Prescribed Fire Preparation

Prescribed Fire in Wisconsin

Photo Credit: Marty Moses

Objectives

- Firebreaks
- Firebreak Management
- Minimizing Hazards
- Fire Timeline

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Firebreaks

- Define boundaries of a burn unit.
- Can be natural features or manmade.
- Make ignition easier.
- Help access the burn unit.

Permanent/Natural Firebreaks

- Rivers / Creeks
- Lakes / Ponds
- Woodland Edges
- Roads or Trails

Temporary or Man-made Firebreaks

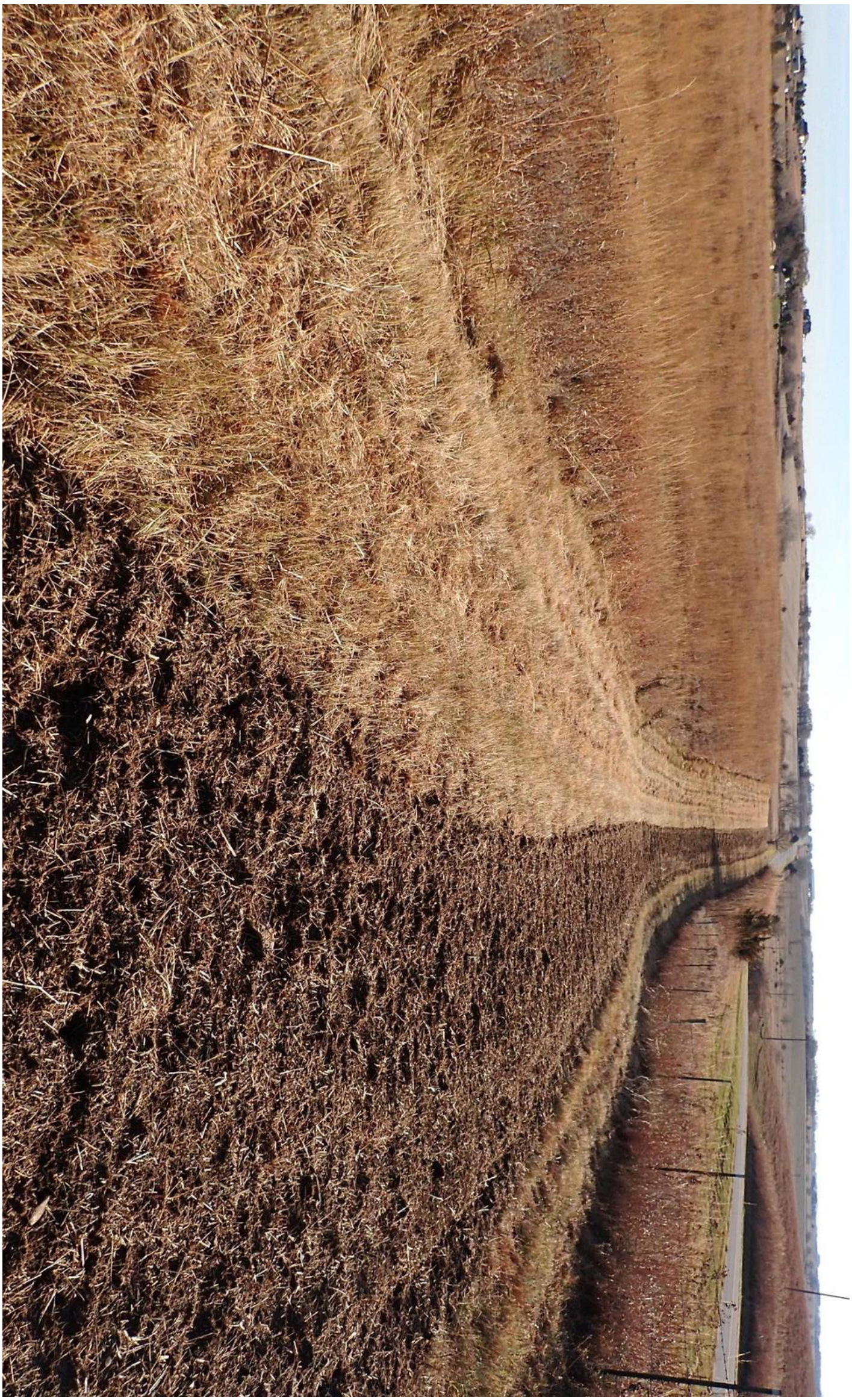
- Mowed
- Vegetated “green” firebreaks
- Cool-season grass, clover
- Black lines
- Bare mineral soil
- Raked, leaf blown
- Plowed, bulldozed
- Deer trails
- Crops that are green
  - Alfalfa, winter wheat

