



**Texas A&M Forest Service- Cool Season Fire Break Grant**  
**Grant Funded Through USDA – Forest Service**  
**Award # 21-DG-11083148-001 & # 22-DG-11083148-001 CFDA: 10.664**

**Scope of Project:** The goal of this grant program is to reduce the negative impacts of wildland fires to communities on the plains of Texas. Projects will be located in the Panhandle, Northwest, West, and South Texas as defined by Texas A&M Forest Service Mitigation and Prevention Department and Applied Technology Department as high priority (see map for eligible counties). The projected outcome is to assist landowners by covering the costs of planting cool season fire breaks adjacent to and in strategic locations around communities at high risk from wind driven wildfires.

The great plains, rolling plains, and south Texas plains are a mostly flat or rolling landscape that is characterized by large wind driven wildfires. In the most extreme cases, these locations experience what is termed a Southern Plains Wildfire Outbreak. Fires that occur on these rangelands after previous wet cycles are often only contained when they reach a wide break in fuel like an agriculture field or recent burned scar, or the weather conditions moderate. Establishing wide fuel breaks planted in cool season grasses that are actively growing during the most common time of year for wind driven wildfires, is one strategy to reduce risk to communities.

Grant recipients in this program will be reimbursed for actual costs up to \$80 per acre for establishing a cool season fire break on their property. Work may be conducted by a hired contractor of the landowner's choosing or by the landowner themselves. Previous work conducted before agreement has been signed and a notice to proceed letter has been issued, will not be accepted. Individual landowners may submit more than one application. Only one application can be approved per landowner. If more applications are received than funding that is available, the applications will be reviewed on a competitive ranking system based on wildfire risk reduction criteria.

**Maximum Total Reimbursement per recipient:** Grant recipients will be reimbursed actual costs not to exceed \$80 per acre (see treatment descriptions below). Total limit of reimbursement per grant recipient is \$8,000. Reimbursable costs are limited to those expenditures listed below. Reimbursable expenses are only those that are directly related to preparation, plant, and establishment of the fuel break. The purchase of equipment is not reimbursable. Paid in full invoices are required documentation prior to our agency reimbursing actual costs. Use of the TAMFS Cost Reimbursement Reporting Form must be submitted along with invoices.



**Application Process:** This grant is competitive, and selection will be based on the goal of reducing wildfire risk to homes. Applications for the grant will open August 22, 2023 and application reviews will begin September 22, 2023. Applications received after September 22, 2023 will be reviewed on a case by case basis if unallocated funding is available. The applications will be reviewed by Texas A&M Forest Service Fuels Team and approved/declined based on the intent of the grant. Approval or declined notification letters for applicants will be mailed by October 9, 2023.

The landowner is required to complete all questions on the application to be considered. The packet requires a map of the proposed project area displaying property owner's boundary, location of proposed fuel treatment or fuel break, dimensions of treatment, and landowner name with aerial imagery as map background. A Texas A&M Forest Service employee can assist landowners in creating an adequate map if the landowner has questions. The Map My Property application from Texas A&M Forest Service's Texas Forest Info website, is an easy method to produce an adequate map.

If an application is received and approved, the landowner will receive an acceptance letter with a W-9 Tax Form and a program Terms of Conditions Form to be signed and returned to Texas A&M Forest Service. Once all documents are received by Texas A&M Forest Service, the landowner will receive a letter with a "Notice to Proceed" with establishing the fire break. Only after the "Notice to Proceed" has been completed may work begin.

A Texas A&M Forest Service staff member will reach out to schedule the pre-inspection. The Texas A&M Forest Service employee will take pre-treatment photos, confirm the dimensions of your project, and answer any remaining questions about the grant process.

After planting the landowner will contact Texas A&M Forest Service to schedule a post-inspection visit which will verify the work has been completed. The post-inspection will calculate acreage and verify dimensions were met in the approved location. After the post-inspection, the landowner must submit their receipts and invoices for reimbursement. Once the post-inspection is conducted and the reimbursement forms have been submitted, Texas A&M Forest Service will process all documentation and mail or direct deposit your reimbursement check.

For more information, visit our webpage: [tfsweb.tamu.edu/cppgrant](https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/cppgrant)  
or email us at [jgosschalk@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:jgosschalk@tfs.tamu.edu)

\*At all times during and after termination of this award, grant recipient shall, to the extent authorized under Texas law, indemnify and hold harmless Texas A&M Forest Service, The Texas A&M University System, its regents, officers, employees and affiliates against any claim, proceeding, demand, liability,





**Project Details**

Length of fire break: \_\_\_\_\_ Width of fire break: \_\_\_\_\_

Total acres of planted fire break: \_\_\_\_\_ acres.

*hint: length (ft.) \* width (ft.) / 43,560 (ft.<sup>2</sup>) = acres*

The applicant acknowledges that the fire break will be a minimum of 300 ft wide.

