

(647) Early Successional Habitat Development and Management— Edge Feathering

FY 2017 Environmental Quality Incentives Program Requirement Sheet

A site- and species-specific wildlife habitat management plan is preferred for all EQIP applications. If no such plan has been approved by the NRCS area biologist or NRCS partner biologist, the conservation planners must follow this requirement sheet to address limiting habitat factors identified in the TN NRCS Wildlife Habitat Appraisal Guide (WHAG).

EQIP Edge Feathering (647) Practice Requirements:

1. The woodland edge will be opened to increase sunlight reaching the forest floor. Minimum width shall be 50 feet. Maximum width shall be 120 feet.
2. The site shall be immediately adjacent to a field, road, or open right-of-way.
3. Natural regeneration is acceptable on all slopes; however, erosion must be controlled at all times, if necessary.
4. The Edge Feathering area will be divided into two zones, Zone A and Zone B. Each zone will be approximately 50 percent of the total width.
5. Zone A will be nearest the open edge. The area shall be thinned with approximately 75 percent of the canopy (both overstory and midstory) vegetation removed, leaving approximately 25% canopy cover remaining following treatment).
6. Zone B will have approximately 50 percent canopy cover remaining after treatment.
7. Low quality timber species (e.g. red maple) may be treated with an approved herbicide to prevent re-sprouting without financial assistance, if the species also has minimal wildlife value.
8. The preferred method of feathering should be to harvest, or fell and leave the tree, allowing the stump to re-sprout with multiple stems to create “shrubby” habitat for several years. Some trees may be chemically deadened and left as standing snags, but the number of standing dead snags per acre should not exceed 10 and standing snags should not be created along roads or high traffic areas.
9. Felled and left trees should be downed parallel to the open edge or may be cut and loosely stacked along the edge but should not be pushed into dense piles.
10. Use herbicides in accordance with the label. NRCS will not provide herbicide recommendations.