NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service

Instructions

Plan for Mechanical and/or Chemical Brush Control — *NE-CPA-314*

Instructions for use of NE-CPA-314

BRUSH CONTROL FOR GRASSLAND IMPROVEMENT

Brush control for grassland improvement is achieved by removal of invasive woody plants and proper grazing or haying methods thereafter in order for desired grasses/forbs to become established. This will allow for desired grass/forb growth. If desirable grass/forb cover is not adequate to establish a good stand in the brush control area, then you will need to establish cover by seeding or interseeding grasses/forbs that are compatible with your grazing or haying objectives. In some cases a cover crop and or use of a non-selective herbicide to kill existing cover will be needed prior to planting grass (refer to seeding plan for proper methods of establishment).

HOW TO CONTROL BRUSH FOR GRASSLAND IMPROVEMENT

1) Determine brush species needing control and the cause for the brush invasion.
   a. If existing grass/forb cover is such that it can out-compete brush by implementing a prescribed grazing system, this alternative should be utilized prior to incurring costs of brush control.
   b. If the best areas for grass production are occupied by brush, target brush control activities on these areas first.

2) Consider controlling only the amount of brush that has invaded beyond historical levels. Brush will likely reappear in areas where it historically occurred after clearing, even on areas in excellent range condition.

3) Grazing areas cleared by mechanical means shall have grazing deferred as follows:
   a. All grazing during the growing season shall be deferred until adequate grass/forb cover is established.
   b. Dormant grazing can be initiated during winter months if there is adequate regrowth of desired vegetation.
   c. At a minimum grazing should be deferred from the time clearing starts through the following growing season.
   d. After grazing deferment a planned grazing system will be initiated.
   e. When appropriate, haying according to a forage harvest management plan can also aid in controlling escape brush and establishing desirable vegetative cover.

4) Consider possible method(s) of brush control (a combination of methods may be necessary):
   a. Mechanical treatment methods (Shearing, Rolling choppers, Chainsaw, Rotobeating, Brush mowers, Blading with dozer/tractor
   b. Chemical (Refer to the current "Guide for Weed Management in Nebraska". The weed management guide can be found at: http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/epublic/live/ec130/build/ec130.pdf
   c. Targeted grazing with browsing animals
   d. Prescribed burning

5) Consider conditions in your pastures before choosing the best control method(s):

a. Kind(s), size, and amount & kind of brush (i.e. resprouting)	b. Topography and soils
c. Ground cover for erosion control	d. Cost and efficacy of alternative treatments
e. Season of control	f. Growth stage of brush
g. Potential grazing use limitations	h. Will follow-up control be necessary?
i. Need for grass seeding, or potential for re-establishment	j. Use of browsing animals practical?
k. Special precautions to avoid damaging non-target species (such as chemical treatments that can affect nearby desirable trees, cause off-site damage, etc.)	