Estimated total cost to be reimbursed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Maximum is \$8,000)

*hint: total acres \* \$80 per acre = total cost*

**Project Planting Description:**

*Note: See Page 5 for details of establishment terms.*

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**Plan for removal of vegetation by summer:**

*Note: See page 5 for details of establishment terms.*

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**Attachments:**

- Project Map:** (<https://texasforestinfo.tamu.edu/mapmyproperty/> - free mapping tool)  
-Map Must Include:
  - Landowner Name
  - Property boundary
  - Outline of proposed fire break/planting site with dimensions
  - Aerial imagery as map background.
- 2 Pictures of project location showing proposed planting area** (Optional)



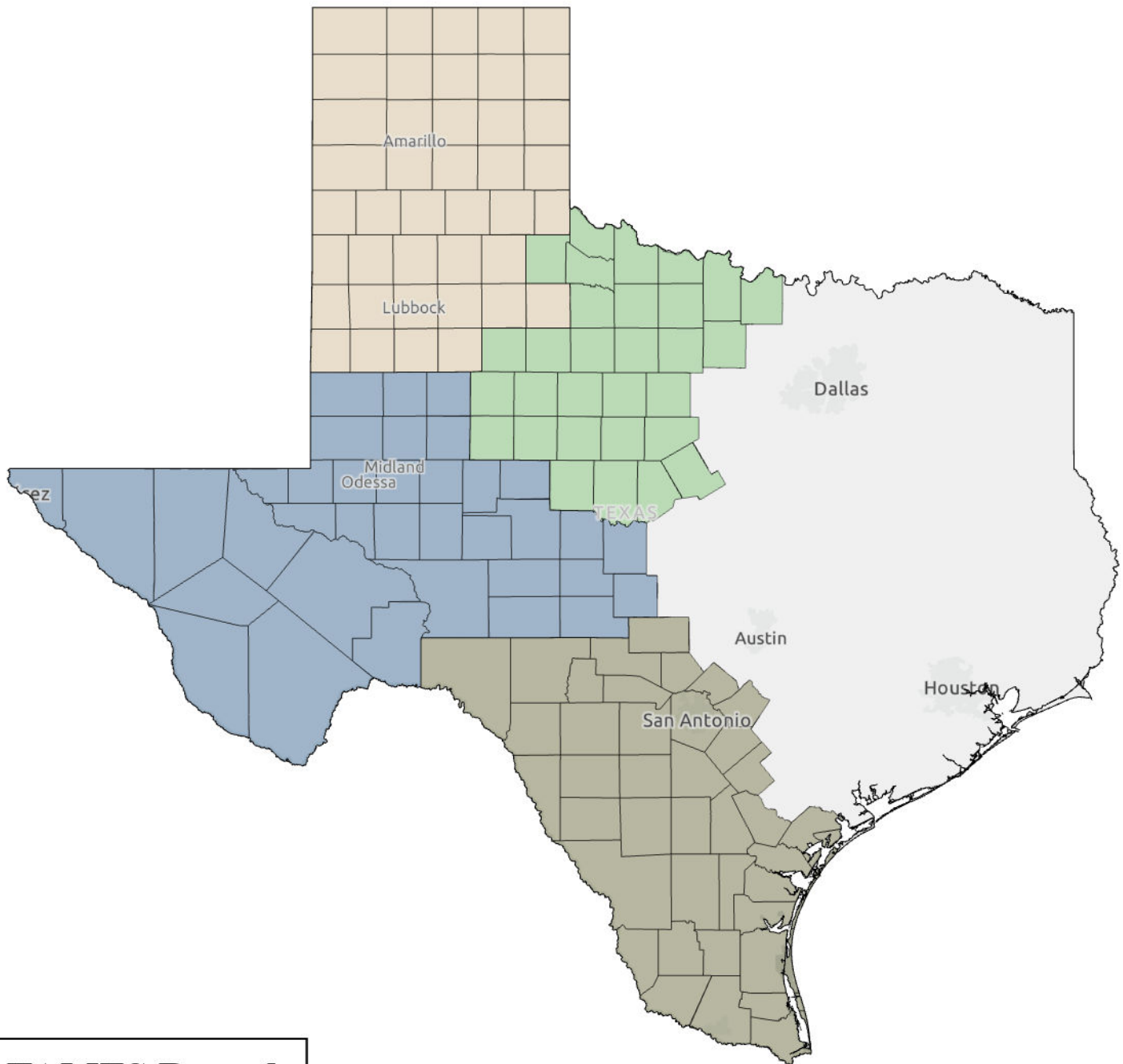
### **Benefits of Cool Season Green Fire Breaks:**

- 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.
- Brush clearing, 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.

# SFAM Cool Season Fire Break Eligible Counties



## TAMFS Branch

-  Northwest
-  Panhandle
-  South
-  West



**TEXAS A&M**  
**FOREST SERVICE**



## Texas A&M Forest Service- 2023-2024 Cool Season Fire Break Grant

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This federally funded grant can only be used for the reimbursement of costs to the grant recipient for creating the approved cool season green fire break. Reimbursable costs are limited to expenditures directly related to the preparation, planting, and establishment of the fuel breaks. This includes specifically the services of a contractor, rental of equipment, fuel and lubricants. **The purchase of equipment is not reimbursable.**

Grant recipients may be reimbursed up to the approved grant amount for actual costs associated with creating a cool season green fire break a minimum of 300 feet wide.

Recipient should notify Texas A&M Forest Service when the project has been completed. Recipient should contact [jgosschalk@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:jgosschalk@tfs.tamu.edu).

Breakdown of contractor invoice

Eligible Items	Description	Cost
Contractor hours, labor, etc?		
Equipment Rental		
Fuel		
Lubricants		
Seed		
<b>Total</b>		

**\*Copies of all receipts must be attached to this form**

**Email completed reimbursement form and all receipts to:**

**Jake Gosschalk**  
[jgosschalk@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:jgosschalk@tfs.tamu.edu)  
Texas A&M Forest Service