EQIP 666-Forest Stand Improvement PRACTICE GUIDELINES

EQIP FY 2009 Scenario: Crop Tree Release
Practice Life: 10 years

Participant: _____
EQIP Contract Number: _____

Purposes of Cost Share Practice

- Improve forest health – reducing potential of damage from pests and moisture stress
- Achieve a desired level of crop tree stocking, quality and quantity
- Increase the quantity and quality of forest products
- Improve wildlife habitat

Conditions for Practice Eligibility

- The landowner must participate in the EQIP application and contract; and, must meet all EQIP requirements including private nonindustrial forestland owner criteria. Other participants are subject to EQIP eligibility requirements.
- Practice scenario must be determined needed and feasible by registered forester. A forest management, stewardship or practice plan written or approved by a registered forester is required.
- Forest stand meets a pre-treatment condition below.

  Pre-treatment Condition
  Treatment area contains hardwood/other conifer trees (not pines) with defective or undesirable trees that share the overstory with desirable crop trees. Crop trees are valuable species, well formed, insect/disease free and dominant or co-dominant that are:
  - 15 to 75 years old
  - stocked at 40+ crop trees per acre; and,
  - Encroached on at least 2 sides (average conditions) by undesirable trees.

Minimum Practice Requirements (EQIP payment rate includes all practice requirements)

- Crop tree crowns are released removing, felling or killing undesirable competing codominant trees to meet the post treatment condition below.
  Post-treatment Condition
  40+ crop trees per acre remaining with 3 sides free to expand and released from competing crowns.
- Release operations must comply with NC Forest Practice Guidelines and NC Forestry Best Management Practices Manual recommendations related to this practice scenario.
- Practice must be part of a contract that obligates at least $1000.

Considerations

- Having and actively following a forest management plan is required to maintain forestland use-value for property taxation in North Carolina. EQIP forest stand improvement practices should qualify as active management of forest land. Contact the local county tax office for details on present use value rules.
- When possible, time forest stand improvement to minimize disturbance of seasonal wildlife activities. Preserve standing deadwood and cavity/den trees that are valuable wildlife habitat.
- Written contracts with a service provider or vendor are recommended. Contract should cover things like: type, extent, timing or work, participant and vendor responsibilities, and payment provisions.
- Protect treated stands from destructive wildfire where competing vegetation is felled or killed and left. Dead vegetation can be highly flammable for a few years.

- Inspect stand regularly for future forest stand improvement needs...including prescribed burning in stands that are capable of being burned.

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EQIP Practice Eligibility Checklist

The participant CANNOT participate in EQIP for this practice if any of the eligibility certifications are marked 'no'. No EQIP application should be pre-approved in PROTRACTS; no EQIP contract prepared; no EQIP payment authorized!

☐ **yes** ☐ **no** Participant is a private non industrial forest land owner (PNIF); or, landowner meets PNIF and is a party to the EQIP contract.

☐ **yes** ☐ **no** Stand meets pre-treatment conditions. Tree release is determined feasible by a registered forester; and documented appropriately (see Minimum Practice Requirements above). Documentation should include tree type, size, current stocking, description of type and amount of competing trees/vegetation, recommended method and specifications for treatment.

Comments:

EQIP Practice Certification Checklist

Outcome/Result

EQIP payment for this practice scenario IS NOT AUTHORIZED if any of the eligibility certifications are marked 'no'

☐ **yes** ☐ **no** After application of this scenario the stand meets or is expected to meet the appropriate post-treatment condition (see Minimum Practice Requirements above).

☐ **yes** ☐ **no** The completed forest stand improvement operation is in compliance with all state and local laws, regulations and ordinances.

Comments:

Follow-up Recommendations: Visit site with participant the second year after treatment to review need for other forest stand improvement if required.

Certification

Crop Tree Crown Release has been completed on _____ acres (area nearest 0.1 acre) per these practice guidelines and NC NRCS 666-Forest Stand Improvement standard.

_____

Designated Conservationist Date