



SENATE BILL 355: North Carolina Farm Act of 2024, Sec. 8: Permanent Prescribed Burn Cost Share Program

2023-2024 General Assembly

Committee:		Date:	August 20, 2024
Introduced by:		Prepared by:	Kyle Evans Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	Sec. 8 of S.L. 2024-32		

OVERVIEW: Section 8 of S.L. 2024-32 codifies a new permanent prescribed burn cost share program for the purpose of supporting prescribed burns on privately owned forestlands. Reimbursement rates must set by the Board of Agriculture by rule, in consultation with the Forest Service, but the maximum allowable cost share reimbursement cannot exceed 75% based on program rate per acre caps. The program requires a General Fund appropriation to operate. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is directed to report on implementation of the program by January 15 of each even-numbered year to the chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources and the Fiscal Research Division.

This section becomes effective July 1, 2025.

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 10.9 of S.L. 2021-180 (Appropriations Act of 2021) created a prescribed burn matching grant program to support prescribed burns on privately owned forestlands that will maximize the benefits of prescribed burning. The program had a required match of one non-State dollar for every State dollar for each of the first 99 acres for a landowner for whom prescribed burns are conducted in a calendar year, and two non-State dollars for every State dollar for all other acres. \$1 million in nonrecurring revenue was appropriated for each of the 2021-22 and 2022-23 fiscal years. The nonrecurring appropriation was converted to a \$1 million in recurring revenue in 2022.

Section 8 of S.L. 2024-32 codifies a new permanent prescribed burn cost share program for the same purpose. Reimbursement rates must be set by the Board of Agriculture by rule, in consultation with the Forest Service, but the maximum allowable cost share reimbursement cannot exceed 75% based on program rate per acre caps. The program requires a General Fund appropriation to operate. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is directed to report on implementation of the program by January 15 of each even-numbered year to the chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources and the Fiscal Research Division.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This section becomes effective July 1, 2025.

Chris Saunders, Legislative Analysis Division, substantially contributed to this summary.

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