



## **Patch-Burn Grazing in the Bluestem Flint Hills and the Central States**

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Patch-burn grazing (PBG) is a grassland management practice designed to benefit wildlife habitat and livestock production through the application of prescribed fire to focus livestock grazing on a portion of a grazing unit with the objective of increasing vegetation diversity and structure. PBG creates a mosaic of heavily and lightly grazed areas thereby increasing vegetation structure and diversity on a single grazing unit. Livestock production research indicates PBG is producing cattle weight gains competitive with traditional management. PBG is an alternative to traditional intensive grazing systems but without constructing interior fencing. Post-fire regrowth attracts cattle to burned areas. Concurrently, the remainder of the unit receives light grazing, allowing rested plants to build structure and root mass. PBG positively effects habitat for turkey, prairie chicken, bobwhite quail, and grassland nesting birds. PBG may also advantage nectar producing plants and butterflies. In an effort to find the status of PBG acceptance, we surveyed NRCS standards by states. In 2007, only 4 of 17 states surveyed referenced PBG. Updating information for 2008. One Central Area Case Study included monitoring activities during the course of the experimental program include annual spring breeding bird survey, butterfly and nectaring plant inventory, fixed-point photography, and vegetation analysis and cattle production data.

2009. 62nd Society for Range Management Annual Meeting. Paper No. 1030-18.