



Nachusa Grasslands Fire Summary Report

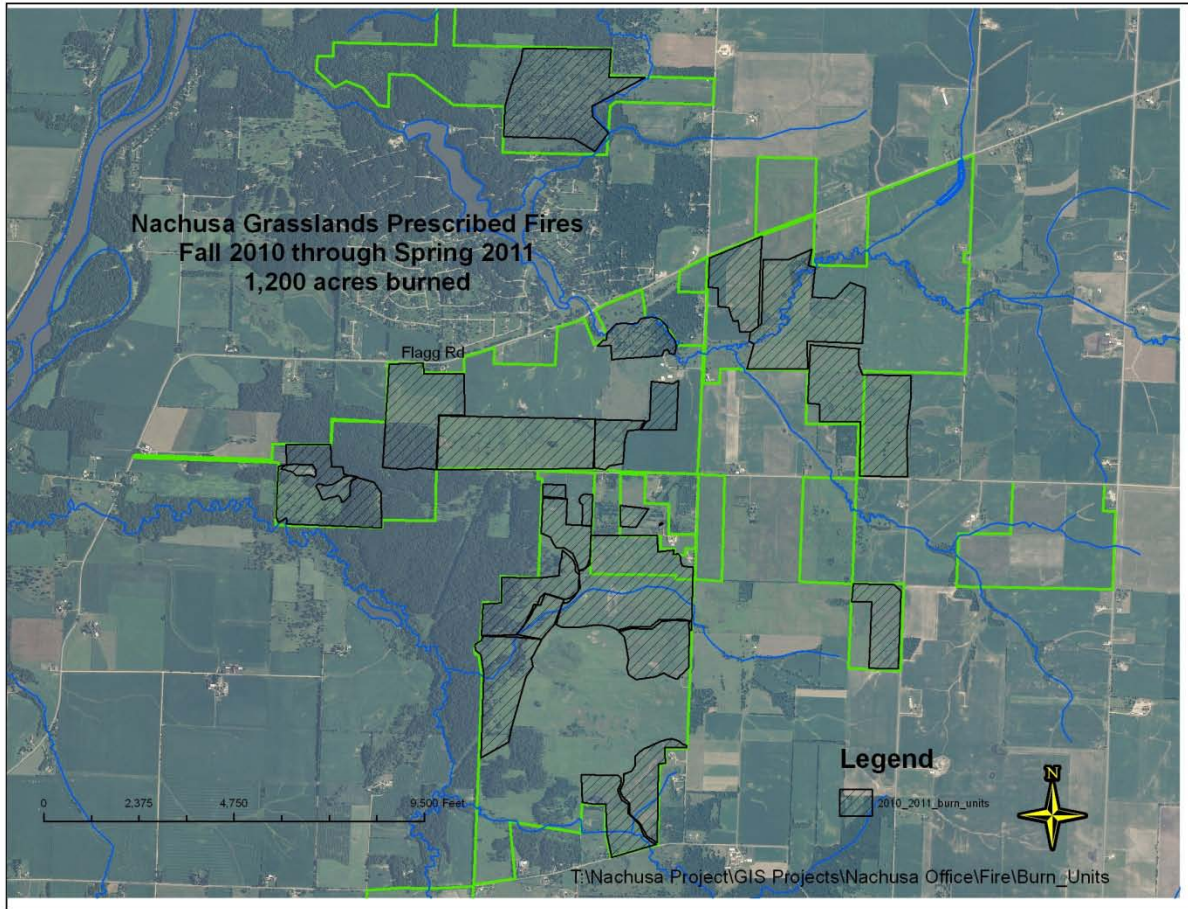
For fires completed from Fall 2010 through Spring 2011

By Bill Kleiman

April 19, 2011

Spring 2011 gave us unusual amounts of east and north winds. We burned 27 units with a total of about 1,400-acres with 200-acres of those off of the preserve. It was the usual hustle to get equipment loaded, upgraded, and working right. Fire programs bring a focus and intensity that mixed with smoke, heat and stress can be quite a challenge. The Nachusa prescribed fire crew continues to demonstrate a high level of knowledge of fire, how to handle equipment, and get the job done. This was shown on the March 31 fire at Big Woods when the light winds shifted for about ten minutes and sent an intimidating tall grass fire running along ahead of the igniter. At the same moment the other crew had a spot fire that had them scrambling and radioing for assistance. It was not pandemonium though. The crew maintained their composure, the burn boss swallowed down a feeling of dread. The crew acted safely, deployed equipment to a new place and enclosed the unit safely.

