

**NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**BRUSH MANAGEMENT**

(ac.)  
CODE 314

**DEFINITION**

Removal, reduction, or manipulation of non-herbaceous plants.

**PURPOSE**

Restore natural plant community balance.

Create the desired plant community.

Restore desired vegetative cover to protect soils, control erosion, reduce sediment, improve water quality, and enhance stream flow.

Maintain or enhance wildlife habitat including that associated with threatened and endangered species.

Improve forage accessibility, quality, and quantity for livestock.

Protect life and property from wildfire hazards.

**CONDITIONS WHERE THIS PRACTICE APPLIES**

On rangeland, native or naturalized pasture, pasture and hay lands where removal or reduction of excessive woody (non-herbaceous) plants is desired.

**CRITERIA**

**General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes**

Brush management will be designed to achieve the desired plant community in woody plant density, canopy cover or height.

Brush Management will be applied in a manner to achieve the desired control of the target woody species and protection of desired species. This will be accomplished by mechanical, chemical, biological, prescribed burning or a combination of these methods.

Prescribed Grazing shall be applied to ensure

desired response from treatments.

**Additional Criteria for Improving Wildlife Habitat**

Brush Management will be planned and applied in a manner to meet the habitat requirements of the wildlife of concern.

Brush management will be planned in a manner that it will not adversely affect threatened or endangered species or their habitats.

**Additional Criteria for Reducing Wildfire Hazards**

Control undesirable woody plants in a manner that creates the desired plant community which reduces wildfire hazard conditions.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Timing and sequence of brush management in a pasture and/or the entire operating unit should be planned in a coordinated grazing management plan.

Consider soil erosion potential and difficulty of vegetation establishment when choosing a method of control that causes soil disturbance.

**PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Plans and specifications for the treatment option selected by the decision maker will be prepared for each pasture, field, or management unit where Brush Management will be applied.

Plans and specifications will be based on the practice standard and may include narratives, maps, drawings, job sheets, or similar documents. These documents will contain the following data as a minimum:

Brush canopy and/or species count, transect line locations and percent canopy and/or species numbers per acre of the target

<p>Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically and updated if needed. The current version of this standard is posted on our eFOTG web site available at <a href="http://www.sd.nrcs.usda.gov">www.sd.nrcs.usda.gov</a> or may be obtained at your local Natural Resources Conservation Service.</p>
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plant(s).

As needed, maps or drawings showing areas to be treated and areas to be left undisturbed should be prepared.

For mechanical treatment methods, plans and specifications will include types of equipment and any modifications necessary to enable the equipment to adequately complete the job. Also included should be:

Dates of treatment.

Operating instructions.

Techniques or procedures to be followed.

For chemical treatment methods, plans, and specifications will include:

Herbicide name.

Rate of application or spray volumes.

Acceptable dates of application.

Mixing instructions (if applicable).

Any special application techniques, timing considerations, or other factors that must be considered to ensure the safest, most effective application of the herbicide.

Reference to label instructions.

Documentation of the use of environmental risk analysis tools (such as WIN-PST Soil Pesticide Interaction Loss Potential and Hazard Rating Report) in formulating alternatives with the client.

For biological treatment methods, plans and specifications will include:

Kind of biological agent or grazing animal to be used.

Timing, duration, and intensity of grazing or browsing.

Desired degree of grazing or browsing use for effective control of target species.

Maximum allowable degree of use on desirable non-target species.

Special precautions or requirements when using insects or plants as control agents.

## **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

**Operation:** Brush Management practices shall be applied using approved materials and procedures. Operations will comply with all local, state, and federal laws and ordinances.

Success of the practice shall be determined by evaluating regrowth or reoccurrence of target species after sufficient time has passed to monitor the situation and gather reliable data. Evaluation periods will depend on the methods and materials used.

**Maintenance:** Following initial application, some regrowth, resprouting, or reoccurrence of brush should be expected. Spot treatment of individual plants or areas needing retreatment should be done as needed.