

Downed Tree Structure

Job Sheet

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC)
University Outreach and Extension – The School of Natural Resources

DOWNED TREE STRUCTURES PROVIDE TEMPORARY WOODY COVER FOR BOBWHITE QUAIL

PURPOSE:

Downed tree structures provide a temporary source of woody cover in areas where shrubby cover is lacking. Downed tree structures also provide an immediate source of shrubby cover while new shrub plantings become established. Shrubby cover is often the missing habitat component for bobwhite quail in warm-season grass fields. Structures should be placed next to early-successional vegetation such as managed wildlife friendly grasses/legumes and tilled soil in order to be most effective.



SPECIFICATIONS:

- A downed tree structure should be located every 5-40 acres adjacent to wildlife friendly grasses/legumes and tilled soil.
- Downed tree structures should be used to enhance new shrub plantings or placed in large fields with inadequate shrubby cover.
- Plant shrubs in and around structures. Plant shrub dogwoods, American plum, blackberry, indigo bush or aromatic sumac. A mix of plants provides vegetative diversity. Plant shrubs 5 X 5 feet.
- Place at least 3 downed trees in each structure. Downed trees should be a minimum of 20 feet in height and well branched.
- Downed trees should not be pushed into dense piles. Do not create small, dense brush piles. Simply drag the downed trees into a loose arrangement.
- Structures should be placed on bareground or on areas where herbaceous vegetation is controlled.
- Oak, hickory, cedar and hedge make good downed tree structures.

MAINTENANCE:

- Exclude livestock from downed tree structures.
- Use herbicides to suppress invasive vegetation and to control noxious weeds.
- Enhance structures by periodically adding downed trees.

PRIMARY HABITAT CONSIDERATIONS:

- Provide a natural cover source for quail and other wildlife.