Mowed Firebreak

Blackline Firebreak

Vegetated Firebreak

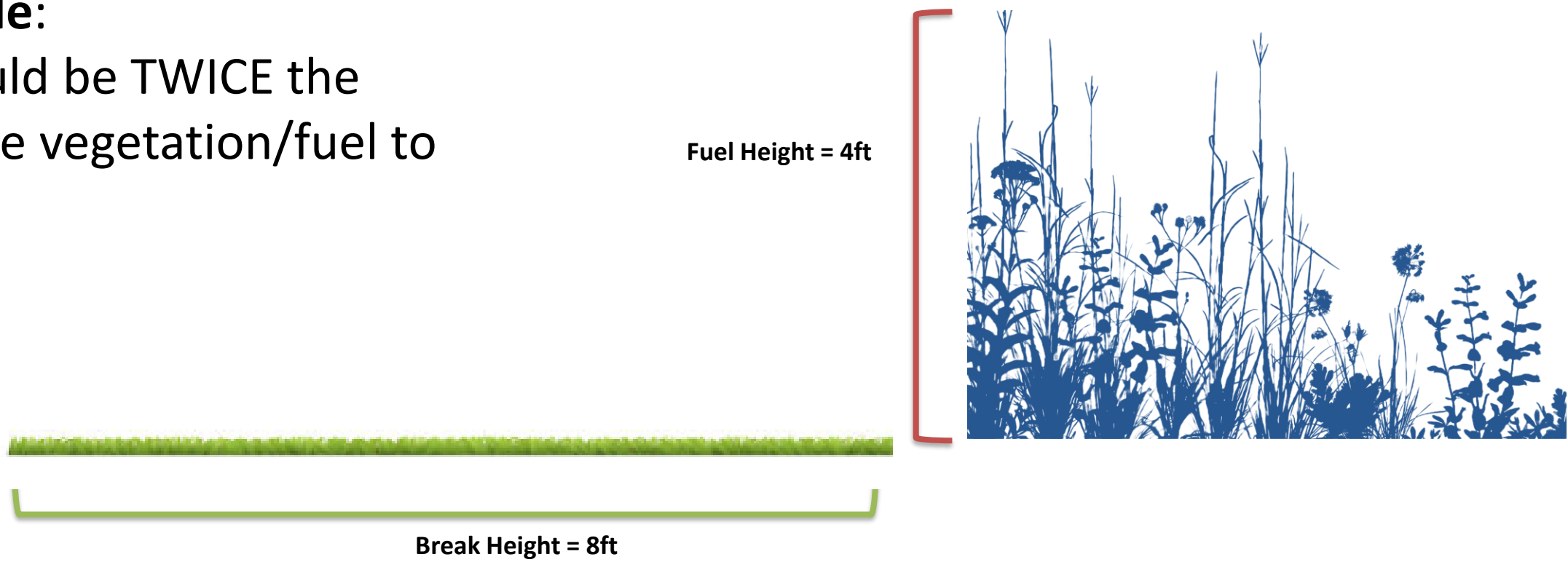
Roto-Tilled Firebreak



Leaf-blown/Raked Firebreak

Firebreak Management

General Rule:
Breaks should be TWICE the height of the vegetation/fuel to be burned



Firebreak Management

- If possible, mow firebreaks in the year before a burn
- Breaks will green up faster than the unit
- Touch up in the spring
- If just starting restoration, think about breaks/access trails

Minimize Hazards Within the Unit

Dead/ Hazardous Trees

- Mow, leaf blow, or rake around trees that could cause problems
- Or cut down and move into/out of the unit.

Brush piles

- Burn in the winter with snow on ground
- In certain situations, you can burn through them during the burn

Minimize Hazards within the unit

Mow, leaf blow, rake, or blackline around other hazards such as:

- Utility poles
- Fences
- Hunting blinds
- Old buildings
- Pumps

Minimize Hazards on the line

If very heavy grass fuel is immediately adjacent a break, mowing can help reduce heat during ignitions.

1 year before burn

Consider planting green firebreaks or fire-resistant crops

Mow firebreaks to reduce thatch layer and maintain green.

6 months before burn

USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Prescribed Burn Plan

Wisconsin Job Sheet 338

*Plan must be submitted at least 60 days prior to burn. Burn plans with **ANY** missing items will not be reviewed.*

Landowner/Operator: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Entity Responsible (individual/organization) for conducting burn: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Burn location address (include fire number): _____

