Forest Trails and Landings

Access to your woods is important to maintain and manage a healthy stand of trees. This practice minimizes damage to soil, water, plant and animal resources. It is not intended to establish trails for recreational activities. This practice is for establishing a new trail/landing or restoring old ones in your forest land.

Herbaceous Weed Control

Many plant species are “out of place” and this practice allows for the use of herbicides or mechanical treatments to remove these weeds and invasives. The goal of this practice is to allow desired plant communities and wildlife habitats to re-establish in the forested environment.

Tree and Shrub Establishment

New stands of trees and shrubs are established under this conservation practice to control erosion and maintain soil moisture. Areas that are favorable for planting woody vegetation are eligible for this activity. Plantings can also take place in areas to reinforce an existing stand of trees in understocked woodlands.

Tree and Shrub Pruning

Trees and shrubs have the potential to be damaged from pests, disease and wildfires. In order to keep this risk minimal, pruning eliminates branches that show signs of stress from disease, insect infestation, or could become fuel for a wildfire.

For more information contact your local NRCS Office or find us at www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

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Healthy Forest Practices

Assistance is available for forest practices through EQIP

Road Trail and Landing Closure and Treatment

Roads, trails and landings can be re-located to reduce and/or eliminate erosion from steep erodible areas, and avoid sensitive areas such as wetlands and riparian areas. The closure of roads, trails, and/or landings and associated treatment will address resource concerns including gulley erosion and sedimentation to water bodies. It will re-establish vegetation on roads and trails no longer needed, provide for human safety, and protect wildlife habitat.

Alley Cropping

Alley cropping incorporates trees and shrubs into agricultural plantings to provide cover for beneficial insects and improve crop quality. Surface water runoff, erosion and nutrient losses are reduced by alley cropping.

Firebreak

A firebreak is a gap in vegetation that is used to stop or slow a fire. A firebreak can be established by disking, mowing, removing woody debris or establishing permanent grass cover. Protection from wildfires improves the ecology of the forest and encourages wildlife habitat.

Firebreaks are commonly established in new tree plantations and should be included in the planting design. Firebreaks may also protect nearby buildings or structures from the danger of fire.

Forest Management Plan (CAP)

A Forest Management Plan is a site specific Conservation Activity Plan (CAP). This practice applies to non-industrial private forestland which will benefit from the development and implementation of conservation and resource management practices.

Woody Residue Treatment

Clearing forested areas of diseased or infested woody debris reduces the risks of wildfires while reducing the population of harmful insects. This practice allows removal and disposal of “slash” which is left over after a timber harvest or a forest stand improvement. This slash can be converted into woodchips. The branches and tree tops can be redistributed on the forest floor in a manner that allows for quick decomposition. These activites cut down on the amount of fuel that would be available in case of a fire and prevents the spread of insects and disease.

Riparian Forest Buffer

A riparian forest buffer improves water quality by filtering contaminants from entering open water. Woody vegetation stabilizes the banks along water bodies, improving fish and wildlife habitat. These buffer zones reduce the amount of sediment, organic matter, nutrients, pesticides, and other pollutants in surface runoff and the amount of nutrients and other chemicals in shallow groundwater.

Stream Crossing

A stream crossing provides a safe and stable pathway for livestock, equipment or farm vehicles to cross a stream. Because this crossing is an established feature it reduces streambank erosion and prevents sediment deposition into the water.

Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment

Trees are important for many reasons. They protect soil resources, provide shelter for livestock and attract wildlife. Windbreaks are planted to provide needed protection in preventing damage to farmsteads from wind and snow. Open areas of cropland can be protected from wind erosion by establishing windbreaks.

Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation

A renovation improves an existing windbreak that is no longer functioning or growing satisfactorily. That may be because of poor design, overcrowding, dead or dying trees, insufficient width, or extreme competition from sod or weeds.

The following practices require a Forest Management Plan that meets the Forest Stewardship criteria and must be developed prior to practice implementation. The plan must specifically state that these practices are needed to address a resource concern.

Access Road

Proper operation of your enterprise requires good access. Roads provide good access for equipment and supplies needed to install forest management practices. By constructing this conservation measure, surface runoff and soil erosion is reduced, improving water quality.

Brush Management

Brush management can be used to improve or restore native habitats Treating invasive and noxious plant species can reduce sedimentation, improve water quality and maintain or increase wildlife habitat and values.

Forest Stand Improvement

Forest stand improvement involves many activites. Degraded or infested trees are cut, the forest is thinned allowing for the new growth to mature. A healthy stand improvement enhances the forest, the understory vegetation and allows for plant regeneration to restore natural communities. These activites reduce soil erosion, sedimentation and runoff. Other benefits include improved water conservation.and wildlife habitat.