Definition
Treating woody plant residues created during forestry, agroforestry and horticultural activities to achieve management objectives.

Purpose
- Reduce hazardous fuels
- Reduce the risk of harmful insects and disease
- Protect/maintain air quality by reducing the risk of wildfire
- Improve access to forage for grazing and browsing animals (includes wildlife)
- Enhance aesthetics
- Reduce the risk of harm to humans and livestock
- Improve the soil organic matter
- Improve the site for natural or artificial regeneration.

Where Used
This practice applies on areas with quantities of woody slash and debris requiring treatment.

Conservation/Forest Management Planning
Typical slash treatment is accomplished during the implementation of forest management practices. Activities such as harvesting results in slash but this is normally not a resource concern since slash naturally breaks down after a few seasons. This practice is to be planned where additional treatment is needed to meet a resource concern or where a specific level of slash treatment is required during a silvicultural operation and documentation of the performance standard is desired. Planning for slash treatment before a harvest or silvicultural activity and to occur during the treatment is often the most economical method of implementation. This practice should not be used as a substitute for poor logging or forest treatment implementation but should be used to improve the level of treatment.

Successful Practice Implementation
Slash treatment is successfully implemented when the planner and implementer use both the natural breakdown process and prescribed mechanical actions. The practice is needed only when it is necessary to go beyond the slash treatment that normally occurs during the activities that produce
slash, such as logging. An attempt should be made to meet the landowners' slash management objectives during the harvest or treatment process, in order to reduce cost and increase treatment efficacy.

**Considerations**

When determining method and timing of slash treatment, consider air quality regulations, burning requirements, available resources, ability to use woody biomass and regeneration needs.

Consider retaining 10 to 20 pieces of slash greater than 9 inches in diameter over each acre as a source of downed logs for specific plant, insect and animal habitat.

Consider wildlife needs when performing and timing treatment. Consider the beneficial and other effects on cultural resources, and threatened and endangered species, natural areas, and wetlands.

**Guidelines for Operation and Maintenance**

Monitor populations and the potential of damage to site resources by harmful pests and take controlling actions as necessary. Comply with Pest Management - 595.

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**Figure 1.** Total slash accumulation after a block harvest is 38.2 tons/acre (8.1 tons/acre for size class 1.1-3.0 inches in diameter; 6.3 tons/acre for 3.1-9.0 inches; 17.2 tons/acre for 9.1-20.0 inches and 6.6 tons/acre for 20.1+ inches). Slash treatment could involve piling and burning, broadcast burning, and/or chipping followed by removal, or removal. To achieve a 9 ton/acre criteria, approximately 30 tons/acre of slash is considered excess.

**Figure 2.** Total slash accumulation after a precommercial thinning is 23.0 tons/acre (6.7 tons/acre for size class 1.1-3.0 inches in diameter; 12.8 tons/acre for 3.1-9.0 inches; and 3.5 tons/acre for 20.1+ inches). Slash treatment could involve piling and burning, and/or chipping followed by removal, or removal. To achieve a 9 ton/acre criteria, approximately 14 tons/acre of slash is considered excess.

**Figure 3.** Total slash accumulation after a partial harvest is 6.3 tons/acre (3.4 tons/acre for size class 1.1-3.0 inches in diameter; 2.9 tons/acre for 3.1-9.0 inches). Because slash is less than the 9 tons/acre criteria, slash treatment could consist of lopping and scattering to meet the less than 2-feet height criteria.

**Figure 4.** Total slash accumulation after a precommercial thinning is 7.8 tons/acre (5.5 tons/acre for size class 1.1-3.0 inches in diameter; 2.3 tons/acre for 3.1-9.0 inches). Because slash is less than the 9 tons/acre criteria, slash treatment could consist of lopping and scattering to meet the less than 2-feet height criteria.

Treatment of Forest Slash

Land user: ____________________________  Field: ____________________________
Assisted by: ____________________________  Date: ____________________________

Land use:  (forest ☐) (wildlife ☐) (grazing ☐) (Other_________________________ ☐)

PURPOSE (Check all that apply)

- Reduce hazardous fuels ☐  Enhance aesthetics ☐
- Reduce the risk of harmful insects and disease ☐  Reduce the risk of harm to humans and livestock ☐
- Protect/maintain air quality by reducing the risk of wildfire ☐  Improve the soil organic matter ☐
- Improve the site for natural or artificial regeneration. ☐  Improve access to forage for grazing and browsing animals (including wildlife) ☐

General treatment (applies to all the specific applications below)

All slash and woody debris will be cuts so that it does not exceed 4.5 feet in height. Slash and woody debris will not cover/shade over 50% of the forest surface/floor. Slash and woody debris 50 feet above a culvert, bridge water control structure will be treated or removed so that it could not potentially block the water passage structure.

_ additional requirements or clarifications____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

☐ Reduction of hazardous Fuels and Air Quality purposes – 90% of materials (slash) greater than 3 inches in diameter will be treated. Material treated will be in contact with the ground once every 8 feet or closer. Ninety percent of all material 3 inches or greater will be within 2 feet of the ground.

_ additional requirements or clarifications____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

☐ Reduction of harmful insect and disease risk – All material greater than 4 inches in diameter will treat the specification for reduction of hazardous fuels or will be debarked and meet the requirements of a pest management plan

_ additional requirements or clarifications____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Treatment for Forage, Grazing and Browsing – A minimum of 75 percent of the treatment area will be free from coarse woody debris (4 inches or greater in diameter) that prevents access for travel and feeding by identified species. A minimum of 50% of the area will be open to allow sunlight to allow for the growth and development of forage and browsing plant species.

Treatement for reduction of safety hazards for Humans and Livestock- all material will be laid down to a height of 2 feet and all branches, limbs, stems, and boles will be cut at an angle of greater than 45 degrees.

Treatment for the improvement of soil organic matter- all material will be of a size and placement as detailed

Improvement for artificial or natural regeneration of an identified species

Treatment for aesthetics
Slash Treatment – Job Sketch

Draw or sketch the field, showing any sensitive areas and required setback zones. Inside each sketched field, enter total field acres and net application acres. Other relevant information, such as complementary practices or adjacent field or tract conditions may be included.

Scale 1"=________ ft. (NA indicates sketch not to scale; grid size=1/2" by 1/2")

Perform the following operations and maintenance:
Inspect residual plants periodically and protect from adverse impacts such as insects, diseases or competing vegetation,

Additional specifications and notes:
This plan was developed based on the requirements of the current NRCS standard and any applicable Federal, state, or local regulations or policies. Changes in any of these regulations may necessitate a revision of the plan.

Design Certification

I certify that the above design meets NRCS standards and specifications:

Permits required? Yes ______ No _____ (attach copy if applicable)

Acres Planned ___________ Linear Feet Planned ____________________

Planner ___________________________ Date ________________________

I have reviewed this plan and agree to install as designed.

Cooperator ___________________________ Date ______________________

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APPLICATION / CERTIFICATION

Acres Planned__________________     Acres Applied_________________________
Linear Ft. Planned ______________      Linear Ft. Applied _____________________
Program ________________  Contract # _________________________________

I certify that the above installation meets NRCS standards and specifications indicated in the attached AK-384 Job sheet:

[ ] YES    [ ] No

Planner________________________________________________________ Date__________________

Recommendations and Comments:
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

Operation & Maintenance
Periodic monitoring of this practice is essential to determine 1) if production and ecological goals are being met, 2) if facilitating practices are installed, maintained, and adequate, and 3) if modifications are needed.