

## **Loess Hills Cooperative Burn Week 2018**

### **Post-Event Summary**

Sponsored by the Loess Hills Fire Partners and held from March 19<sup>th</sup> through 23<sup>th</sup>, this event provided an opportunity to join with partners to achieve fire management in an area where extra hands or resources were needed to accomplish the work at scale. It was also an opportunity to build relationships with partners, share knowledge and skills, and work within a more complex organizational structure than usual through utilization of the Incident Command System. In addition, an NWCG S-211 Portable Pumps and Water Usage course was integrated into the week which incorporated both classroom and hands-on time focusing on water delivery and appliances.

The Cooperative Burn Week was based at the DNR Loess Hills State Forest with a focal area of Harrison and southern Monona Counties. Burn units on the Little Sioux Scout Ranch and DNR Loess Hills State Forest lands were identified as priorities for treatment, as well as additional agency and private lands in various counties. The first two days of the week were focused on the S-211 Portable Pumps class and field exercises. The weather was not conducive to burn conditions, thus creating great opportunities for other training. On Wednesday the 21<sup>st</sup>, the operational shift included burns on the target unit for the Little Sioux Scout Ranch in Monona County, as well as 4 units in eastern Pottawattamie County. Through continued drying conditions, Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> presented the opportunity to burn multiple units at three different locations simultaneously. We had participation from 68 personnel on Thursday, which allowed for the bigger units, more complex planning, and additional taskbook work.

A total of 75 people from 26 agencies or organizations, volunteers, and a volunteer fire department participated during the Cooperative Burn Week. Of these, 25 people took the S-211 Portable Pumps and Water Use course. Many individuals received evaluations for their FFT1 (squad boss) taskbooks and several served as burn boss trainees; other training included firing very pistols (flares), using fusees, learning new or different engine and UTV setups, portable pump set-up, and working within a complex burn organization with multiple divisions organized under the Incident Command System (ICS). Seven staff from multiple agencies served on the Incident Management Team in a variety of roles. See Appendix A for more detail regarding number of participants and acres treated.

Funding for this event was provided by The Nature Conservancy, the Loess Hills Alliance, and the participating agencies. These funders provided financial support for course materials and supplies, and for the assistance of the Conservation Corp of Iowa (CCI) crew during the burn week. Additional project support was provided by CCI through contribution of crew time for burn unit prep and by the participants and their agencies in the form of staff time and equipment. Other participants donated their personal time and labor to support this event during both unit prep, planning, and burn operations. The Loess Hills State Forest generously donated classroom, meeting, and storage space for the week. The Harrison County Conservation Board provided lodging space at their Willow Lake Recreation Area. Additional lodging was provided by the Little Sioux Scout Ranch for the week.

Participants have shared that the Cooperative Burn Week was a positive experience and was successful in achieving multiple objectives, including fire management goals, training, and improving

collaboration between partners in the Loess Hills region. The participation of 75 people, most of whom came from the Loess Hills, speaks to the high level of interest among partners in completing priority burn units and pursuing training and networking opportunities in the region. The attendance of several individuals from other regions of Iowa and Nebraska was a strong positive as well, as these participants are either state-wide collaborators in the land management community and/or brought unique and valuable experiences to share with local staff. Additionally, the interest and participation of volunteer fire department personnel was a major success of this event. It has long been a goal to better integrate with VFDs on prescribed fire operations, although success in that goal has been sometimes elusive. The use of an expanded Incident Management Team and the Incident Command System this year provide for a more organized and smoother running operation on burn days and during the entire week. A more detailed After Action Review of the event will be conducted at the next Loess Hills Fire Partners meeting in May 2017.

## Appendix A: Participants, Agencies, and Acres Treated

Participating Agencies/Organizations:

- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
  - Parks Division
  - Wildlife Division (3 units)
  - Law Enforcement
  - Research
  - Fire
  - AD/Volunteers
- Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
- Conservation Corps of Minnesota & Iowa
- Pottawattamie County Conservation Board
- Harrison County Conservation Board
- Mills County Conservation Board
- Monona County Conservation Board
- Plymouth County Conservation Board
- Woodbury County Conservation Board
- Pheasants Forever
- The Nature Conservancy
- Fontenelle Forest
- Loess Hills Preservation Society
- Doane University
- Iowa State University (Extension and students)
- Morningside College
- Grinnell College

Volunteer Fire Departments

- Missouri Valley Fire and Rescue

<b># of Participating Agencies/Orgs</b>	<b>26</b>
<b># of Participants (Agency/Org):</b>	<b>72</b>
<b># of VFD Departments</b>	<b>1</b>
<b># of VFD personnel</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total # of Participants:</b>	<b>75 (2094.5 Man-Hours logged)</b>

Burn Unit	Ownership	Location (County)	Day Completed	Acres
Overlook (Blacklining)	DNR	Monona	3/20/18	2
Little Sioux Scout Ranch	DNR/Private	Monona	3/21/18	80
FCPWA Young Hay #2	Pottawattamie CCB	Pottawattamie	3/21/18	26
FCPWA Young Dam	Pottawattamie CCB	Pottawattamie	3/21/18	3
FCPWA Riepe South	Pottawattamie CCB	Pottawattamie	3/21/18	72
FCPWA Riepe Hay #2	Pottawattamie CCB	Pottawattamie	3/21/18	15
Gramm Wetland West	Monona CCB	Monona	3/22/18	89
Gramm Wetland Central	Monona CCB	Monona	3/22/18	65
Mondamin Unit	DNR/Private	Harrison	3/22/18	536.7
Old Town Units 1-4	Harrison CCB/Private	Harrison	3/22/18	355
			<b>State/Org acres</b>	<b>1029.7</b>
			<b>Private acres</b>	<b>214</b>
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1243.7</b>

**Appendix B: Pictures**



*Firing operations on the Mondamin Unit, Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup>.*



*Farm Creek Public Wildlife unit, Wednesday the 21<sup>st</sup>.*

*Loess Hills Fire Partners, March 2018*



*Blacklining the DNR Overlook Deck, Monday the 19<sup>th</sup>.*



*The crew on the Mondamin unit, Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup>.*

*Loess Hills Fire Partners, March 2018*



*Participants in the S-211 Portable Pumps course, Monday the 19<sup>th</sup>.*



*Participants on Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup>.*

*Loess Hills Fire Partners, March 2018*