

CRP PRACTICE PLANNING JOBSHEET SUPPLEMENT FOR PRACTICE CP3, TREE PLANTING ACRES, ALREADY EST. TREES

Pine plantations established through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) have stabilized thousands of acres of highly erodible cropland by establishing permanent vegetation protecting soil and water resources. Many of these plantations are eligible for additional contracts once the current 10 to 15 year contract expires.

Figure 1



A pine plantation established under CRP, such as the one pictured to the left in Figure 1, could be eligible for a new contract. CRP is a competitive program with each application being ranked using a system called the Environmental Benefit Index (EBI). EBI takes numerous factors into consideration; however, an applicant can select management options to increase the score of the offered acres. More intensive management typically has more benefit for plant diversity and wildlife habitat resulting in a higher score.

Figure 2



The pine plantation in Figure 2 has been commercially thinned to a density of approximately 90 square feet of basal area per acre or about 125 trees per acre. This is a typical density for a timber production objective. Prescribed burning has been utilized in this stand to control hardwood competition, improve groundcover, and reduce danger of wildfire.

Figure 3



Figure 3 shows the same pine plantation shown in Figure 2; however, the basal area has been reduced to about 60 square feet per acre or 83 trees per acre. This density allows a substantial amount of sunlight to reach the forest floor, promoting plant species diversity and improving wildlife habitat. This stand was also burned once after thinning to further promote herbaceous plants.

Minimum Management Requirements:

Subfactor N1a 10 point offers:

- **If firebreaks are present**, disk three (3) times during the CRP contract. Spot herbicide treatment of the firebreak can be planned once during the contract prior to year 8 if needed to control vegetation.
 - First Disking – Year 1-2 of contract.
 - Second Disking – Years 3-4 of contract.
 - Third Disking – Years 5-7 of contract.

Subfactor N1a 50 point offers:

- **If firebreaks are present**, disk firebreaks three (3) times during the CRP contract. Spot herbicide treatment of the firebreak can be planned once during the contract prior to year 8 if needed to control vegetation **AND** wildlife openings will be disked or burned three (3) times during the CRP contract. Spot herbicide treatment for hardwood control will be planned once during the contract prior to year 8 for all openings.
 - First Disking/Burning – Year 1-2 of contract.
 - Second Disking/Burning – Years 3-4 of contract.
 - Third Disking/Burning – Years 5-7 of contract.

OR

- Thin entire contracted acreage to a basal area equal to 50-70% of Site Index on the site **AND** burn the entire contracted acreage at least two (2) times during the contract prior to year 8.
 - *****Thinning must be completed by end of year three (3) of contract.*****
 - First Burning – Year 1-4 of contract.
 - Second Burning – Years 5-7 of contract.