



Plains gayfeather

# NCORPE Project - Public Lands & Programs Edition

NCORPE PUBLIC ACCESS PROGRAM

IN THIS ISSUE

## Public Access Program Update

NCORPE has 6,880 acres of public access available. These portions of the NCORPE property can be utilized for a variety of outdoor activities, such as; hunting, hiking, and wildlife viewing. For regulations, maps, and other information please visit [www.ncorpe.org](http://www.ncorpe.org)

As a friendly reminder, hunting and target shooting is prohibited on the hike-bike and horseback trails portion of the NCORPE property.

Furthermore, vehicle usage is prohibited on all public access portions of the NCORPE property. Designated parking lots are available and as a safety precaution, do not park vehicles on the county roads.

The NCORPE Wildlife Viewing Program in cooperation with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission allows for the viewing of Greater prairie-chickens every spring during their mating rituals. This unique opportunity provides education on a species native to Nebraska.

Please contact 308-534-6752 to make reservations or visit [www.ncorpe.org](http://www.ncorpe.org) for more information.

**Public Access Program update**

**2020 grazing opportunities**

**Land management update**

**Pasture Deferment Program update**



Wildlife viewing program,  
viewing trailer provided by NGPC



Burrowing owl

### Public Access Program

**We want your feedback!** Please, if you have any comments or suggestions for our hunting or hiking areas please contact us at [bsellers@urnrd.org](mailto:bsellers@urnrd.org) To improve our public access program and to ensure availability our board of directors need to hear your responses.

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## Land Management Update



### Prairie Reconstruction Project

Grazing and haying are used as tools for maintaining the health of warm season grasses.

#### FAST FACTS

# 6,240 ac.

of the NCORPE property will be available for bid grazing in 2020.

## 2020 Grazing Opportunities

NCORPE is accepting sealed bids until February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 for Summer Rx grazing opportunities. Two separate announcements are available for bidding. If bidding on multiple units, please submit the corresponding bid submittal form for each announcement. The bids shall be submitted only once and no counter bidding will be available. All bids need to be mailed to:

NCORPE

Attn: 2020 Summer Sealed Bid

and/or 2020-2024 Summer Sealed Bid

24871 S. Lone Star Rd.

North Platte, NE 69101

#### GRAZING

For additional information and bid submittal form visit [www.ncorpe.org](http://www.ncorpe.org)

QUESTIONS:  
308-534:6752



August hay

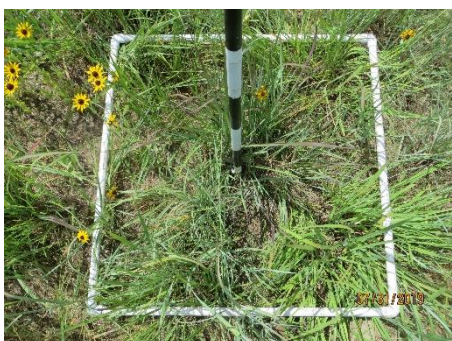


## MANAGING PUBLIC LANDS



## Rx Grazing

With the use of short duration rotational grazing, plants such as Downy brome aka Cheatgrass can be reduced in native grass pastures.



## Re-seeding Project

Applying deferred rotational grazing to seeded areas allow for some warm season grasses to reproduce. This seed production insures longevity of wsg to an otherwise blank seed-bank in formerly irrigated acres.

## FAST FACTS

5%

of the NCOPRE property will be utilized in 2020 for the Pasture Deferment Program.

50%

of the NCORPE property will be grazed in 2020 and 8% will be hayed.

## PRESCRIBED GRAZING &amp; HAYING OPPORTUNITIES

For more information visit [www.ncorpe.org](http://www.ncorpe.org)

## 2019 Summary:

In February, NCORPE was awarded year 1 of a 3 year grant proposal by the Nebraska Environmental Trust for native



[www.environmentaltrust.nebraska.gov](http://www.environmentaltrust.nebraska.gov)

forb seed and the associated drilling cost. The forb component will be integrated into a native warm season grass mix that will be the mixture used in NCORPE's re-seeding project for years 2019 through 2021. \$37,746 was awarded for year 1 which provided enough forb seed and the cost of drilling the entire mixture for 1,300 acres. NET's annual grants are funded through the proceeds of the Nebraska Lottery. Looking forward, NCORPE will know the fate of year 2 funding by February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and drillings are scheduled to begin shortly there after. Frost seeding is an optimum way of ensuring native forb and grass seedling establishment due to the freeze and thaw mechanism some seed coats require in order to germinate. 3,700 acres are schedule to be drilled by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

By June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 the drilling of 1,227.1 acres was completed. Above average precipitation during the past growing season aided in extensive seedling germination and survival. Furthermore, the abundant rainfall received this last year increased the amount of plant vigor as a whole on the NCORPE property. Subsequently additional haying's were utilized to take advantage of the wet year.

