



**Natural Resources Conservation Service**  
**CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**  
**TREE/SHRUB SITE PREPARATION**

(Acres)

**CODE 490**

**DEFINITION**

Treatment of areas to improve site conditions for establishing trees and/or shrubs.

**PURPOSES**

- Encourage natural regeneration of desirable woody plants.
- Permit artificial establishment of woody plants.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

On all lands needing treatment to establish trees and/or shrubs.

**CRITERIA**

**General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes**

Use of this standard requires compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

All chemicals will be used in accordance with label guidelines. Follow criteria in Indiana (IN) Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Standard (595) Integrated Pest Management.

Livestock access will be controlled to prevent damage to site preparation areas and woody plants.

Seedbed preparation, species selection, seeding mixes, seeding rates, dates, depths, fertility requirements, site adaptation and planting methods will be consistent with the requirements in the IN NRCS Seeding Tool and/or Tables in IN FOTG standards.

The method, intensity and timing of site preparation will match the limitations of the site, equipment, and the requirements for establishing the desired woody species.

An appropriate site preparation method (mechanical, chemical, prescribed burning, cover/companion crop) will be chosen based on existing vegetation, site and soil conditions, and establishment method. Use the IN FOTG Forestry Technology Note: Tree and Shrub Site Preparation as a guide in determining appropriate site preparation methods.

Other complementary practices and measures will be used as necessary to control erosion, runoff, compaction and displacement to acceptable levels. Refer to IN FOTG standards (393) Filter Strip, (362) Diversion, (580) Streambank Protection, (342) Critical Area Planting, (340) Cover Crop, (655) Forest Trails and Landings, (410) Grade Stabilization Structure, (391) Riparian Forest Buffer, and/or (612) Tree/Shrub Establishment.

Remove undesirable vegetation using appropriate complementary practice such as IN FOTG standard (314) Brush Management, (315) Herbaceous Weed Treatment, (595) Integrated Pest Management, (666) Forest Stand Improvement, or (338) Prescribed Burning, as needed.

**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 Field Office Technical Guide for your State.**

Remaining slash and debris will not create habitat for or harbor harmful levels of pests.

Remaining slash and debris will not hinder needed equipment operations or create an undue fire hazard. Slash and debris will be removed, treated or eliminated as appropriate. Refer to IN FOTG standard (338) Prescribed Burning for slash and debris that will be burned.

Measures, including the use of equipment, will be implemented to control or protect against locally invasive and noxious species that may arise from site preparation activities. If pesticides are used, refer to the IN FOTG standard (595) Integrated Pest Management.

#### **Additional Criteria to Encourage Natural Regeneration of Desirable Woody Plants**

Existing desirable tree species must be present with the potential for successful natural regeneration and seed production. Refer to IN FOTG standard (612) Tree/Shrub Establishment.

#### **Additional Criteria to Permit Artificial Establishment of Woody Plants**

Remove or kill existing herbaceous or grassy vegetation in the entire field, in rows, or in spots using chemical and/or mechanical means and/or prescribed fire. Refer to IN FOTG standard (612) Tree/Shrub Establishment.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

The considerations section contains information that is optional to the planner.

Impacts on wildlife species, habitat and aesthetics should be considered when selecting site preparation methods.

Particulates, smoke, and other air pollutants generated by site preparation may have on-site and off-site effects on air quality.

Time site preparation activities to coincide with the natural seed fall.

### **PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Specifications for applying this practice and protection of the site will be prepared and recorded using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes and narrative statements in the conservation plan or other acceptable documentation.

Specification will include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- Method(s), including equipment used and timing of site preparation
- Tree and Shrub Species and regeneration method to be used
- Identification of any erosion control measures needed
- Map indicating location of treatment

### **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Maintain erosion control measures as necessary.

Control locally invasive and noxious plants as necessary. If pesticides are used, refer to IN FOTG standard (595) Integrated Pest Management.

Access by vehicles or equipment during or after site preparation will be controlled to minimize erosion, compaction and other site impacts. Refer to the IN FOTG standard (472) Access Control.