

Conservation Practice Standard Overview

Forest Stand Improvement (666)

Forest stand improvement involves the manipulation of forest species composition and structure by cutting or killing selected trees and understory vegetation.

Practice Information

This practice applies to forestland where competing vegetation interferes with the growth of preferred tree and understory species. Preferred plants are identified and retained to achieve the desired composition and structure of the forest stand.

Specifications for this practice include defining the spacing, density, and number or area of preferred plants. Timing of treatment and retaining dead or dying trees will help minimize impacts on nesting birds and other wildlife. Food and cover for desired wildlife species may be enhanced by modifying tree and understory composition and spacing.

Conservation benefits may include but are not limited to:

- improved plant health and productivity,
- reduced susceptibility to pests and moisture stress,
- reduced wildfire hazard,
- improved wildlife habitat,
- increased water yield, improved water quality, or beneficial timing of flows,
- increased carbon storage.



Common Associated Practices

Forest Stand Improvement (666) is commonly applied with practices such as Woody Residue Treatment (384), Integrated Pest management (595), Brush Management (314), Herbaceous Weed Control (315), Access Control (472), Critical Area Planting (342), Firebreak (394), Fuel Break (383), Forest Trails and Landings (655), Access Road (560), Prescribed Burning (338), Tree/Shrub Pruning (660), Upland Wildlife Habitat Development (645), Early Successional Habitat Development/Management (647), Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitats (643), Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644), and various erosion control practices.

For further information, contact your local NRCS field office.