



Northern Harrier

# NCORPE Project - Public Lands & Programs Edition

NCORPE PUBLIC ACCESS PROGRAM - HUNTING

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)

Parking lots are placed on all portions of public access so please, as a safety precaution, do not park vehicles on the county roads.

Thank you to all on behalf of the NCORPE staff for the remarkable job, once again in 2018, of properly disposing of trash. This makes for a pleasant experience for everyone using the property and keeps an obligation to our neighboring land owners that NCOPRE public lands stay litter free. *Note: Trash cans are located in parking lots.*

*Pack it In, Pack it Out!*

On a regrettable note, the photo to the right depicts the waste of two game birds found on portions open to hunting access. As reminder it is the responsibility of the sportsman to properly care for harvested game. More importantly, this waste disrespects wildlife and hunters who remain diligent in the conservation of our

outdoor heritage. By respecting wildlife and the act of hunting this ensures future opportunities for generations to come.

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**

**2019 grazing opportunities**

**Land management update**

**Pasture Deferment Program update**

**2019 Intern announcement**



**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@umrd.org](mailto:bsellers@umrd.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

**GRAZING**

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

QUESTIONS:  
308-534:6752



## 2019 Grazing Opportunities

NCORPE is accepting sealed bids until February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019 for Summer Rx grazing opportunities. Five units are available for bidding. If bidding on multiple units, please specify individually the unit being bid on and its corresponding bid. The bids shall be submitted only once and no counter bidding will be available. All bids need to be mailed to:

NCORPE  
Attn: Summer Sealed Bid  
24871 S. Lone Star Rd.  
North Platte, NE 69101

**Prairie Reconstruction Project**

Cattle are used as tool for maintaining the health of warm season grasses.

**FAST FACTS**

**12,900 ac.**

of the NCORPE property will be available for bid grazing in 2019.



MANAGING PUBLIC LANDS



Rx Grazing

With the use of temporary electric fence grazing can control Downy brome aka Cheatgrass.



Re-seeding Project

Currently, the staff is evaluating the acres seeded in 2015 to determine the success rate of establishment. Approximately, 1,000 ac. of the original 3,500 ac seeded in 2014 will be re-seeded in 2019.

FAST FACTS

15%

of NCOPRE property will be utilized in 2019 for the Pasture Deferment Program.

84%

of the NCORPE property will be grazed in 2019 and 6% will be hayed.

PRESCRIBED GRAZING & HAYING OPPORTUNITIES

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

2018 Summary:

By spring of 2018 all 2014 seeded acres were evaluated for stand establishment. Success or failure was determined by using NRCS standard evaluation methods for grass-legume seedlings. This method required several samples within each previously irrigated circle, that is now seeded to a native grass mixture, to be taken and recorded on an evaluation form. Once the samples were collected they were analyzed in a spreadsheet to determine the overall average amount of seedlings per 3 sq. ft. per circle. This allowed for the determination of whether enough seedlings existed in a given circle to either propagate additional plants in the future or demonstrate complete establishment by the seeded species.

As spring wore on the NCORPE property had nearly 1,300 head of yearlings scattered out on 5,440 acres rotationally moving every seven days in order to combat the invasive cool-season grass Downy brome, aka Cheatgrass. Cheatgrass can severely impact warm-season grass seedling establishment and through time can even considerably impact remnant or existing pastureland. Meaning, pastures that are only grazed in the summer months can potentially lose productive acres to this nuisance species.

NCORPE provided a considerable amount of summer grazing opportunities in 2018 and had 5 separate participants utilize the available acres. This provided several aspects which benefited both the property and it's tenants. Foremost, the grazing process it's self yields improvements towards soil and plant health plus the facet of structural changes in vegetation which lend towards optimum wildlife habitat. Increased grazing and haying opportunities in 2019 will allow for the expanded use of the property in addition to the ability to apply several management techniques which will hopefully fulfill the overall goal for the property.

Several smaller projects were completed in the summer of 2018. A series of living fences were planted on all un-established acres bordering neighboring landowners with row crop fields. This concept consisted of plantings of Sorghum Sudan which would act as a catch and block system for any tumble weeds that may have been missed by previous control methods. NCORPE's weed control plan, which has several facets, was implemented early with aerial and ground herbicide sprayings occurring in May for Russian thistle.

Treatments for Leafy spurge and Canada thistle followed. Mechanical removal of Musk thistle began in mid-June and



Ring-necked Pheasant nest with eggs

persisted till July with the help of the McCook Work Ethic Camp inmates. The ability to work with the WEC staff and inmates over the last couple of years has been greatly appreciated by the NCORPE staff. Additional man power is imperative when trying to survey 17,536 grassland acres in a four-week period, much thanks to all involved from this great facility.

Looking into the future, the NCORPE staff is awaiting the outcome of a Nebraska Environmental Trust grant proposal. The proposal was for obtaining funds to purchase additional seed for the re-seeding project. The re-seeding project will begin in early 2019 and continue until 2021.



# 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.

# Intern Announcement

NCORPE Internship Vacancy  
Announcement

Salary: \$14.50 hr.

May-August 2019

Part-time and/or Full-time

## Organization:

*The Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement project (NCORPE – is a coalition of four Natural Resources Districts including Upper Republican, Middle Republican, Lower Republican and Twin Platte.*

## Description:

Overall goal of the internship is to assist with general operations of the NCORPE project.

Which includes assisting with range management duties and the implementation of wildlife habitat management on 19,000 acres of project property.

## Specific Duties:

General property upkeep; mowing, noxious weed control, trash collection, general repairs, fencing, and security. Activities will also include "hands on" habitat management, posting signs, wildlife surveys, environmental data collection, and outreach/education activities.

**Work Requirements:** (knowledge, skills and abilities)

Ability to communicate effectively, work as part of a team or as an individual (with limited supervision). Ability to operate large equipment, tractors, various implements (mowing, chemical application), load and haul equipment on trailers, ATVs, general power tools and/or shop equipment, etc. Computer skills including word processing and spreadsheets.

## Requirements:

**15 semester hours or the equivalent of post high school coursework/training in range management, wildlife management, animal science, horticulture, agronomy, natural resources and/or biology.**

**Valid driver's license.**

**TO APPLY:** Submit cover letter and resume to [bsellers@urnrd.org](mailto:bsellers@urnrd.org).



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*Project -*  
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