

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**  
**CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**  
**TREE/SHRUB SITE PREPARATION**

(Ac.)

**CODE 490**

**DEFINITION**

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

**PURPOSE**

- 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**

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 will be chosen to achieve the intended purpose and to protect desirable vegetation, site and soil conditions. Other complementary practices and measures will be used as necessary to control erosion, runoff, compaction and displacement to acceptable levels.

Erosion and/or runoff will be controlled.

Soil compaction and displacement will be minimized.

Slash and debris shall be removed, treated or eliminated as appropriate. Refer to the standard Slash Treatment, 384.

Remaining slash and debris shall not create

habitat for or harbor harmful levels of pests.

Remaining slash and debris shall not hinder needed equipment operations or create an undue fire hazard. Refer to the standard Prescribed Burning, 338, 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 standard Pest Management, 595.

All chemicals will be applied in accordance with label guidelines.

Comply with applicable laws and regulations and follow recognized Best Management Practices (BMPs) developed for Louisiana.

**Additional Criteria to Fracture Restrictive Soil Layers**

Deep ripping shall be performed when a root growth restrictive layer caused by surface compaction, tillage pans, deep compaction or inherent hardpans exists in the top 24 inches of the soil.

Presence of a restrictive layer is indicated when soil survey bulk density values for sandy, loamy or clayey textures exceed 1.70, 1.60 or 1.40 g/cm<sup>3</sup>, respectively; or soil cone penetrometer readings range between 145 and 300 psi for any texture.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

The site preparation method should be cost effective and protect cultural resources, wildlife habitat, threatened and endangered species, water resources, and identified unique areas.

Impacts on wildlife species, habitat and aesthetics should be

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

**NRCS, LA**  
**September 2012**

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.

#### **PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

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

#### **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Maintain erosion control measures as necessary.

Control locally invasive and noxious plants as necessary. If pesticides are used, refer to the standard Pest Management, 595.

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