Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM20 – Silvopasture for wildlife habitat

Enhancement Description

Silvopasture integrates trees, livestock, and forage into a single system on one site resulting in annual forage production for grazing and long-term products from trees. Although silvopastures can provide quality habitat for some species of wildlife, not all silvopastures are designed or managed to benefit wildlife. Manipulation of both the understory and overstory plant composition can enhance wildlife values while still providing livestock and forestry benefits.

Land Use Applicability

Pastureland and forestland.

Benefits

Integrating trees, forage and livestock creates a land management system to produce marketable products while maintaining long-term productivity. Economic risk is reduced because the system produces multiple products, most of which have an established market. When a landowner is also interested in providing habitat for wildlife, silvopasture designs and management can be modified to create structure and plant diversity which is attractive to many wildlife species including quail, wild turkey, nongame birds and other terrestrial wildlife.

Criteria

1. Identify wildlife species to be benefited by the silvopasture.
2. Inventory the habitat condition of the silvopasture, the farm, and adjoining farms to determine habitat needs for the targeted wildlife.
3. Develop a plan to enhance the silvopasture to provide habitat for the targeted species.
4. Use one or more of the following methods to improve habitat for the targeted species.
    a. Establish additional understory vegetation (e.g., native grass, forbs and shrubs) that will improve habitat conditions for the targeted species. Establish clusters of other tree species if needed as a food source (e.g., oaks for mast).
    b. Defer or manage grazing periods to enhance wildlife habitat during critical life cycle periods.
    c. Manage tree canopy to achieve the desired understory plant community.
    d. Leave some dead or dying trees as snags if cavity nesting wildlife is targeted.
    e. Remove trees or invasive plants that do not provide the desired habitat.
    f. Replace removed trees by planting new trees or shrubs that will provide the desired habitat.
    g. Thin less desirable trees to encourage the growth of trees that will provide the desired wildlife habitat.

Documentation Requirements

1. Brief written description of the tasks completed with dates and any receipts for planting stock, herbicides, etc.
2. Delineations on a map or aerial photo of silvopasture.

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Additional guidance for silvopasture:

Wildlife Friendly Species
These are shrubs and trees that are known to favor the kinds of wildlife typically adapted to sites suitable for silvopasture. These species include all native perennial plant species typically represented by a diverse mixture as described in the representative ecological site description. Appropriate native grasses and forbs will depend on site conditions and intended use (e.g., wildlife species benefitted). Native shrubs include chokecherry, golden current, shrubby cinquefoil, juniper, serviceberry, woods rose, silver buffaloberry, redosier dogwood, native willow sp. Native trees include cottonwood, water birch, quaking aspen, Douglas and black hawthorn and tree willows. Introduced woody species include Nanking cherry, cotoneaster and Siberian peashrub.

For additional information, refer to the following documents:

Idaho NRCS Plant Materials Technical Note 24, *Grass, Grass-like, Forb, Legume and Woody Species for the Intermountain West.* ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ID/programs/technotes/tn24_seedspecies

Idaho NRCS Plant Material Technical Note 24, Supplement: *Intermountain Planting Guide*, USDA-ARS Forage and Range Research Lab/Utah State Extension, AG 510. ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ID/programs/technotes/tn24supplement.

Idaho NRCS Plant Materials Technical Note 32, *Native Shrubs and Trees for Riparian Areas.* ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ID/programs/technotes/riparian_woodys.pdf

NRCS National Range and Pasture Handbook, *Chapter 8 – Wildlife Management on Grazing Lands*. http://www.glti.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/publications/nrph.html

USDA National Agroforestry Center, Agroforestry Note 26, *Converting a Pasture to a Silvopasture System in the Pacific Northwest*. http://www.unl.edu/nac/agroforestrynotes/an26s05.pdf

USDA National Agroforestry Center, Agroforestry Note 38, *Landscape Planning for Environmental Benefits*. http://www.unl.edu/nac/agroforestrynotes/an38g10.pdf

USDA National Agroforestry Center, *Working Trees for Wildlife.*
http://www.unl.edu/nac/workingtrees/wtw.pdf

This activity may NOT be used with the following enhancements: ANM15, ANM21, ANM22, PLT01, PLT05, PLT10, SQL07

Potential duplicate practices: 528 – Prescribed grazing, 612 – Tree and shrub establishment, 512 – Pasture and hay planting, 666 – Forest stand improvement