



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

E314A

Brush management to improve wildlife habitat

Conservation Practice 314: Brush Management

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture, Range, Forest, Associated Ag Land

RESOURCE CONCERN: Plants; Animals

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 10 years

Enhancement Description

Brush management is employed to create a desired plant community, consistent with the related ecological site steady state, which will maintain or enhance the wildlife habitat desired for the identified wildlife species. It will be designed to provide plant structure, density and diversity needed to meet those habitat objectives. This enhancement does not apply to removal of woody vegetation by prescribed fire or removal of woody vegetation to facilitate a land use change.

Criteria

- This enhancement will be applied in a manner to achieve the desired control of the target woody species while protecting the desired species through mechanical, chemical, or biological methods, alone or in combination. NRCS will not develop biological or chemical treatment recommendations except for biological control using grazing animals. NRCS may provide clients with acceptable biological and/or chemical control references.
- Identify wildlife species of concern and landscape specific brush habitat functionality that is consistent with the related ecological site steady state or another desired state that will meet the objective.
- Brush management will be planned and applied in a manner to meet the habitat requirements for wildlife species of concern as determined by the state's NRCS Wildlife Habitation Evaluation Guide (WHEG).



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- Evaluate wildlife habitat with the state NRCS WHEG and manage for a value of 0.60 or greater.
- Brush management will be designed to achieve the desired plant community based on species composition, structure, density, and canopy (or foliar) cover or height.
- Conduct treatments during periods of the year that accommodate reproduction and other life-cycle requirements of target wildlife and pollinator species.



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Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- Prior to implementation, meet with NRCS to complete the Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) evaluation at the site.
- Prior to implementation, determine and write down clear objectives for brush management and implementation of this enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, develop a map delineating the areas to be treated and enrolled in this enhancement.
- During implementation, maintain records of applied treatments (pesticide used, rate applied, timing, etc.) and grazing restrictions. The records must support the label requirements for re-entry or grazing restrictions when applicable.
- After implementation, reassess habitat condition with NRCS using the WHEG.
- After implementation, provide records for review by NRCS to verify enhancement was implemented to meet criteria.

NRCS will:

As needed, provide technical assistance to participant as requested.

- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Brush Management (Code 314) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, confirm brush management and grazing management plan objectives clearly identify the wildlife of concern for the area.
- Prior to implementation, meet with participant to complete WHEG evaluation at the site.

Existing WHEG score = _____ Planned Post Implementation WHEG score = _____

- Prior to implementation, NRCS will make cover or density measurements at georeferenced transects on key areas within the treatment area.
- After implementation, NRCS will return to georeferenced area to measure cover or density and report the results.
- After implementation, review records to verify participant implemented enhancement to meet criteria.



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- After implementation, review record of applied treatment (pesticide used, rate applied, timing, etc.) and grazing restrictions.
- After implementation, reassess habitat condition using the Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide.
Post Implementation WHEG score = _____

NRCS Documentation Review:

I have reviewed all required participant documentation and have determined the participant has implemented the enhancement and met all criteria and requirements.

Participant Name _____ Contract Number _____

Total Amount Applied _____ Fiscal Year Completed _____

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature

Date



WASHINGTON SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

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References/Criteria for Brush Management Practice (314) Enhancements.

Brush Management References:

NRCS Brush Management (314) Practice Standard is located in the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 4-Practice Standards and Supporting Documents/Brush Management (314) folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>

Brush Management (314) Planner Guide provides guidance for the planning and implementation of brush management. It can be found in the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 4-Practice Standards and Supporting Documents/Brush Management (314) folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>

Washington State Pervasive Weed Species – Species which multiple treatments are allowed under Brush Management (314). It can be found in the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 4-Practice Standards and Supporting Documents/Brush Management (314) folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>

Pacific Northwest Weed Management Handbook - A reference for weed control practices and herbicides used in various cropping systems and sites in Idaho, Oregon and Washington. <https://pnwhandbooks.org/weed/about>

Ecological Site Descriptions and Forage Suitability Groups can be found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA> in Section 2. For planning unit ecological sites and forage suitability groups see next item.

Soil information, including productivity, **Ecological Sites and Forage Suitability Groups** for planning unit soils can be found by using the **Web Soil Survey** <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>



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Wildlife References and WHEG's:

Washington State's Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) is **Biology Technical Note 14 Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG)**. It can be found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 1/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Biology folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>

Use the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) **Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) database** to identify priority wildlife and habitat in your area.
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/mapping/phs/>

For Washington State's **Sage Grouse Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG), and other species specific WHEG's**, – contact the NRCS State Biologist for the current guide.

Biology Technical Note 24 Plants for Pollinators in the Inland Northwest, Revised 2016 for appropriate plant species east of the Cascade Mts. and for guidance on establishing pollinator habitat. **FOTG** Section 1/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Biology.
<https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>