



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY
E612132Z

CONSERVATION
STEWARDSHIP
PROGRAM

Establishing tree/shrub species to restore native plant communities

Conservation Practice 612: Tree/shrub Establishment

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Forest; Range: Associated Ag Land

RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Degraded Plant Condition

PRACTICE LIFE SPAN: 15 YEARS

Enhancement Description:

Establish trees and/or shrubs to restore elements of plant diversity that have been lost through past diseases or improper management. For example, disease-resistant varieties of elm and chestnut can be established to restore the ecological functions of American elm and American chestnut. At the stand level, past forest management may have eliminated certain native tree species. Restoring stand-level diversity and function addresses a wide array of resource concerns and strengthens ongoing management activities. This enhancement improves a forest that is already in good condition by increasing plant diversity, and improving health and vigor through adding plants with resistance to disease, pests, or other local hazards. Additional benefits include contributing to carbon storage, and providing diversity in wildlife habitat and food sources.

Criteria:

States will apply general criteria from the NRCS National Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) 612 as listed below, and additional criteria as required by the NRCS State Office.

- Trees/shrubs selected for planting will be adapted to site conditions and suited for the restoration of stands where past impacts of disease and/or pests has reduced species diversity.
- No trees on the Federal or state noxious weeds list, or trees known to be aggressive and/or potentially invasive in the local area, shall be planted.



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- 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).
- Trees/shrubs selected must be of good quality. Only viable, high-quality and adapted planting stock or seed will be used.
- Proper planting dates and care in handling and planting the trees/shrubs will ensure an acceptable rate of survival.
- Selection of planting technique and timing will be appropriate for the site and soil conditions.
- Planting density will be adequate to accomplish the long-term goal for the property.
- Survival surveys must be conducted to determine if targeted goals are met.
- A precondition for tree/shrub establishment is appropriately prepared sites. Refer to criteria in NRCS Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (Code 490).
- Refer to criteria in CPS Integrated Pest Management (Code 595) to assist with site-specific strategies for pest prevention, pest avoidance, pest monitoring, and pest suppression. Protect plantings from competition from invasive plants and other environmental stressors.
- 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 Requirements:

- Site suitability (from WebSoil Survey); list the plant species to be planted.
- Map delineating the treated areas, dates completed and their size
- The method utilized to plant the trees/shrubs.



- Evidence to support the treatment activities were completed, including representative photos, receipt from contractor etc. Location of representative photos must be indicated on the map.
- Specifications shall be prepared and recorded using the appropriate job sheet, technical note or narrative statement to document the objectives of the tree planting efforts.
- Additional documentation as required by NRCS State Office.

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