



Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM42 – Forest stand improvement for wildlife habitat and soil quality

State Criteria (same as NATIONAL CRITERIA)

A copy of a forest management plan that contains a management objective and outlines specific management actions pertaining to this enhancement must be provided to NRCS to support this enhancement. The plan must include a plan map which delineates areas to be treated. Consultation with a Nebraska Forest Service forester or NRCS staff with adequate job approval authority in Forest Stand Improvement is recommended to develop or review the forest management plan.

If the requirements below cannot be met due to forest site factors such as existing species composition, stand structure, etc., the plan must identify how management actions will guide the stand toward those conditions.

Additional Criteria for Nebraska

1. Retention or creation of snags:
 - Retain or create snags (standing dead trees) with a minimum of three snags per acre that are ≥ 6 feet tall and 6 inches DBH and at least one snag ≥ 10 inches DBH.
2. Suitable den/cavity trees:
 - Provide for an average of one wildlife den tree or roost tree per acre. These trees must be alive and ≥ 10 inches DBH with a portion (at least 25%) ≥ 15 DBH within the site. They may often be older 'cull' trees that provide either hollow trunks and/or an open limb structure. An average across the stand is allowed since some portions of the site may only support younger age class trees.
3. Stand structural diversity restoration:
 - Utilize management strategies that result in multiple age classes comprised of multiple species of woody vegetation to provide a diversity of structure and species composition to benefit a wider array of wildlife species. At least two age classes of tree (sapling, mature, etc.) and two growth forms (overstory, understory, shrub, etc.) must be present throughout the stand or in adjacent patches within a stand. A minimum of three desirable woody species (including shrubs) must also be present throughout the stand. Refer to NE FOTG, Section II-Windbreak Interpretations, Conservation Tree/Shrub Groups, for information on wildlife value associated with each species.
 - Leave beneficial trees, shrubs, and vines throughout the stand when they are not interfering with the growth of desired, dominant trees. Understory structure is important to many wildlife species to serve as escape/hiding cover, nesting/fawning cover, and other uses.
 - Remove trees, shrubs, and vines considered invasive, or that provide low wildlife value, in favor of beneficial woody species. This removal may facilitate establishing snags, brush piles, edge feathering, or forest openings as described below.
 - Plant native vegetation within the stand to increase diversity of species composition and/or structure where needed. A priority should be placed on mast-producing trees, shrubs, and vines as well as forbs within the herbaceous understory community.
 - Other considerations include developing small forest openings within the forest stand varying in size from 0.5 acre to 5 acres and comprising 10% to 25% of the total area and/or creating an irregular edge or border between the forest and open field by not applying management in that zone or doing edge feathering (cutting and leaving a portion of the trees in that zone).



4. Downed woody debris:

- Provide at least one brush pile for every two acres as habitat for small mammals and associated predators. Each brush pile should be a minimum of 15 feet in diameter and 5 feet tall.
- Scatter slash material (tree trunks and smaller limbs) in loose patches throughout the stand on a minimum of 10% of the total area. These loose patches can also be positioned to protect desired seedlings and saplings from damage caused by deer browsing and livestock trampling. Hinge cutting can also be used where appropriate to contribute toward this requirement.

Treatments involving tree removal should not occur during the primary nesting period for migratory birds (April 1 to July 15) with consideration for early or late nesting species (i.e. raptors).

Documentation Requirements (SEE NATIONAL ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY JOBSHEET)

Additional State Documentation Requirements

Complete the Table below:

To be completed by NRCS and Producer during planning			To be completed by Producer during certification		
1	2	3	4	5	6
Tract	Field	Acres Planned	Acres Applied	Management Activities Applied	Date Completed
EX. T1001	1	10	10	Inventory of snags, den trees, woody debris Thinning, creating snags/brush piles, etc.	4/15/2015 11/15/2015

EX= EXAMPLE, COLUMNS 1-3 NRCS COMPLETES, COLUMNS 4-6 PRODUCER COMPLETES

I certify that the enhancement criteria have been met and the required documentation provided to NRCS for review.

1. A copy of the forest management plan or similar document that identifies required elements.
2. Map showing where treatments were applied (highlighted, outlined, etc.).
3. Documentation of completed management activity, as required. – (COMPLETE TABLE ABOVE)
4. Representative digital images of the area showing before and after photos of the area that was treated.

Certified by: _____ **Date:** _____