



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E612C

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Establishing tree/shrub species to restore native plant communities

CONSERVATION PRACTICE: 612 - Tree/Shrub Establishment

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Forest

RESOURCE CONCERN: Animals, Plants

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 15 years

Enhancement Description

Establish trees and/or shrubs to restore elements of plant communities and diversity that have been lost. Restoring stand-level diversity and function improves health and vigor through planting resilient and/or resistant native plant communities. Additional benefits include providing diversity in wildlife habitat and forage.

Criteria

- States will apply criteria from the NRCS National Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Establishment (Code 612), and any additional criteria as required by the NRCS State Office.
- Species selected for planting will be native to the site and will create a successional state that progresses toward the identified target plant community.
- To enhance native plant diversity, select a minimum of three different species of trees and/or shrubs to be planted. An exception is in situations where a native lost species is being restored to a fully-stocked forest stand. (i.e., American chestnut). Selection of species should also be chosen according to the site's natural disturbance regime. Species should be selected based on traits, successional status, structure, and composition.
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- Build forest resilience by favoring existing species that are better adapted to projected future climate conditions, and by enhancing relative compositional and structural diversity.
- Do not plant species on the Federal or State invasive species or noxious weed lists.
- Only viable, high-quality and site-adapted planting stock or seed will be used.
- A precondition for tree/shrub establishment is appropriately prepared sites. Refer to criteria in NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (Code 490).
- Implementation and timing of planting will be appropriate for the site and ensure successful establishment.
- Planting must be protected from unacceptable adverse impacts from insects, disease, wildlife, and/or fire. Apply supporting practices and treatments to protect establishing trees and shrubs, as necessary.
- Each site will be evaluated to determine if mulching, supplemental water, or other treatments (e.g., tree protection devices, shade cards, weed mats) will be needed to assure adequate survival and growth.
- The enhancement will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and with States' Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality.

Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- ☐ Prior to implementation:
 - provide an updated Forest Management Plan that documents intended objectives for restoring native plant communities.
 - select a combination of at least three native tree/shrub species that will increase plant and stand diversity.

Species	Note selected species characteristic(s)



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- ☐ During implementation:
 - install and maintain erosion control measures as needed for the site.
 - protect the planting(s) from plant and animal pests and fire.
 - notify NRCS in writing of any planned changes to verify changes meet NRCS enhancement criteria.

TASK	Species	Species	Species
Planting Date			
Planting Technique			
Arrangement/Spacing			

NRCS will:

- ☐ Prior to implementation:
 - provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (Code 490) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
 - verify the enhancement is planned for the appropriate land use.
 - provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Establishment (Code 612) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
 - verify no plants on the Federal or state noxious weeds list are included.
 - NRCS will provide Technical Assistance, as needed, in the following:
 - Selecting a combination of species to meet enhancement criteria.
 - Selecting planting techniques, arrangement and spacing design, and timing appropriate for the site and soil conditions.
 - Planning the use of additional erosion control for the site, as needed.
 - Preparing specifications for applying this enhancement for each site using approved state implementation requirements, national technical notes, appropriate state technical notes, and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.
- ☐ During implementation:
 - evaluate any planned changes to verify they meet the enhancement criteria and were established to specifications developed for the site.



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- ☐ After implementation:
- verify the plantings were protected from plant and animal pests and fire.
 - verify all erosion control needed for the site is functioning and is maintained to specifications developed for the site.

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

Alabama Supplemental Guidance for CSP Enhancement

2025 CSP ENHANCEMENTS – GUIDANCE & PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATION

ENHANCEMENT NUMBER AND TITLE:

E612C – Establishing tree/shrub species to restore native communities

Conservation Practice 612: Tree/shrub Establishment

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ENHANCEMENT: Establish trees and/or shrubs to restore elements of plant diversity that have been lost through past diseases or improper management.

Please note, the criteria listed on page 2 of the enhancement stating “A minimum of three different species of trees and/or shrubs should be planted. An exception is in situations where a lost species is being restored to a fully-stocked forest stand (i.e., American elm, American chestnut).” **For Alabama the lost species include longleaf pine, shortleaf pine, and white oak, all other species must be approved by the NRCS State Staff Forester.** Containerized seedlings are required for all pine plantings. General spacing recommendations for longleaf pine & shortleaf pine are 600+ trees per acre, white oak is 12’ x 10’ or 363 trees per acre, however, acceptable alternative spacings are shown below. For shortleaf/longleaf plantings in areas of Alabama that have extremely poor pulpwood markets, lower spacings can be approved on a case by case basis by the state staff forester.

- I. ***Pine spacing guidance:*** Longleaf and shortleaf pine trees planted for production of wood products, enhancing wildlife habitat and carbon storage will be planted at spacings which allow between 518 and 726 trees per acre.

Some acceptable spacings include:

7 x 12’ = 518

9 x 9’ = 537

8 x 10’ = 545

7 x 11’ = 565

6 x 12’ = 605

7 x 10’ = 622

6 x 10’ = 726

Hardwood spacing guidance. Hardwood trees planted for production of wood products, carbon storage and wildlife habitat will be planted at spacings which allow between 363 and 565 trees per acre.

Some acceptable spacings include:

12 x 12 = 302

11 x 12 = 330

11 x 11 = 360

10 x 12 = 363

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9 x 12' = 403

15 x 7' = 414

10 x 10' = 435

9 x 11' = 436

8 x 12' = 454

9 x 10' = 484

8 x 11' = 495

7 x 12' = 518

9 x 9' = 537

8 x 10' = 545

7 x 11' = 565

Additional requirements for this enhancement: All appropriate site preparation required for good survival of planted trees will be implemented. At a minimum, herbicide site prep application will be completed. Additional site preparation, determined by a conservation planner with expertise in tree planting site preparation, will be required if the planner determines it necessary. These could include mechanical site preparation and/or prescribed burning.

Enhancement eligibility: All tree planting enhancements must meet requirements for eligibility; cutover or open land with no trees obviously meets the eligibility criteria. Other examples include severely understocked stands for various reasons such as drought, insect or disease problems, storm damage are also eligible. Sometimes issues such as southern pine beetle, pine decline, littleleaf disease, and annosus root rot will damage a stand so badly that a timber sale may not be possible. In addition, landowners that have standing timber on an area with a timber sale contract in hand that has been signed by both parties (buyer and seller) to remove all standing timber on specific site will meet eligibility. Timber sale contract must describe the area to be harvested, the price of the timber and a deadline of not more than 12 months from the date of ranking the application.

ATTACH COPIES OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTS AS NOTED BY THE ENHANCEMENT JOB SHEET. CHECK THE BOX OR OTHERWISE IDENTIFY THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION.

- ☐ MAPS OF THE AREA or LOCATION(S) WHERE TREE PLANTING OCCURED
- ☐ LIST ACRES (BY STAND) WHERE TREE PLANTING OCCURED
- ☐ COMPLETED Alabama Job Sheet Nos. AL490B, AL612C and AL643 – 5 (found on the eFOTG guide)
- ☐ REPRESENTATIVE DIGITAL IMAGES/PHOTOS OF THE AREA AND INDICATE AREA ON MAP
- ☐ DATES OF COMPLETED ACTIVITY

Alabama Supplemental Guidance for CSP Enhancement

The attached documents support the full implementation of this Conservation Stewardship Enhancement.

CSP Participant Name

Date