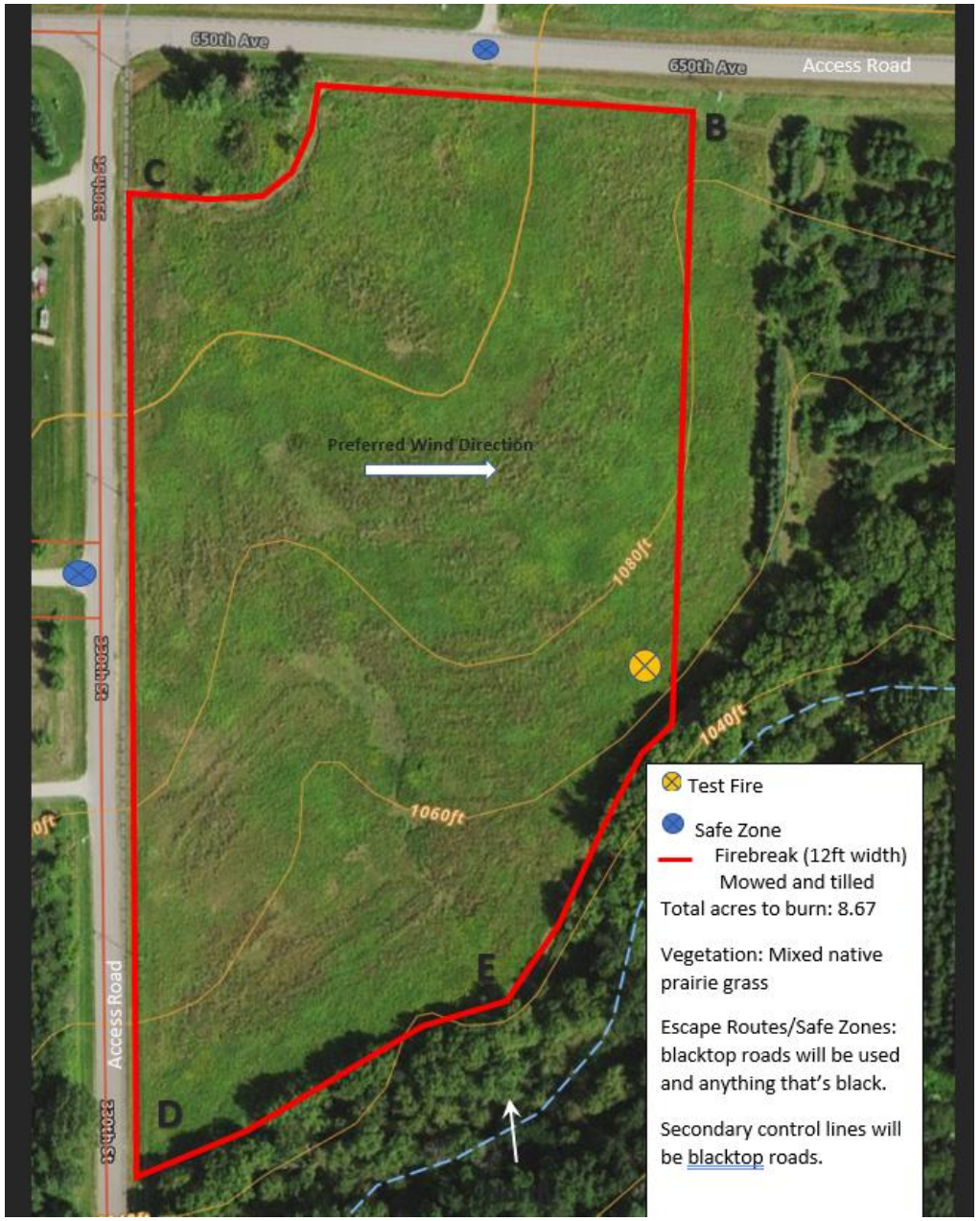
County: _____ **TWP**: ____ N **Range**: ____ ☐E ☐W ____ ¼ **Section**: _____

Total Acres in Burn Unit: _____

Objective of the burn (check all that apply)

- ☐ Control woody/invasive species
- ☐ Promote legumes in cool season stands
- ☐ Promote forbs and legumes in warm season stands
- ☐ Species specific habitat management
- ☐ Promote grasses in cool season stands
- ☐ Promote grasses in warm season stands
- ☐ Preparation for sedding or planting
- ☐ Oak regeneration
- ☐ Pine regeneration

Prepare a written burn plan or ask for assistance in writing a burn plan.



Determine where your firebreak boundaries will be.

6 months before burn

Discuss your intention to burn with adjacent landowners and fire chief.

Move heavy fuels away from burn unit boundaries and/or burn brush piles.

1 to 3 weeks before burn

Re-contact everyone included in burn plan (neighbors, burn crew, fire chief, etc.).

Touch up fire breaks by mowing, blacklining, or using another method.

1 to 3 weeks before burn

Make sure equipment is working properly and mix drip torch fuel.

Often, there is a limited window of opportunity to burn.

Plan ahead to ensure a safe and effective prescribed fire.

Are you ready?

Questions?

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NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION
NFWF

DRIFTLESS AREA LAND CONSERVANCY

IOWA COUNTY WISCONSIN
LAND CONSERVATION

WISCONSIN PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL