EQIP/WHIP PRACTICE GUIDELINES
Early Successional Habitat Development & Management (647): Woods Edge Management

Practice Life: 3 Years

Participant: _____

EQIP Contract Number: _____

Purposes of Cost Share Practice: The primary purpose of this practice scenario is to create early successional habitat on the woods edge in order to improve wildlife habitat. This practice will encourage the management of transition zones between habitat types by creating "soft edges" along wood lines. This scenario is designed to improve multiple wildlife habitat components including food, nesting cover, and escape cover for various upland species including quail and other upland birds. Fallow or idle areas are essential nesting and overwintering habitat for many species and should be considered essential components of the landscape. In addition to providing wildlife habitat, fallow areas can reduce erosion, protect water quality by trapping sediment, chemicals and other pollutants, and can serve as buffers for sensitive areas when applying pesticides or fertilizers.

Conditions for Practice Eligibility: Applicants must meet all EQIP/WHIP requirements to be eligible for financial assistance. Cropland, including hay land, and pastureland are the only land uses eligible for consideration. Benchmark condition of Wildlife Assessment indicates early successional wildlife cover, useable space, or barriers to movement are determined to be a habitat limiting factor within these land uses.

Minimum Practice Requirements: Participant must create a 30-foot wide (average) strip along the wood line to enhance edge habitat. The contract must include a cost shared item for herbicide application to control trees and shrubs less than 10" DBH and any undesirable re-sprouting vegetation. Herbicides with the active ingredient *Imazapyr* or *Triclopyr* will selectively control undesirable woody vegetation and favor early successional habitat. Refer to the NC Ag Chemicals manual for recommendations and proper use of herbicide. Prepare a pest management plan that meets NC NRCS 595 standards. A separate contracted item for utilizing a tracked machine to sheer and/or grind woody vegetation less than 10" DBH may be needed depending in site conditions. If a crawler is determined to be necessary, it will be used to sheer, NOT STUMP woody vegetation. Stumps will be left in ground and in place. Debris will be disposed of by burning, hauling, grinding, or other adequate methods to be determined by technical representative. Stream buffers, quality snags, den trees, and high quality mast producing trees will be conserved. Once installed, the habitat area must remain un-cultivated and fallow for the duration of the contract life. If significant soil disturbance occurs due to mechanical operation, temporary vegetative cover may be required as a non-cost shared practice. Refer to the NC-FOTG Practice Standard 645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management Appendix II: Planting Food Plots & Temporary Cover for Wildlife to determine species composition, seeding rates, and planting season for vegetative cover. Measurement and payment will be rounded to the nearest half acre. Practice must be part of a contract that obligates at least $1000.

Considerations

- Consider planning additional habitat producing/enhancing practices that compliment this scenario.
- If exotic invasive or noxious plants are present, consider eradication prior to practice implementation.
- When possible, time management activities to minimize disturbance of seasonal wildlife activities, with special consideration for nesting season.

EQIP/WHIP Practice Eligibility Checklist

☐ yes ☐ no Participant meets all EQIP requirements and is eligible to receive financial assistance.
☐ yes ☐ no The benchmark condition of the Wildlife Assessment indicates a resource concern as defined in Conditions for Practice Eligibility.

Comments:

EQIP/WHIP Practice Planning Checklist

☐ yes ☐ no The completed wildlife management operation will be in compliance with all state and local laws, regulations and ordinances.
☐ yes ☐ no Location of planned area is clearly identified on the conservation plan map and acreage to the nearest half acre has been determined for treatment area.
☐ yes ☐ no Site has been evaluated and the need for mechanical treatment has been determined to be necessary.
☐ yes ☐ no Herbicide application has been planned as a contracted item.
☐ yes ☐ no Pest Management plan that meets NC NRCS 595 standards has been included.

Comments:

Follow-up Recommendations: Visit site with the participant following treatment to review need for temporary cover of disturbed areas.

Certification
This practice has been installed according to NRCS specifications and meets the EQIP requirements and the Early Successional Habitat Development & Management (647) practice criteria

_____ acres (to nearest half acre) of habitat have been installed per these practice guidelines.

_____

Designated Conservationist Date

2nd and 3rd Operation and Maintenance Recordkeeping: Record if herbicide treatment was conducted in year two following mechanical treatment. Remaining time planned area is required to remain fallow.

Date of Inspection	*Acres Treated/Fallow*	*Participant initials*	*Designated Conservationist initials/comments*