

**Plant Enhancement Activity – PLT25 – Prune low density pine or hardwood trees to improve tree quality and wildlife habitat**



**Enhancement Description**

This enhancement is to enrich the health and productivity of individual trees, while improving other resources such as recreation, timber value, and aesthetics through the use of a silvicultural technique--pruning.

**Land Use Applicability**

Forestland

**Benefits**

Pruning improves tree quality by training the tree to a single straight stem and developing more valuable knot free trunks, and allowing sunlight to the forest floor stimulating herbaceous plants. The activity may also reduce wildfire hazard by removing ladder fuels.

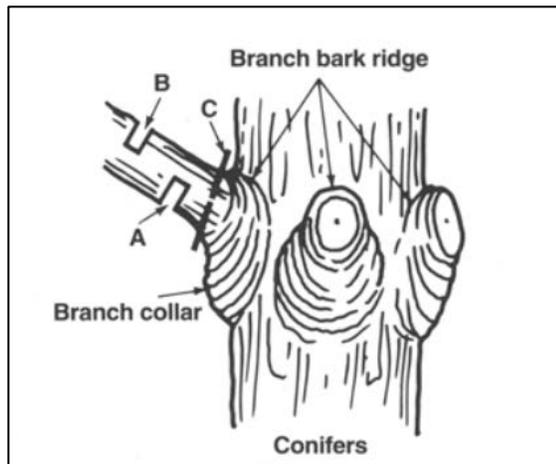
**Conditions Where Enhancement Applies**

This enhancement applies to all forest land use acres.

**Criteria**

Implement the following:

1. Apply to young hardwood or pine stands with low density stocking (i.e., less than 400 trees/acre) which have a significant number of branches within 8 feet of the ground, indicating that natural pruning is not occurring.
2. Apply proper pruning techniques:
  - a. Cut only the branch wood leaving the trunk wood to grow over and close the pruning wound.
  - b. The three-cut method shown below reduces the risk of the pruned branch peeling trunk bark off as it falls.



3. Prune a minimum of 75 crop trees/acre with straight trunks to a minimum of 8 feet with live healthy crowns.
4. Leave a live crown ratio of at least 33 percent live crown
5. Use pruning saws or loppers
6. Prune during the dormant season

**Adoption Requirements**

The enhancement is considered adopted when the above criteria has been applied on the land use acre.

**Documentation Requirements**

1. Inventory of trees to be pruned (species, number per acre)
2. Map locating the forested area (s) that pruning activities were performed.
3. Representative digital images/photos of the area showing before and after treatments.

**References**

NRCS, 2006. Agroforestry Notes 31. Silvopasture tree Pruning. National Agroforestry Center

Shigo, A.L., 1986. A New Tree Biology and Dictionary: Facts, Photos, and Philosophies on trees and their problems and proper care. Shigo and Trees, Associates, LLC.