

Forest Stand Improvement for Wildlife

Job Sheet

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

WHAT IS FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT FOR WILDLIFE?

PURPOSE: Forest Stand Improvement for wildlife is a forest management technique used to remove unwanted trees from an area in order to improve forest stand composition. This process opens up the canopy so that more sunlight can reach the ground providing increased plant growth in the understory. This improves understory plant diversity which benefits wildlife habitat.



SPECIFICATIONS:

- The thinning procedure should minimize damage to the land and remaining trees.
- Thin to 60 percent stocking or less to encourage fuller crown development, increased seed production and heavier herbaceous plant development. **Follow stand specific recommendation on page 2.**
- Favor hard-mast producers (oak, hickory, pecan and walnut) and conifers.
- Leave or establish seven snags and seven den trees per acre, ranging in size from six to 20 inches Diameter Breast Height (DBH).
- Leave four to six vines per acre. Favor trees with vines that will be left as den trees or oak species greater than 10 inches DBH.
- Create three or four brushpiles per acre using material removed during improvement work. Include hinged, partially cut “living” brushpiles to provide long-lived shelter.

MAINTENANCE:

- Periodically take out dead or diseased trees to allow more sunlight to reach the ground.
- Rotate thinning through each stand to establish various stages of plant succession.
- Consider prescribed burning to help encourage herbaceous plant growth. Burn only under an approved burn plan from NRCS or MDC.

PRIMARY HABITAT CONSIDERATIONS:

- Provide natural food sources for quail, deer, turkey and other wildlife.
- Improve forest stand diversity.

Consult with NRCS or MDC wildlife biologists and private land conservationists, or University Extension for additional recommendations.

STAND SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

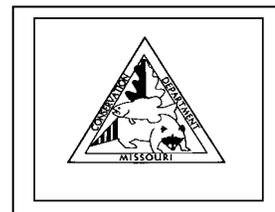
	Basal Area (sq. ft.)	Trees/acre
Existing	_____	_____
Planned	_____	_____
Reduction	_____	_____

Thinning Levels	Basal Area Reduction
Light	20-30 sq. ft.
Medium	30-40 sq. ft.
Heavy	>40 sq. ft.

COMMENTS

LANDOWNER _____ **Field No.** _____ **Farm No.** _____ **Tract No.** _____

CONTACT:



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