

Prepared for: _____

Prepared by: _____

Farm: _____ Tract: _____ Date: _____



DEFINITION

Bedding is a mechanical means of site preparation that mounds the soil in narrow strips for tree planting.

PURPOSE

This treatment is usually done on sites with poor surface drainage. Bedding can be done with a narrow 2-axled disk or bedding plow. Bedding is often done after the site has been sheared and windrowed or prescribed burned to remove surface vegetation.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

Bedding is utilized on wet sites to raise the seedlings out of the water. On some of our bottomland sites, the water table rises when the existing stand of trees are harvested. This rise in the water level often drowns seedlings when the sites are planted. Bedding raises the seedlings above the water and improves survival.

The function of bedding on sites where water is not a problem is equally important. Bedding produces a planting medium where the tree can quickly spread out and establish an aggressive root system and compete with weeds and grasses for nutrients and sunlight. This aggressive, early root growth is a key to seedling survival.

Bedding also raises the soil temperature in the bed because sunlight strikes the bed from three sides giving the seedling an earlier start in the growing season by 7 -10 days.

First and foremost, bedding provides an excellent medium for early seedling growth.

CONSIDERATIONS

1. Bedding should be done on the contour to control erosion on sloping land.
2. Beds should be allowed to settle prior to planting. Bedding should be done several months prior to planting to allow time for the beds to settle. Several rain events may be needed to break down clods in the beds and close air pockets formed by bedding.
3. Significant soil disturbance caused by bedding can activate a dormant seed bank causing significant weed growth/competition therefore requiring additional chemical site preparation on some sites to control competing vegetation. A forest management, stewardship or practice plan must be written or approved by a registered forester.
4. Beds may act as dams or dikes causing unwanted pooling of water.
5. Excessive amounts of litter (farm residue, grass, weeds, etc.) should not be part of the bed. The site should be prescribed burned, disked, or bush hogged prior to bedding.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Ensure that bedding is done with the contour and bed several months prior to planting. Beds should be approximately 4 feet wide and 18 inches high initially. Rains will reduce the beds

to around 10-12 inches in height prior to planting.

Any soil at or near field capacity should not be worked with a plow or subsoiler. This destroys natural structure. The entire field should be dry enough that no free water is evident.

Bedding can be done with various disks or bedding plows. A large four wheeled drive tractor or dozer may be required to build the proper size beds. Sometimes a faster speed will be required to produce the desired results.

Beds warm up quicker in the spring because they get sun from above and the sides giving trees an extra week of early growth.

Additional Operation and Maintenance requirements specific to this Plan:
