

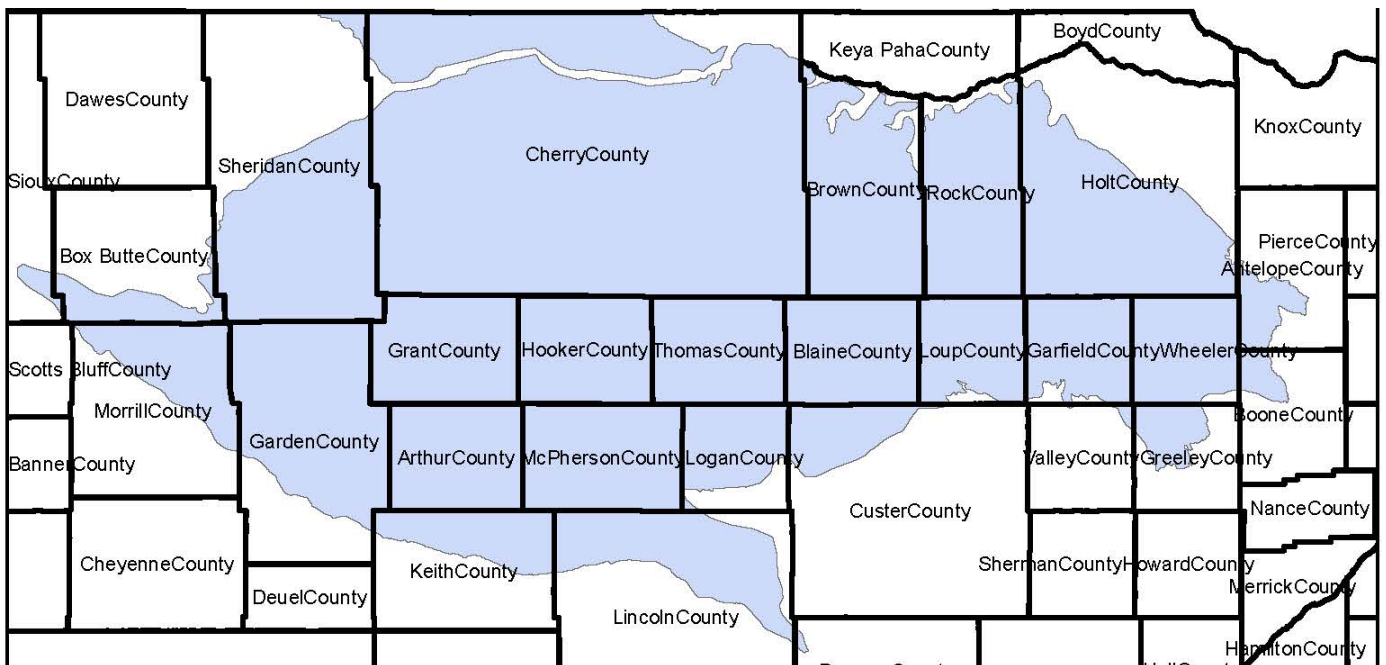


## Volunteer Fire Department Prescribed Fire Recognition Award - 2023

Once again, the Sandhills Task Force is offering a **Recognition Award** for all Sandhills-based Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs) for the 2023 prescribed fire season. VFDs who assist private landowners with prescribed fire to control invasive plants species, primarily eastern red cedar trees, are eligible.

Cedars are robbing ranchers of forage and they are disrupting native plant and animal populations. They are taking over many acres of the Nebraska Sandhills. Prescribed fire is a great tool that can be used to control invasive cedar trees, but some landowners feel they do not have the necessary protection to assure the fire does not escape. VFDs have equipment and volunteers that can help landowners safely conduct prescribed burns while simultaneously training VFD volunteers in use of equipment, fire behavior, fire weather implications, and more in a non-emergency setting. Controlling cedars with prescribed fire is proven to reduce the likelihood and severity of future wildfires, so helping burn cedars in a prescribed setting can pay dividends for VFDs. Local VFDs are staffed by busy volunteers that donate large amounts of personal time in service to their communities and budgets are very tight, so the Sandhills Task Force would like to recognize those VFDs who do assist in controlling cedar tree invasion using prescribed fire. Reimbursement will be at a rate of \$15 per burned acre, with a maximum payment of \$5,000 per VFD to spread the awards geographically. More than one VFD may split the award. Participation is defined as providing at least one truck and two trained personnel on a prescribed fire in the Sandhills. Personnel need to be actively involved.

The form on the next page must be fully completed, signed by the VFD Chief, and mailed or emailed to the address listed with a copy of the approved burn plan (including a map). WRP and CRP lands are not eligible. Private lands only. Funds are not available if a contractor is hired to complete the prescribed burn. Available funds are limited. Applications will be accepted on a continuous basis. Only complete applications will be considered. An application does not guarantee an award. The prescribed fire must be inside the boundary shown in the map below to be eligible for award.





## **Volunteer Fire Department Prescribed Fire Recognition Award**

### **Application Form**

VFD \_\_\_\_\_ Tax ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Landowners Names Assisted \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Description of RxBurns \_\_\_\_\_

Acres Burned \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Assistance \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Assistance (# of people, equipment, etc) \_\_\_\_\_

Chief's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Application is not complete without a copy of the burn plan(s) that meet state statues**

**MAIL OR E-MAIL THE COMPLETED FORM AND BURN PLAN TO:**

Sandhills Task Force, P.O. Box 482, Broken Bow, NE 68822  
Shelly Kelly - Phone: 308-214-0065 (call/text) - Email: [shelly@sandhillstaskforce.org](mailto:shelly@sandhillstaskforce.org)

*The Sandhills Task Force has been supporting private profitable ranching in the Nebraska Sandhills for the past 30 years. The STF Board of Directors is primarily comprised of Sandhills ranchers. Visit [www.sandhillstaskforce.org](http://www.sandhillstaskforce.org) to learn more.*