



### **Benefits of Cool Season Green Fire Breaks:**

- Wide fuel breaks in strategic locations are one of the safest way for firefighters and suppression aircraft to work safely and successfully to contain a wind driven wildfire.
- In winter and early spring when wildfires often occur on the Texas plains cool season grasses are actively growing and not susceptible to die-back.
- These plants also provide increased forage for wildlife and livestock in winter and production of hay in late spring.
- Constructing firebreaks prior to a wildfire is a well-established technique, but wide patches of bare ground offer poor forage value and contribute to erosion.
- Planting cool season vegetation into firebreaks increased organic matter, soil moisture, and overall stability of the soil when compared to only disking or blading to create a fire break or bare dirt field.

### **Terms of establishment and maintenance:**

- This program requires these linear shaped fire breaks to be a minimum of 300 feet wide (3X maximum flame lengths). Whole field planting is allowable but maximum width (smaller side of the rectangular treatment area) cannot be more than 1,000 ft.
- Maximum reimbursement per landowner is \$8,000.00 which equates to 100 acres (examples: 300 ft by 14,553 ft or 1,000 ft by 4,356 ft)
- The program requires disking/tillage of the site if it is not already free of vegetation. Planting may be done by broadcast and re-disking but use of a grain drill to maximize seed to soil contact is preferred.
- Use of rubber tire equipment to mow/bush hog or otherwise prepare the site is an allowable expense.
- Brush clearing with heavy machinery, herbicide, fertilization, irrigation, fencing, and purchase of equipment are not required practices and are not eligible for reimbursement but are allowable at the discretion of the landowner and at the landowner's expense.
- Prescribed burning/crop burning is not an acceptable method for removing the vegetation under the terms and conditions.
- Grazing is allowable after establishment at the landowner's discretion.
- Haying, harvesting, grazing, or plowing under are required between May 1 and July 30 (warm season following planting) as part of the terms and conditions. This reduces the chance grasses becoming summer cured and contributing to fires.
- Consider using annual native species that don't add to unnecessary build-up of thatch into the spring/summer growing season
- Eligible cool season grasses for planting in this program are: Cereal Grains (Oats, Wheat, Rye), Annual Rye grass, native cool season annual grasses, or cool season legumes.
- Not Eligible to be planted on the project acres during the September 30 to December 30 planting window: Corn, soybean, peanuts, sorghum, Sudan, haygrazers, Johnson grass, and commercial sunflower.
- Invoices listing itemized costs are required at time of reimbursement. Reimbursement cannot exceed \$80 per acre.
- Cost Reimbursement Reporting Form must be used with list of requested items for reimbursement.
- Items/costs eligible for reimbursement are limited to: 1) Services of a contractor 2) Seed 3) Equipment rental 4) Fuel 5) Lubricants 6) Filters.