NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

BRUSH MANAGEMENT
(AC.)
CODE 314

Brush should be treated to meet the land resource objectives and associated resource concerns according to the Brush Management (314) standard.

Evaluation of Brush Density

"Heavy density" indicates the target species is of sufficient canopy coverage to significantly suppress the production of herbaceous vegetation. Failure to implement brush management control practices in a timely manner could result in the ecological site passing through a transition threshold. The targeted sites can be treated with common brush control methods. If the site has passed an ecological transition threshold, brush management will not be applied.

"Medium density" indicates the target species is of sufficient canopy coverage to suppress the production of herbaceous vegetation and would eventually move to a high infestation level if not treated. Evidence is present of brush spreading on the pasture.

"Low density" indicates the target species is not of sufficient canopy coverage to significantly suppress herbaceous vegetation but enough to be a concern for the planner and client.

Treatment Options

The treatment methods for brush include: mechanical, chemical, or biological methods either alone or in combination. The following are detailed explanations of the treatments:

Chemical

Herbicide application can be very effective in controlling woody species. AR NRCS staff will not provide herbicide recommendations for brush management. Herbicide recommendations from the Cooperative Extension Service or other qualified individuals are required. Herbicide recommendations should be species specific and should relate to the resource inventory.

The Brush Management (314) job sheet provides precautions and additional safety measures to be followed.

Even though herbicide application is a very effective measure to treat woody species, multiple applications are often required to meet objectives.

Chemical Treatment Methods

Boom Sprayer – A boom sprayer is a very accurate option to apply herbicide. Boom sprayers are used on sites where the height of the existing size of vegetation isn't a hindrance to the application.

Boomless Sprayer – A boomless sprayer isn't as accurate as a boom sprayer when applying herbicide but still very effective. A boomless sprayer can be an advantageous option when: 1) brush is dominant in fence rows along with pastures, 2) steep and changing terrain is a barrier for a boom sprayer, and 3) existing vegetation is a barrier with a boom sprayer.

Foliar Spot Treatment – Individual treatment of targeted plants is the most efficient and

effective method to control brush. Consider this treatment option for "hard to kill" brush species.

Soil Spot Treatment – Applying herbicide to the soil at the base of the plant is an effective method to treat certain brush species. Do not use this method where the roots of desirable trees extend.

Treatment Periods

Below are treatment times for commonly observed brush species:

Species	Application Time
Blackberry	May or June
Mixed Brush Species	May to August
Persimmon	April to May
Red Cedar	Spring or Fall
Sumac	May to July

Do not mow brush the same year herbicide treatment is applied.

Biological

The only use for biological brush control approved at this time is through domestic animals such as goats.

The area to be browsed will be crossed fenced to meet the Prescribed Grazing (528) standard. Browsing should occur when brush is fully leafed. Allow the goats to defoliate the majority of the leaves. Move goats to the next paddock and begin browsing to defoliate the majority of the leaves. Adjust rotations according to amount of browsing available in the current paddock and the re-growth of leaves in the previously browsed sites. After the initial rotation, target paddocks where the leaves are actively growing. Anticipate this method of biological control using goats to take 2 to 3 years. Increased stocking rates may be needed to achieve desired results.

Mechanical

Brush hogging should be the last alternative for treatment. Brush hogging typically requires multiple treatments each year for consecutive years to meet objectives.

Generally, brush should be mowed as close to the ground as possible without damaging equipment. Mowing height may need to be adjusted to minimize stress on desirable herbaceous plants.

Cut-stump treatment (sawing, clipping, or shearing) is the severing of the trunk below the lowest growth point and removing all green growth. All visible stumps of sprouting brush species will be treated per label directions with a cut-stump herbicide application immediately after the stump is severed.

Mechanical treatment should never result in soil disturbance or cause additional resource concerns.

References

University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service; MP-522; Pasture Weed Control in Arkansas.