

Tree/Shrub Pruning for Lowbush Blueberries

Maine Conservation Practice Job Sheet

660



Definition

Removing all or parts of selected branches or leaders from trees and shrubs.

Purpose

The purpose of this practice is to improve the appearance of trees or shrubs, e.g., ornamental plants and Christmas trees, improve the quality of wood products, and improve the production of plant products, e.g., nuts, fruits, boughs and tips. It also may reduce fire and/or safety hazards, improve the growth and vigor of understory plants, and adjust the foliage and branching density for other specific intents, such as wind and snow control, noise abatement, access control, and visual screens.

Where used

This practice is used on a variety of land areas, including tree and shrub-covered areas used for recreation, production of non-timber and timber crops, and screens.

Operation and maintenance

Periodically inspect plant condition and take corrective actions as necessary, e.g., additional pruning, pest management, nutrient management, and forest stand improvement.

Considerations

The pruning and shearing method and timing will match the limitations of the site and soils, achieve purposes for the specific tree or shrub species, and will be conducted in a safe and efficient manner. Pruning or shearing will not adversely reduce the growth and vigor of the tree or shrub for the intended purpose. Debris and vegetative material left on the site after treatment will not present an unacceptable fire or pest hazard or interfere with the intended purpose and other management activities.

Comply with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations during the installation, operation and maintenance of this practice, including pre-activity permits, permissions, or notifications.

Time pruning and shearing to least disturb seasonal wildlife activities. Disinfect pruning and shearing tools as needed to prevent the spread of pathogens. Review the estimated cost and projected economic benefits of the project before starting pruning and shearing projects. To maintain plant growth and sustained vigor, pruning and shearing may be done in two or more timed intervals. Time the pruning and shearing to minimize potential damage to the tree bole and stems.

Please Note: In forestland, for the purpose of improving the quality of wood products, a current Forest Management Plan, completed by a Licensed NRCS Forestry/Agroforestry Technical Service Provider (TSP) is required for this practice. When implementing this practice for that purpose, you may want to use a Registered NRCS Forestry/Agroforestry TSP for technical assistance.

Specifications

Site-specific requirements are listed on the job sheet. Additional provisions are entered on the job sketch sheet. Specifications are prepared in accordance with the ME NRCS Field Office Technical Guide. See practice standard and specification guide for Tree/Shrub Pruning, Code 660 for specific requirements.

Tree Pruning – Lowbush Blueberries Specification for completion – Job Sheet

<i>Name:</i>	<i>County:</i>	<i>Town:</i>
<i>Field(s):</i>	<i>Tot. Acres:</i>	<i>Farm #:</i>
		<i>Tract #:</i>
<i>Designed By</i>	<i>Lic #:</i>	<i>Approved By:</i>
		<i>Signature:</i>
<i>Date:</i>		<i>Date:</i>

Conservation Management System

This practice is used in wild blueberries to prune the plants every other year to stimulate vegetative growth. Pruning can be accomplished by either flail mowing (or burning) of the plants. This practice is implemented after the first killing frost in the fall, after harvest, and until the plants break dormancy the following spring. Pruning is accomplished by mowing or burning the plant as close to the ground as possible. This practice is frequently used in conjunction with Obstruction Removal (code 500) to remove large rocks, and Mulching (code 484) of the resulting bare spots.

Plans and Specifications

For purposes of this NRCS practice, flail mowing will be used. (NRCS does not assist with burning, however burning is an acceptable method of pruning when fields cannot be mowed, due to obstructions, or when burning is needed to control insect damage.) When fields are mowed and there are areas of unpruned plants around stone walls or other obstructions, burning of those plants may be desired. Contact your town office for local regulations on burning.

Operation and Maintenance

The typical management cycle for the growing of wild blueberries is two years. Pruning is done prior to the non-bearing season, either in the fall or early spring.

Specifications for Completion of this Practice:

Tract/Field	Acres	Planned Pruning Date	Method of Pruning	Date Practice Certified	Certified By

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Additional Remarks (Include information on salable or usable products, other values and considerations):

COMPLETION/CHECKOUT CERTIFICATION

I have job approval authority and certify this practice as applied meets NRCS Standards and Specifications:

NRCS Representative name and title		
NRCS Representative Signature:		Date:

As-Built Notes (include date completed by client, treated acres and describe any changes to original design):

Questions or changes regarding this practice should be directed to Gerald Barnes, at (207)990-9580

LANDOWNER/OPERATOR ACKNOWLEDGES:

- a. They have received a copy of the specifications and understand the contents including the scope and location of the practice.
- b. They have obtained all necessary permits and/or rights in advance of practice application, and will comply with all ordinances and laws pertaining to the application of this practice.
- c. No changes will be made in the installation of the job without prior concurrence of the NRCS.
- d. Maintenance of the installed work is necessary for proper performance during the life of the practice.
The practice life is _____.

I have reviewed all specifications and agree to install as specified:

Landowner/operator name and title (type or print):		
Landowner/operator Signature:		Date: