

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS**

RECREATION AREA IMPROVEMENT

1. Scope

The work shall consist of establishing and or improving existing vegetation to enhance areas for recreational use. These specifications (including references made within to other conservation practice standards and technical notes), the Form KS-ECS-4, Grass Seeding, and/or Form KS-ECS-5, Tree/Shrub Planting, shall be used to design the practice. Practice application will be documented on the Form KS-ECS-4 and/or Form KS-ECS-5 and in the conservation plan.

2. Species Selection

Species will be adapted to soil site conditions. For woody species, see Section II of the electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG), Windbreak and Environmental Planting Interpretations; Conservation Practice 612, Tree/Shrub Establishment; Kansas Forestry Technical Note No. 9, Tree/Shrub Establishment and Maintenance Guidelines; and Kansas Forestry Technical Note No. 10, Conservation Tree/Shrub Plantings Suitability Groups, Windbreak Suitability Groups, and Plantings for Kansas. For herbaceous species, see Section II of eFOTG, Pasture and Hay Land Interpretation; Conservation Practices 512, Pasture and Hay Planting; 550, Range Planting; 342, Critical Area Planting; and Kansas Plant Materials Technical Note No. 1, Grass and Forb/Legume Varieties Approved for Use in Kansas.

3. Planting Details

Specific planting requirements for woody species are provided in Kansas Forestry Technical Note No. 9. Herbaceous species seeding requirements are addressed in Conservation Practices 512, Pasture and Hay Planting, and 550, Range Planting. See also local extension recommendations for the establishment and maintenance of turf grasses.

4. Pruning/Thinning Details

Follow Construction Specifications, 660, Tree/Shrub Pruning, for pruning guidance. Additional guidance for pruning and thinning include:

For pruning:

- Prune early while the plant is still dormant.
- Prune dead and diseased branches annually.
- Prune storm damage as soon as possible after the storm.
- Prune branches as close to the trunk as possible (Figure 1).
- Prune all low hanging branches.
- Pruning should improve the appearance of the trees and not present a “hedged” effect.
- Properly dispose of all pruned material.

For thinning:

- Thin defective, infested, damaged, or poorly formed trees or those that may be a safety hazard.
- Thinning should favor those species that have a long life span such as oak or walnut.
- Thinning should result in a natural appearance.

- Cut unwanted trees to the ground and remove the stump.
- Protect trees from undue damage from livestock, insects, disease, wildlife, and people.
- Properly dispose of all pruned material.

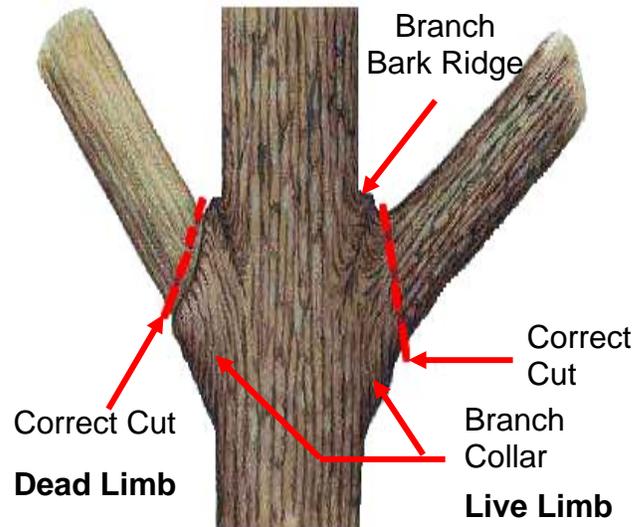


FIGURE 1. PROPER PRUNING

5. Maintenance

Inspect the area after storm events and repair all eroded areas, re-seed disturbed areas, and remove debris and hazardous trees.

For safety and overall appearance, remove dead and downed woody material from the recreational area.

For safety, remove trees and shrubs that pose a hazard (e.g., dead, dying, vision, obstruction) to user safety. Vehicles and people should be fully visible at all road intersections. Cut trees and shrubs flush with the ground line. Eliminate poison ivy from intensive use areas.

Edge transitions: Reduce abrupt changes from open areas to forests. Create transition zones by leaving groups of trees and clumps of shrubbery. Encourage plants with showy flowers, attractive fruit, or bright fall colors.

Monitor tree/shrub species in the area for possible infestations of insects and disease. Remove any infected trees/shrubs immediately or treat with appropriate chemicals.