Volunteer John Schmadeke produced a 7 minute Youtube video on the Nachusa spring fire season that is entertaining. Here is the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dP-GQrrQXK0>



Fires done by Nachusa Grasslands crew from Fall 2010 to Spring 2011

Unit Name	Acres	Date	Temp high	Humidity low	Wind high	Crew size	Comment
CCK corn stubble	0.5	11/8/2010	66	30	11 S	7	Started ignition, then cancelled during due to smoke on Flagg road.
Dot Doug corn stubble	18	11/9/2010	70	38	9 S	7	
Holland corn stubble	35	11/9/2010	70	38	9 S	7	
CCK corn stubble	27	11/11/2010	60	49	7 NNW	8	
Tellabs corn stubble	10	11/11/2010	60	49	7 NNW	6	
Tellabs corn stubble west	4	11/11/2010	60	49	7 NNW	6	
Gray house prairie	1	11/11/2010	60	49	7 NNW	6	

HQ to AOTP	137	3/16/2011	61	40	10 SW	15	
CCK	123	3/18/2011	52	48	15 N	9	
CCK and Sand Farm`	123	3/19/2011	56	26	SE5	21	Annual fire refresher live fire exercise and Rx fire
Dot and Doug unit	28	3/24/2011	34	62	9 N	12	
Wahl Prairie	80					9	
Schafer	39	3/25/2011	39	53	7 NE	11	
Carpenter	40	3/25/2011	39	53	7 NE	11	
Tellabs Savanna W half	95	3/27/2011	40	41	13E	15	3 ignition crews
Bennett woods and Holland	91	3/28/2011	43	31	9 E	11	
Holland Savanna	0	3/28/2011	43	31	9 E	11	Started late in day and fatigue made us quit.
Holland Savanna, take two	32						
Big Woods	65	3/31/2011	49	20	7 NE	12	Low humidity, wind shifted a bit and had us hustling.
Dixon PD Lowell NP north	35	4/5/2011	50	42	16 W	8	
Dixon PD Lowell NP south	60	4/5/2011	50	42	16 W	8	
Schafer wetlands	39	4/6/2011	61	40	7 NE	9	
Coneflower	46	4/6/2011	61	40	7 NE	9	
Hook Larson	116	4/7/2011	58	41	17 E	6	
Dot Doug	10	4/12/2011	54	46	9 NE	6	
Walkup pine slash	6	4/12/2011	54	46	9 NE	6	
Orland prairie	128	4/13/2011	69	30	4 NW	15	
Total acres	1388.5						
Total Nachusa	1,200						
Average burn unit size	51						

Total burn units	27
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John Heneghan, Michelle Crites, Tom Mitchell, Hank Hartman, Becky H, Bernie Buchholz. Photo by BK.

Crew who participated in Fall 2010 to Spring 2011 prescribed fires

First name	Last Name	# of fires	Comments
Keith	Anderson	3	
Heather	Baker	17	
Bernie	Buchholz	13	crew boss
Mike	Carr	11	Rookie of the year
Doug	Chien	1	
Cody	Considine	19	crew boss many times
Damian	Considine	3	
Michelle	Crites	7	
Dave	Crites	2	crew boss
Trent	DeBeare	5	
Jon	Dempsey	1	
Steve	Dixon PD	2	
Christy	Dixon PD	2	
Jan	Grainger	1	
Kirk	Hallowell	1	
Hank	Hartman	9	crew boss
Becky	Hartman	9	crew boss
Dwight	Heckert	4	

John	Heneghan	21	crew boss many times
Tim	Keller	1	
Bill	Kleiman	27	25 as burn boss
Susan	Kleiman	6	crew boss
Mark	Kruis	16	
Aaron	Lange	1	
Dave	Lawson	3	
Mark	Liechty	1	
Al	Meier	4	
Tom	Mitchell	4	crew boss
Chip	O'Leary	1	
Pete	Oliver	8	crew boss
Allision	Parker	1	
Kyle	Rauch	1	
Mike	Saxton	9	crew boss
John	Schmadeke	2	
Kim	Schmidt	2	
Steve	Sentoff	2	
Paul	Soderholm	4	
Jay	Stacy	2	
Earl	Thomas	1	
Daniel	Thompson	1	
Mary	Vieregg	8	crew boss
Jim	Vieregg	3	
Greg	Wahl	1	
Dan	Wahl	1	
Austin	Webb	2	
TOTAL CREW		45	



Mary Vieregg. Photo by BK

What we learned:

- The Nachusa fire crew is resilient, focused and deserve praise. What makes the fire crews good is that a number of people come out for a multiple of days, or they have been burning with us for years.
- Fire breaks need to be done by fall because spring fire season is too busy. We had too many irons in the fire in the fall and early winter snows shut us down. We need about two weeks of daily attention to fire break mowing and clearing.
- Live fire exercises were good but the logistics for handling over 20 crew pushed our limits. We might try a variant on this theme by having crews do fire suppression during regular prescribed fires to get practice at putting out fire in an escape scenario.
- Thanks to John Heneghan, who focused daily on the fire equipment. We had hoses leaking and bursting, pumps needing upgrades.



Michelle Crites and Pete Oliver as crew boss. Photo by Wes Gibson. Opening photo of bur oak by M Crites.

End.