

**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.

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.

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.

Comply with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations during the installation, operation and maintenance of this practice.

Refer to:

- M.G.L. c. 132, §§40-46 Massachusetts' Forest Cutting Practices Act and regulations at 304 CMR 11.00 et. seq (DCR);
- M.G.L. c. 48, §§16-20, An Act Relative to the Handling of Slash;
- 310 CMR 7.07 (1-6) Open Burning regulations, and
- M.G.L. c.61, the Forest Tax Law.

Plans shall be in compliance with the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act, and planners shall consult the Massachusetts Natural Heritage to ensure that site preparation activities do not endanger local wildlife populations.

CONSIDERATIONS

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.

The site preparation method should be cost effective and protect cultural resources, wildlife habitat, threatened and endangered

species, water resources, and identified unique areas.

Visual quality objectives should be considered when selecting site preparation methods.

Anticipate possible off-site effects and modify the site preparation design accordingly.

Consider personnel safety during site preparation activities.

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.

Tree/shrub site preparation plans and specifications shall be in accordance with any existing forest management plan and with any Forest Cutting Plan (Ch. 132) currently in effect for the property.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Maintain and repair erosion control measures as necessary to ensure proper function.

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 Use Exclusion, 472.