

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
PRACTICE DOCUMENTATION GUIDE
BRUSH MANAGEMENT**

314

314 – STEP 1. INITIAL EVALUATIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to determine the landowner's desire to apply brush management to predetermined areas for the intended purpose(s). (See Natural Resources Conservation Service, Practice Standard and Specification 314).

The landowner must be interviewed to determine the purpose and needs for brush management. Considerations will include the landowner goals and objectives, existing condition and effects of this practice on existing soil, water, air, plant, animal and human resources. A discussion of NRCS brush management standards and specifications should also take place. Role of the landowner and the person assisting with the brush management plan should also be discussed. Additional pertinent questions should be asked on a site-specific basis.

314 – STEP 2. INVESTIGATIONS, SURVEYS, AND INVENTORIES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to identify the mandatory preliminary resource inventory and operations that are required before brush management can be planned and implemented. Resource inventories will include all data and information needed to make informed decisions in the development of the brush management plan and any follow-up management needs. Appropriate resource inventories could include soils, ecological sites, similarity index and/or rangeland health, pasture condition score, range trend, degree of infestation by species and all physical features such as structures, fencing and watering facilities, streams etc that might have an effect on planning of brush management. Adjacent land resources and non-target areas that could be affected by brush management should also be considered.

Identify map resources needed such as the proper USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle sheet, soils, and road maps as well as aerial photography. Also include identifying all needed utility clearances, archeological clearances. Also see Natural Resources Conservation Service, Conservation Practice Job Sheet 314, ENV-1 Environmental Assessment & Resource Inventory Checklist).

314 – STEP 3. PRACTICE DESIGN

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to develop a brush management plan. This practice will be applied in accordance with all federal, state and local laws and ordinances. Appropriate pesticide applicators license requirements must be met. All pesticides will be applied according to label. Resource inventories and local conditions will need to be assessed for the proposed land units in the development of a brush management plan. A complete brush management plan will be developed with the client that meets the intended goals and objectives. If brush management is to take place in conjunction with grazing then all requirements outlined in Standards and Specifications and for prescribed grazing and pesticide labels must be met. All appropriate job sheets, maps and reports must be developed with landowners input, review and concurrence. See Practice Standard and Specification 314 & 528a & Job Sheet 314 & 528a.

II. SITING

The purpose of this step is to insure that the client fully understands which land units are involved in the brush management plan. Care should be given to make sure the land unit locations involved in the brush management plan is known by all involved. Access locations for livestock and vehicles should also be known by all involved in implementing the plan.

III. MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT

The purpose of this item is to insure an understanding of the materials/equipment used to implement and monitor brush management. Further knowledge would include the types mechanical, biological and chemical application equipment used control brush. Those involved in implementing the brush plan should also be able to use monitoring equipment such as grass clippers, clipping frames, weight scales, cameras, as well as all other measuring devices needed for monitoring purposes. Appropriate standards, job sheets that includes the types and number of each type of materials/equipment will need to be provided to the landowner and all those involved in the implementation of the plan.

314 – STEP 4. PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to document and describe each component of the brush management plan, which includes step by step instructions, construction methods and materials to be used while carrying out brush management.

This will include the documentation of all components described in Brush Management Job Sheet 314. Additional reference material should include as needed and appropriate. The landowner must be provided with a complete brush management plan in the form of NRCS Job sheet 314 in order to document the brush management implementation process. Any items not described in Job Sheet 314 that are essential for implementation of brush management will be added to the Job sheet.

314 - STEP 5. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION, MAINTENANCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to assure that proper management and maintenance is completed

before, during and after brush management. (See Natural Resources Conservation Service, Practice Standard and Specification 314 & 528a, Job Sheet 314 & 528a).

This requires a familiarity with soils, ecological sites, plant ecology, grazing animals, monitoring and grazing management in order to assure that the treated area meets goals and objects and that the plant community continues to improve over time. A monitoring program that assesses indicators of ecological processes, animal numbers, and utilization should be implemented as per the NRCS National Range and Pasture Handbook and the New Mexico Interagency Rangeland Monitoring Handbook. These measures should be discussed with and understood by the landowner.

314 – STEP 6. COMPLIANCE OR SPOT CHECKING

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to determine that all work has been completed to the standards required by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

All completed NRCS forms should be collected from the landowner and submitted to the appropriate persons. (See Natural Resources Conservation Service Practice Standard and Specification 314 & 528a and Job Sheet 314 & 528a 1 - 7, NM-ENV-1 Environmental Assessment & Resource Inventory Checklist).

II. DOCUMENTS

Copies of all completed job sheets and associated work sheets should be submitted to the Natural Resources Conservation Service representative within 10 working days of completion of the prescribed grazing plan. This includes the Practice Requirements for Brush Management 314 and Prescribed Grazing 528a, Job Sheet(s) for 314 & 528a and any other job sheets that may be needed for this practice to meet the intended goals and objectives.