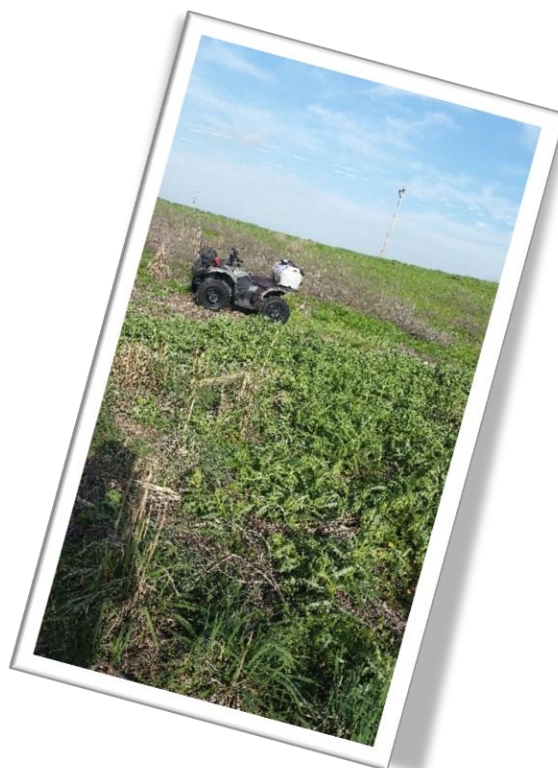
Increased plant vigor isn't exactly a positive thing when discussing noxious weeds. With well above normal rainfall in 2019 efforts to control Canada thistle we upped. Sprayings were conducted both in the spring and fall and additional contract work was utilized. The NCORPE staff uses GPS handheld devices to document noxious weed patches and a GPS database has been developed in order to monitor sprayings and adjust management.

Five individuals were awarded summer grazing bids in 2019.



2019 drilled seedlings in August

Collectively the bids averaged \$2.05 per head per day. A deferred rotational grazing system was used in 2019 and will continue to be the management system used in the future. 0.46 was the average AUM/ac. applied to the summer paddocks. The highest being 1.06 AUM/ac. and lowest being 0.19 AUM/ac. (cont. on pg. 5)



# Pasture Deferment Program

*This program promotes the use of prescribed burning as tool for improving rangeland health.*

## Program Goals:

NCORPE is devoting a grazing opportunity specifically for local landowners who are planning to defer their property in preparation for implementing a prescribed burn.

## Requirements for Enrollment Consideration:

Property within one of the following NRD districts: Upper Republican, Middle Republican, Lower Republican, or Twin Platte.

Must have a prescribed burn plan in place and a specific year scheduled for implementation.

Will participate in the execution of the prescribed burn or have a contract for implementation of a prescribed burn with a qualified, agency approved, prescribed burn contractor.

Or

Be a member of a prescribed burn association within the following NRD districts: Upper Republican, Middle Republican, Lower Republican, or Twin Platte.

**Applies to both scenarios:** Only the deferred property's carry capacity will be taken into consideration for enrollment.

## Ranking Criteria:

A ranking system determines successful enrollment after all other requirements are met.

## Program Standards:

PDP grazing plan will be followed. **Note: maximum animal units will be specified.**

Set rental rate – via combination of UNL's *Trends in Nebraska Farmland Markets* publication and USDA's current Nebraska cattle market reports.

Nuisance factors will be applied to rental rate if necessary.

2<sup>nd</sup> year enrollment option after burn.

## MANAGING FOR BETTER PRIVATE LANDS



## Eastern Red Cedar Encroachment

Eastern Red Cedar is a pioneer species and can be considered invasive. If not controlled early this species can out compete many grasses in rangeland. Early control by mechanical methods or prescribed fire can help landowners combat this issue before land production is lost.



## Grazing Deferment

Summer pasture deferment is a critical step in implementing a prescribed burn. The build-up of adequate fuel loads is necessary when trying to control brush or tree species.



## Prairie Reconstruction Project

Established reconstruction acres provide forage for cattle owned by producers enrolled in NCORPE's Pasture Deferment Program.



# Land Management Update cont.

Below is a summary of the total AUM's for the NCORPE property in 2019 broken down by month. This includes the acres during the spring prescribed grazing season.

## Pasture Forage Demand Summary (AUM)



Total AUM from grazing by livestock class.

Livestock Class	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Livestock Class Total
Cow-calf pairs					220	580	757	841	817	807	116		4139
Dry cows													
Bred heifers (replacement 18-24 months)													
Yearling heifers (replacement 12-17 months)													
Heifer calves (replacement 4-12 months)													
Weaned steer/heifer calves (4-12 months)													
Yearling steers/heifers (12-17 months)			84	1112	1051	410	440	440	85	1			3625
Bulls					3	18	37	42	37	26	5		168
Horses													
<b>Monthly Totals</b>			84	1112	1275	1009	1234	1323	940	834	121		7931

Advancing forward, as more acres become established on the NCORPE property higher stocking rates and densities will be applied. Management objectives for the property are beginning to shift from establishing native seedlings to effectively utilizing the improved varieties of grasses.

These improved varieties which are capable of greater vigor than native plants will need intensive management in comparison to native pastures. Management for utilization will be implemented in conjunction with practices that maintain seasonal habitat for wildlife.



Ring-necked Pheasant

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