

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

WOODY RESIDUE TREATMENT

(Acre)
CODE 384



woody residue requires treatment.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Determine the treatment method based upon the condition and extent of residual woody material and the client's objective.

Select slash treatment methods (i.e., burning, chipping, lop and scatter, removal, crushing) that achieves landowner objectives while adequately protecting land and water resources.

Minimize injury to or function of the residual plant communities when the practice is being applied.

Apply Florida NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribed Burning, Code 338, when burning activities are required to meet client's objectives.

Ensure that slash and debris left on the site after treatment does not present an unacceptable fire, safety, environmental, pest hazard, or interfere with the intended purpose(s) or other planned management activities.

Impact to cultural resources, wetlands, and Federal and State protected species need to be avoided or minimized to the extent practical during planning, design, and implementation of this conservation practice in accordance with established National and Florida NRCS policy; General Manual (GM) Title 420-Part 401, Title 450-Part 401, and Title 190-Parts 410.22 and 410.26; National Planning Procedures Handbook (NPPH) FL Supplements to Parts 600.1 and 600.6; National Cultural Resources Procedures Handbook (NCRPH); and The National Environmental Compliance Handbook (NECH).

DEFINITION

The treatment of residual woody material that is created due to management activities or natural disturbances.

PURPOSE

- Reduce hazardous fuels
- Reduce the risk of harmful insects and disease
- Protect/maintain air quality by reducing the risk of wildfire
- To improve access for management purposes
- Improve access to forage for livestock and wildlife
- Develop renewable energy systems
- Enhance aesthetics
- Reduce the risk of harm to humans and livestock
- Improve the soil organic matter
- Improve the site for natural or artificial regeneration.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On all lands, except active cropland, where

Additional Criteria Applicable to Reduce

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service [State Office](#), or download it from the electronic [Field Office Technical Guide](#) for your state.

Hazardous Fuels

Reduce the amount of fuels to an acceptable level by controlling height, size, amount, and distribution.

Additional Criteria to Reduce the Risk of Harmful Insects and Disease

To enhance the effectiveness of the control, consider the characteristics and/or life cycle of any harmful insects or diseases when the degree, intensity, and timing of treatment is planned. This practice may include the use of Florida Conservation Practice Standard Integrated Pest Management, Code 595, when applying this practice.

Additional Criteria to Protect/Maintain Air Quality by Reducing the Risk of Wildfire

Plan activities to be consistent with established regulations and guidelines for PM10 and PM 2.5 emissions, ozone precursors (NOx and VOCs), as well as smoke and fugitive dust, and state and local permit requirements.

Additional Criteria to Improve Access to Forage for Livestock and Wildlife

Arrange or remove woody residue sufficiently to allow access by livestock and wildlife, and to maximize forage growth.

Additional Criteria for Develop Renewable Energy Systems

Removal of woody material shall not be detrimental to the site and will adequately protect soil and water resources. Adequate woody material will be left to maintain or improve nutrient and organic matter cycling.

Additional Criteria to Enhance Aesthetics and Reduce the Risk of Harm to Humans and Livestock

Plan additional treatments of the woody material left on the site to necessary to meet the client's objectives and that meet any state or local requirements for safety and esthetics.

Additional Criteria to Improve Soil Organic Matter

Ensure that the size of the slash and contact with the soil is adequate to accelerate decomposition rate.

Additional Criteria to Improve the Site for Natural or Artificial Forest Regeneration

Ensure that slash treatments do not interfere with establishment criteria specified in Florida NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Site Preparation, Code 490.

CONSIDERATIONS

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

Consider wildlife needs when performing and timing treatments. Leave some slash piles within a safe area to offer shelter and cover for ground nesting birds and small mammals.

Consider pollinator needs when planning and performing treatment.

Consider the effects on cultural resources, threatened and endangered species, natural areas, and wetlands.

Consider chipping, shredding, bio-fuel composting, or other technique used in lieu of burning in areas with air quality concerns.

Consider effects on soil carbon when off-site removal of woody material is to occur.

Consider incorporating woody residues into the soil to enhance soil organic matter content.

Consider planning the least energy consuming methods that still meet the client's objectives and resource concerns of the site.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications for applying this practice shall be prepared for each site and recorded using approved specification sheets, job sheets,

technical notes and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.

Specifications minimally need to include:

- Goal(s) of forest slash treatment(s)
- Schedule and methods of treatment of slash residue.
- Plans for management/disposal of debris.
 - Site map or sketch of planning area.
 - Locations of brush piles, if applicable
 - Dimensions and estimated fuel load of brush piles if planning prescribed burning.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Monitor populations and the potential of damage to site resources by harmful pests and take controlling actions as necessary. Comply with Florida NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Pest Management, Code 595.

Access by vehicles or people will be controlled during treatment for safety. Comply with Florida Conservation Practice Standard Use Exclusion, Code 472.

REFERENCES

- Florida Forest Service (FFS). 2011. Silviculture Best Management Practices. 116pp.
http://www.floridaforestservice.com/forest_management/bmp
- Longleaf Pine Forest Regeneration by The Longleaf Alliance. See
<http://www.longleafalliance.org/landowners/forestrestoration/cutover.htm>
- NRCS National Forestry Handbook Part 636.4: Planning Considerations.
- Yarrow, Greg. K and Deborah T. Yarrow. 2005. Managing Wildlife. Sweetwater Press, 194 pp.
- Ecological Restoration Institute 2010. Treating Slash. Northern Arizona University. Flagstaff, Arizona. <http://www.eri.nau.edu/en/information-for-practitioners/treating-slash>
- Bennett, M. and Fitzgerald, S., 2008. Reducing Hazardous Fuels on Woodland Property: Disposing of Woody Material. Oregon State Extension publication EC-1574-E.