

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD
UPLAND WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT**

(Ac.)

CODE 645

DEFINITION

Provide and manage upland habitats and connectivity within the landscape for wildlife.

PURPOSE

Treating upland wildlife habitat concerns identified that enable movement or provide shelter, cover, food in proper amounts, locations and times to sustain wild animals that inhabit uplands during a portion of their life cycle.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On land capable of supporting desired habitat where an objective has been identified for conserving a wild animal, guild, suite or ecosystem.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to all Purposes

Evaluate or appraise habitat-limiting factors using an approved WY NRCS Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) appropriate to the habitat or specific species.

WHEG's can be found under Section I- Technical Notes by Discipline-Biology Technical Notes Index or:

<http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/WY/BIOLOGYTECHNOTES.pdf>

Address limiting factors identified by the WHEG to meet or exceed Quality Criteria.

Application of this practice alone, or in combination with other supporting and facilitating practices, shall result in a conservation system that will enable the planning area to meet or exceed the minimum

quality criteria for wildlife habitat established in Section III of the FOTG.

A Habitat Management Plan that addresses the target species' needs shall be developed.

Establish structural and/or vegetative measures for shelter, food, and to allow movement.

Include only high quality and adapted species in the plant material specifications.

Prepare and plan vegetation to optimize survival and growth.

Restrict equipment travel, grazing, haying and other disturbance to habitat during critical periods such as nesting, brood rearing, fawning or calving seasons. States may establish exceptions when necessary to maintain the health of the plant community and control noxious weeds.

Control of regulated noxious weeds and invasive plants shall be specified.

CONSIDERATIONS

This practice may affect the target species as well as non-target species through mechanisms such as hunting, predation, disease transmission, nest parasitism, etc. Consider effects of this practice on species with declining populations.

Wildlife population control may be necessary to protect and maintain certain habitats. State and federal regulations may apply to population control methods.

Undisturbed areas conserved at a sufficient extent during management activities, may sustain disturbance-intolerant animals and plants.

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Other conservation practices may be utilized in conjunction with this practice to create a wildlife management plan (Refer to FOTG, Section III, Table 2. Wyoming Conservation Planning Guide- Resource Management System (RMS) Level Conservation Planning).

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Prepare specifications, schedules and maps for each planning area and habitat type.

Specifications shall:

- Identify the amounts and kinds habitat elements, locations and management actions necessary to achieve the client's management objectives.
- Describe the appropriate method, timing and intensity of management needed to produce the desired habitat conditions and sustain them over time.

Provide specifications to clients using NRCS approved specifications sheets, job sheets, or customized narrative statements included in the conservation plan.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

The following actions shall be carried out to ensure that this practice functions as intended throughout its expected life:

- Evaluate habitat conditions on a regular basis in order to adapt the conservation plan and schedule of implementation.
- Annually inspect and repair structural or vegetative components of this practice.

REFERENCES

Bolen, Eric and William Robinson. 2002. Wildlife Ecology and Management 5th Edition. Prentice Hall, 656 pp.

Bookhout, T.A. (ed.). 1996. Research and Management Techniques for Wildlife and Habitats, 5th Ed. Wildlife Society, 740 pp

Rayne, Neil F. and Fred C. Bryant. 1994. Techniques for Wildlife Habitat Management of Uplands. McGraw-Hill, Inc., 841 pp.

United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. National Biology Manual. Title 190, Washington, DC.

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