

## Prescribed Burning with Local Fire Departments.

The US Army Corps of Engineers constructed and operates Perry Dam. Located on the Delaware River in Jefferson County, Perry Lake is the fourth largest lake in the state of Kansas. The lake possesses over 160 miles of shoreline, 25,389 acres of flood control pool, 11,150 surface acres of multipurpose pool, and 39,311 acres of land in the comparatively humid region of northeast Kansas.

The Perry Project is staffed with 1 Natural Resource Management Specialist, 3 Natural Resource Specialist, 3 Maintenance Staff. With an insignificant staff to burn, areas too large for a small burn crew, and limited equipment the Perry staff sought out for help using local fire departments. Jefferson County is divided into ten township fire departments, with 7 townships containing USACE owned lands.

Coordination with fire departments to conduct prescribed burns accomplishes both USACE and fire department goals. Burning enhances native grass stand and aids in control of invasive woody species. Fire departments benefit by providing training opportunities to fire fighters and mutual aid coordination of different townships working at the same location.

Coordination meetings begin in January and February to discuss the upcoming burn plans. All burn plans and post burn evaluation are conducted by the Natural Resource Staff. Burning is conducted from 1 March through 30 April. Most burns are conducted on weekends. Jefferson County Communications will page out upcoming burn location and time to all Townships. All firefighters are required to sign USACE Volunteer Agreement.

In 2005 Perry Project staff and local township fire departments burned 376 acres, logged 376 volunteer hours used 16 fire trucks and 4 water supply tankers. In 2006 Perry Project staff and local township fire departments burned 761 acres, logged 842 volunteer hours, and used 21 fire trucks and 5 water supply tankers. Warm weather and a wet spring provided undesirable conditions to complete any burns in 2007.

During the 2005-2006 burn season 1137 acres was burned at a reimbursement cost of about \$3,400. Reimbursement was divided by participation by each Township Fire Department for each burn. Under ER-1130-2-500 Chapter 10 volunteers may be reimbursed for actual out-of-pocket expenses they incur in performing voluntary service when approved in advance and identified on the individual's Volunteer Agreement form. Such expenses might include, but are not limited to, local transportation costs and personal safety equipment.

By USACE and Jefferson County Township Fire Department working together safe and successful prescribed burns can be executed to improve our natural resources and the safety of all.

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