

## Issue Paper for Oregon Technical Advisory Committee

<b>Topic:</b>	Using Created Brush Piles as a CRP Management Activity	
<b>Presenter / Sponsor(s):</b>	Lois Loop, FSA	
<b>Issue Statement:</b>	All CRP and CREP contract require a mid-contract management activity as a requirement for approval. Wasco County FSA, with support from NRCS and the Wasco SWCD, has requested that created brush piles be eligible as a management activity.	
<b>Action Required:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review & Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Advice Requested	<input type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/> Other:: _____
<b>Background:</b>	This request was submitted to OTAC at the February 22, 2007 meeting. After explanation of the practice and discussion among the members it was decided that a subcommittee should meet to determine if the practice should be approved and, if so, should parameters should be put on the practice. Volunteers for the subcommittee are Sam Asai, Tom Hilken, Russ Hatz, Bruce Campbell and Lois Loop.	
<b>Progress / Current Status:</b>	<p>The subcommittee met on April 18, 2007. Bruce Campbell was not available due to workload issues but members attending were Sam Asai, Tom Hilken, Russ Hatz and Lois Loop. The question put to the sub-committee was whether there was sufficient reason for approving the creation of brush piles on Conservation Reserve Program lands as a management practice. The practice is being requested by the Wasco County Service Center to provide additional cover for small mammals and birds. It was also suggested that the brush piles should be a by-product of other land management activities such as thinning or juniper removal.</p> <p>Some of the concerns expressed were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is this cost-shared practice really needed when natural regeneration will eventually create cover</li> <li>• how are invasive weeds going to be controlled in areas of the brush pile when tillage cannot occur</li> <li>• if the practice is needed, is it needed in all areas of the state on all programs</li> </ul> <p>Sam Asai had previously made a field visit to look at an existing brush pile in Wasco County. He said that it made more sense once he saw how it was constructed and placed in a CREP area. It had more structure than what would typically be described as a brush pile. Russ pointed out that this is a widely-used practice through the nation as a component of upland wildlife habitat creation. He also explained that it is typically targeted toward a specific wildlife specie and it is up to the planner and the landowner to identify that specie.</p> <p>Tom's concern about invasive weed control was answered with the requirement that all CRP land must have noxious weed control as part of the maintenance requirement. Selective herbicides could be used to control any undesirable growth up through the pile.</p> <p>The Committee agreed to submit the proposal to the OTAC with the following provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the practice will be allowed in all counties in the state with the exceptions of:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Curry, Douglas, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Washington and Yamhill. It was determined that these counties will have sufficient natural regeneration to supply cover.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• can be used in riparian areas only if out of the flood plane in FSA zones 2</li> </ul>	

	<p>&amp; 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• should be used after initial establishment or between contract years 4-6</li><li>• NRCS will develop an Oregon specific job sheet and specifications.</li></ul>
<b>Technical / Staff Recommendation:</b>	Adoption of the management activity with the proposed guidelines.
<b>Attachment:</b>	None