

Prepared for: _____

Prepared by: _____

Farm: _____ Tract: _____ Date: _____



DEFINITION

Manage early plant succession to benefit desired wildlife or natural communities.

PURPOSE

Increase plant community diversity to provide habitat for early successional species.

CONDITON WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On all lands that are suitable for the kinds of desired wildlife and plant species. Some lands may not be suitable for specific methods. For example, disking should not occur on intact soils with natural undisturbed habitats like longleaf woodlands. This method is not appropriate and will degrade the native plant community. Prescribed fire would be the appropriate management tool in this example.

CRITERIA

Management will be designed to achieve the desired plant community in density, vertical and horizontal structure and plant species diversity.

Where planting is required, native local ecotype, regionally adapted plant materials will be used whenever possible. Measures must be provided to control noxious weeds and other invasive species.

To benefit insect food sources for grassland nesting birds, spraying or other control of noxious weeds will be done on a "spot" basis to protect grasses, forbs and legumes that benefit native pollinators and other wildlife.

All Federal and State invasive plant species in the habitat will be controlled.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Evaluate the habitat conditions on a regular basis in order to adapt the conservation plan and schedule of implementation. Burn or lightly disk on a rotational basis in order to promote a diverse native plant community. Clean equipment prior to use on site in order to prevent the transfer of exotic invasive plants. Many exotic invasive plants will compromise intended wildlife habitat improvements and are difficult to control once established.

After establishment, equipment travel and manipulation of habitat during the nesting season (April 1- September 1) shall be limited to control woody or invasive vegetation.

In addition, the following actions must be carried out to ensure that this practice functions as intended:

Inspect plantings for mortality during their first growing season. Re-plant areas where survival is less than 50% of the intended plant density.

Control access to the habitat to ensure no damage to habitat structure, composition, soil, water or plants occurs in the habitat.

Inspect the habitat and repair damage from pest infestations and erosion.

This jobsheet is supported by a conservation plan map that shows where the habitat will be established and where rotational management needs to occur.

Habitat Elements to be Improved:

- Cover
- Native vegetation
- Spring/summer nesting habitat
- Fall /winter food sources
- Year round food sources
- Control of Invasive Species

Target Species of plants for regeneration:

Habitat Establishment (check planned methods)

- Marker Posts**
Install 1-inch by 5-foot (or larger) pipes, driven at least 1-foot into the soil to identify habitat boundaries at locations indicated on plan map (these are beneficial to keep field borders and other designated habitat areas from being accidentally disturbed, especially in farm land settings).

- Natural Vegetation**
Establish and manage naturally occurring (volunteering) grass, forbs, or high quality mast or cover shrubs at locations indicated on plan map (inspect locations to be sure plants species have wildlife value and are not harmful invasive exotic species).
 - Target Species of plants for regeneration:

- Grasses or Forbs from Seed**
Establish habitat forming native grasses and forbs at locations indicated on plan map using the seeding specification indicated in the to the NRCS Conservation Cover jobsheet included in your plan.

Habitat Management (check planned methods)

Implement one or more of the following management actions according to the plan's schedule to maintain desirable early succession habitat characteristics and amounts in the planning area.

- Burn**
Use prescribed fire (according to the NRCS Prescribed Burning jobsheet included in your plan) to control advance of succession.

- Disc (Rotational Basis)**
In previously disturbed areas, use a disc, drag, or equivalent implement to chop up plant residue and scarify the soil surface to a depth less than 5-inches during October through December to encourage reproduction of partridge pea and ragweed. Disking later than Thanksgiving may encourage growth of annual grasses and blackberry.

In natural areas like longleaf pine woodlands where soils have not been disturbed, do not use disking as a management tool. Disking will be detrimental to the native seed bank and to the natural habitat. Burning is a more appropriate practice in undisturbed natural areas.

Divide area into 3 sections. Rotational disturbance will occur on a 3 year cycle, where 1/3 of the site is disturbed annually while the remaining 2/3s remain untouched. Disturbance on a 3-year rotation creates habitat with new annual plants providing food and dusting areas next to 1 year old growth with perennial vegetation, next to 2-year old growth providing cover. See specification sheets for Rotational Disking 1 and 2 on the EFOTG under 647

Make strips at least 30 feet wide. Attempt to leave at least 30% of ground covered by plant residue. Run the implement perpendicular to the land slope to the greatest extent possible.

Alternate strips of disked and un-disked land reduce soil erosion by breaking slope length and provide interspersions of different habitat resources. Avoid disking slopes greater than 7% and locations where concentrated flow will cause gully formation.

Brush Management/Herbaceous Weed Control

Apply an appropriate herbicide according to the product label's directions for controlling introduced grasses, non-native invasive species or woody vegetation as soon as they are observed. Use Brush Management or Herbaceous Weed Control according to the NRCS Brush Management and/or Herbaceous Weed Control jobsheets included in your plan.

Protect the habitat from herbicide damage, especially from adjacent cropland. When herbicide is used to manage the habitat, use directed sprays and management strategies to control drift as specified in the Brush Management and/or Herbaceous Weed Control specification included in this plan.

Time the application to ensure the stage of plant growth maximizes control results.

Summer Treatment Needed for: Bahia grass, Bermuda grass, Dallisgrass, Vasey's grass, Johnsongrass, and Sericea lespedeza; deciduous woody plants

Fall Treatment Needed for: Tall fescue

Winter Treatment Needed for: Chinese or Japanese Privet

Graze

Use prescribed grazing (according to the NRCS Prescribed Grazing jobsheet included in your plan) to control advance of succession, or development of undesirable vegetation. Use of forage must not compromise the habitat forming purpose of this practice.

Mow*

Utilize a mower to:

- Control pest plants that cannot be controlled using other means (Mowing is not a preferred management practice since the thatch left on the ground inhibits native plant growth and movement of wildlife. If mowing is utilized, bale and remove thatch if possible. If thatch contains noxious weed seed, disposed of safely so seeds are not spread)
- Release new habitat plantings from competition with unwanted vegetation (spring mowing over planted native warm-season grasses and forbs)
- Maintain vigor and palatability of plants growing in food plots, such as white clover

*Mowing must not compromise the habitat forming purpose of this practice.

Habitat Management Schedule

Note to Planners: You decide how to illustrate the mgt. rotation in this table. Use of Field #s, Acres, or ✓ is o.k.

Action	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year
Burn					
Disc					
Herbicide					
Graze					
Mow					
Fallow					
Herbicide					

Circle yes if additional plans included:

Prescribed Grazing Plan is attached:	Yes	Not Applicable
Brush Management or Herbaceous Weed Control Plan is attached:	Yes	Not Applicable
Prescribed Burning Plan is attached:	Yes	Not Applicable

Additional Operation and Maintenance requirements specific to this plan:

**Certification:
Job Sheet**

Prepared by: _____

Title: _____ Date: _____

Approved by: _____

Title: _____ Date: _____

Installation

Meets NRCS Standards and Specifications?	YES	NO
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Certification by: _____ Date: _____