contribute to a significant change in fire intensity or behavior

The slope restriction is <12% (average slope). All plans must be checked for completeness by an employee with Level 2 job approval. The employee can also, with supervision by a qualified NRCS or MDC burn boss, actively participate in the application of prescribed burning plans within and outside of his/her job approval authority as a member of the firing or holding crew.

To Qualify for a Level 1 job approval, the employee must complete the requirements outlined below within 3 years of satisfactorily completing the approved Missouri NRCS Level 1 classroom instruction:

1. Develop 5 (practice or actual) prescribed burning plans developed on site with assistance from a Level 1 or 2 person. Plans will be reviewed by a person with Level 2 Job Approval Authority.
2. Serve as a crew member during the application of three prescribed burning plans supervised by a qualified NRCS or MDC burn boss.

During the three burns, employees will participate in:

- Pre-burn checklist
 - Serve on ignition crew
 - Serve on holding crew
 - Assist with mop-up
3. Personnel will receive hands on experience in the use of all of the following equipment:
 - Pumper or sprayer
 - Drip torch
 - Backpack pump
 - Swatter
 - Sling psychrometer
 - Wind meter
 - Handheld Weather Station, if available (i.e. Kestrel 3000)
 - Rake
 - Backpack blower
 4. Assist with three (same day) post-burn evaluations with the burn boss that conducted the burn.
 5. Assist in one (60-90) day follow-up evaluation with a Level 2 person or equivalent.

To Maintain Level 1 approval, an employee must prepare 2 (actual) prescribed burn plans and participate in the application of 1 burn plan within 3 consecutive years; or must have demonstrated good judgement, knowledge, and skills and be recommended by the APBS and approved by the SPBS.

To Regain Level 1 approval, requirements will be determined by the APBS.

Level 2: A Level 2 job approval authorizes an employee to prepare, without review, prescribed burning plans on private land that are <320 acres in one firing sequence (plan could cover more than 320 acres) with fuels that include:

- all herbaceous species
- non-volatile woody species
- live volatile woody species* less than 4 feet tall
- a limited number of live volatile woody species* greater than 4 feet tall that will not contribute to a significant change in fire intensity or behavior
- dead woody fuel that will not contribute to a significant change in fire intensity or behavior

There are no slope restrictions. Level 2 job approval also authorizes an employee to check burn plans prepared by employees with Level 1 approval; provide producers prescribed burn training; serve as Burn Boss in the application of prescribed burning plans within his/her job approval authority on private land at the owners request; and, with supervision by a qualified NRCS or MDC burn boss, actively participate in burns outside of his/her job approval authority as a member of the firing or holding crew.

To Qualify for Level 2 approval, an employee with Level 1 approval must plan and participate in the application of 5 or more prescribed burn plans, 2 of which must meet Level 2 criteria, within 2 consecutive years. One of the plans written must be one of the plans applied. All plans must be reviewed by an employee with at least Level 2 job approval.

To Maintain Level 2 approval, the employee must prepare and/or review 3 prescribed burn plans and participate in the application of one plan within 3 consecutive years or must have demonstrated good judgement, knowledge, and skills as determined by the APBS.

To Regain Level 2 approval, requirements will be determined by the SPBS in consultation with the APBS.

Level 3: A Level 3 approval authorizes the employee to prepare and participate in applying, with no restrictions on size, vegetation, or slope, prescribed burning plans on private land without review; check burn plans prepared by employees with Level 2 job approval; and serve as Burn Boss on burns at the producers request.

To Qualify for Level 3 approval, Level 2 employees must satisfactorily complete MO-NRCS Level 3 approved classroom training, then prepare and participate in at least three prescribed burning plans that exceed Level 2 criteria within 2 consecutive years. All plans must be reviewed by an employee with Level 3 job approval.

To Maintain Level 3 approval, the employee will prepare and/or review one plan and participate in the application of one plan exceeding Level 2 criteria within 3 consecutive years or must have demonstrated good

judgement, knowledge, and skills as determined by the APBS.

To Regain Level 3 approval, requirements will be determined by the SPBS in consultation with the APBS.

***Live volatile woody species are those that have a chemical make-up that causes them to be somewhat “explosive”, especially during certain seasons. Examples include eastern red cedar, shortleaf pine, blackberry vines, serecia lespedeza, honeysuckle, and sumac.**

OTHER INFORMATION

All employees with Level 2 or 3 job approval are encouraged to have a fellow employee with the appropriate job approval level review their burn plans periodically for completeness. Peer review will assure that all employees are producing a quality product.

If an employee fails to follow established policies and procedures for Prescribed Burning, their job approval will be revoked by the State Resource Conservationist or the Area Conservationist in consultation with the State Resource Conservationist