

## Practices for Improving Forest Health and Composition



Above: a typical stand needing mechanized patch cutting for regeneration.

### Timber Stand Improvement Requirements

- ✓ All areas need an updated forest management plan approved by NRCS and UNH.
- ✓ The trees to be cut are less than 10" DBH
- ✓ *Productive Soils*, Important Forest Soil Groups (IA and 1B (hardwoods) , IC for White Pine, IIB (bedrock where ledge is > 40" from surface), or Site Index > 50
- ✓ The ratio of Acceptable Growing Stock (AGS) to Unacceptable Growing Stock (UGS) is improved after the cut.
- ✓ All cost shared improvement cutting must be completed on schedule in the NRCS contract (typically within 3 years) regardless of markets.

**Marking-** \$68 per acre (at 75% cost share) must be done by a NH licensed forester.

Used for marginal commercial sales as the only practice or in combination with TSI @ \$300 per acre for cost negative improvement cutting.

*The forester can mark the cut trees, crop trees, or delineate patch cuts. All prescriptions need to be painted prior to cutting to be eligible for NRCS cost share payments. NRCS can make payment on the marking scenario and the cutting scenario on the same acre.*

### Management Options

**Hand Crew** For releasing crop trees >30 AGS per acre) and/or for removing UGS understory trees after a commercial harvest to improve regeneration.

### Mechanized Improvement Cutting-

- ✓ All Patch Cuts Must have an identified species for regeneration with appropriate seed trees and patch sizes. For more info please see: <http://extension.unh.edu/goodforestry/html/2-3.htm>
- ✓ For patch cutting undesirable species of poor quality and form (cull trees, beech, hemlock, pasture pine, etc) with longer skid distances (>2000 ft) and volumes <40 Tons per acre.
- ✓ Improvement cutting can be done after commercial harvest or during.
- ✓ Severing all undesirable species from patch cuts, shelterwoods or seed tree cuts, including species ½"-2" in diameter.

**Herbicide Option** (*Brush Management- Moderate Chemical*), this scenario can be used to control invasive plants and undesirable species. This payment is for two foliar applications of herbicide. Landowners may apply herbicide to their own land but are strongly encouraged to hire a NH licensed applicator. Permits are required for wetlands, shorelands, aquatic habitats, near public drinking water supplies (surface waters or wells) and it is NRCS policy to require a permit and licensed applicator in these environments. NRCS reserves the right to determine when herbicide should be used, and the seasonality. Plants must be actively growing and the final dates for spraying are around Mid to Late September (early Sept in Coos) depending on weather.

**This practice is used to control invasive plants anywhere and to control undesired tree species within improvement cuts.**

Stump application is allowable in combination with a hand crew, as the herbicide needs to be applied immediately to the freshly cut stump, but the higher expense is at the landowners choice.