

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

**EARLY SUCCESSIONAL HABITAT DEVELOPMENT/MANAGEMENT**

(Ac.)

**SPECIFICATION**

**CODE 647**

**Cut-Back Borders**

A. The minimum width for a cut-back border is 30 feet. Generally, 50 feet will be the maximum width to benefit non-forest wildlife. When managing early successional habitat for forest wildlife, 300 will be the maximum width for a cut-back border.

B. Establish cut-back borders by one of the following methods:

1. For narrow cut-back borders (maximum 50 ft. width) either:
  - a. Clear cut all trees and shrubs except mature mast-producing trees such as oaks or hickories and hollow den trees. Construct brush piles or windrows by crisscrossing trunks and larger branches, then piling smaller branches on top.
  - b. Cut only trees and shrubs whose very tops will touch the open field when cut. Cut even mast-producing and hollow den trees.
2. For wide cut-back borders (maximum 300 ft. width) clear cut trees and invasive shrubs, leaving 10 to 25 trees of 10 inches diameter or greater (at breast height) per acre. When oaks, hickories, cherries, or black locust and hollow den trees 10 inches or greater are present, leave these trees.

**January 2013**