

Early Successional Habitat Development/Management – Old Field/Shrubland

Massachusetts Conservation Practice Job Sheet MA-647

Client Name:	Farm #:	Tract #:
Field(s):	Total Acres:	
Planned By:	Date:	

Definition

Create or manage early plant succession to benefit desired wildlife or natural communities.

Purpose

Increase plant community diversity to provide habitat for shrubland species.

If a particular species is targeted, please note:



Specifications

Old field/shrubland habitat is variable but typically has a mix of forbs, shrubs and tree seedlings. Grasses, if present, are not dominant. This habitat type is usually a successional stage that occurs during the transition from field to forest. Some sites such as wetlands, sandy sites and ledge areas can support a relatively stable shrub community; however, most shrub communities in the northeast are successional. Because of their ephemeral nature, regular disturbance will generally be required.

If the site is currently a mix of tall growing tree species and shrubs, shrub habitat can sometimes be developed and/or maintained through selective tree removal (i.e., selectively targeting all tall growing tree species for removal, while leaving behind desirable shrub species that can act as seed sources for regeneration). This method preserves the habitat as opposed to cutting all the woody vegetation at one time. The culled trees can be cut, girdled or treated with herbicide. Cut trees can be used to construct brush piles. Repeat the process on a 3 to 10 year interval or as needed to manage the site for shrubland species.

Exotic invasive plant species – If non-native invasive plant species are present in an area they must be controlled. In general, if the site is easily traversed, and the invasive species are small, it's better to treat the site prior to a management cut. If the vegetation is too dense to walk through or the invasive species are large, it's probably better to do the management cut first and treat the invasive species re-sprouts at a later time.

Timing of Activities - All restoration/management activities should be conducted outside of the primary nesting season (April 15 to August 1) whenever possible.

Establishment is planned as follows: *(check all that apply)*

- Mechanical clearing** _____ Acres Years _____
- Herbicide treatment** _____ Acres Years _____
- Selective tree removal** _____ Acres Years _____
- Invasive species control** _____ Acres Years _____
- Other** _____ _____ Acres Years _____

Maintenance

Shrubland must be disturbed at regular intervals to prevent succession. Maintenance practices should be conducted outside of the nesting season (April 15 to August 1) whenever possible.

Maintenance is planned as follows: *(check all that apply)*

- Mechanical clearing** _____ Acres Years _____
- Herbicide treatment** _____ Acres Years _____
- Selective tree removal** _____ Acres Years _____
- Invasive species control** _____ Acres Years _____
- Other** _____ _____ Acres Years _____

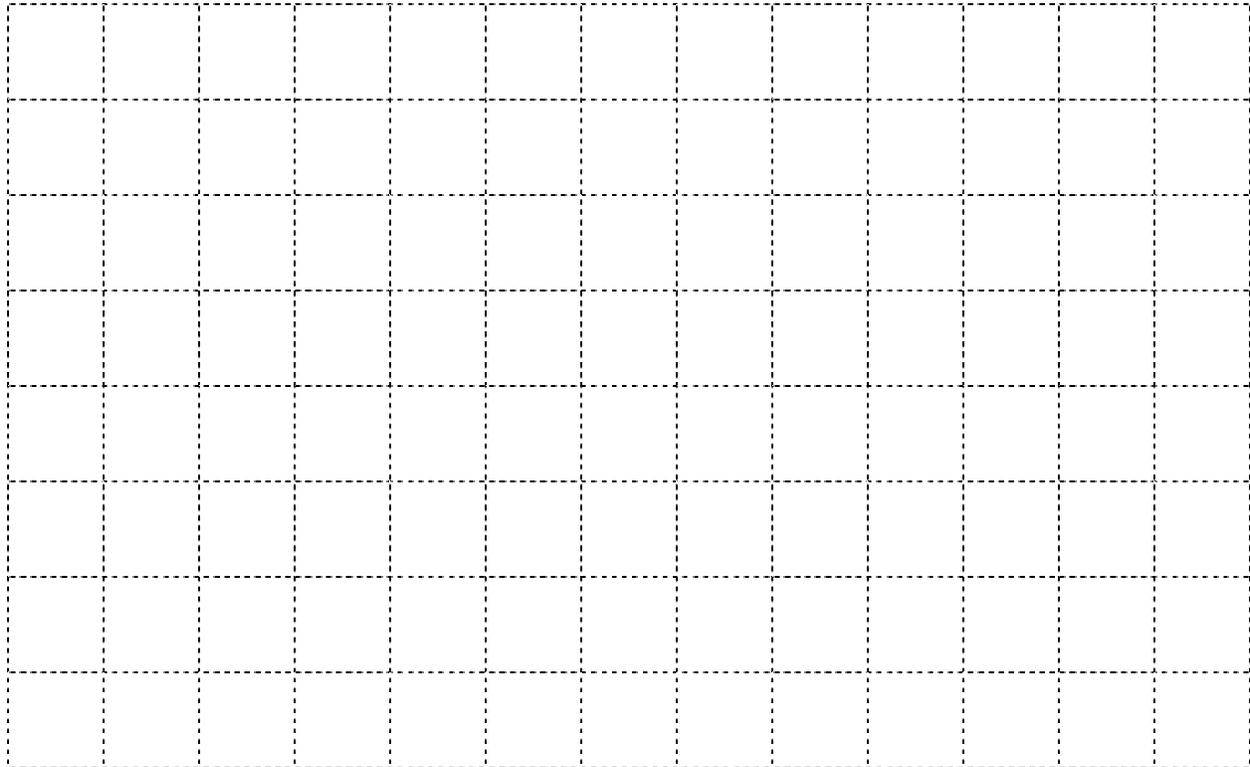
Site Specific Comments and Recommendations

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Provide a map (may be attached) showing the location of the proposed practice and practice components.

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



A large grid of dashed lines, intended for drawing a map. The grid consists of 12 columns and 10 rows of squares.

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