EQIP 666-Forest Stand Improvement PRACTICE GUIDELINES

EQIP FY 2009 Scenario: Midstory-understory control in pines
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 or an authorized wildlife biologist*. Practice specifications (method, timing, etc.) MUST outlined in a forest management, stewardship, practice, or wildlife management plan written or approved by the appropriate professional (herbicide recommendations require NCDA Category G – Forest Pest Control license).

  * authorized biologists include – NRCS, NC Wildlife Resources Commission, US Fish and Wildlife and Wildlife Society Certified biologists
- This scenario is used in established pine stands that are beyond sapling size (generally > 4 inches diameter at breast height (DBH)) where commercial thinning is not a viable option.

  Pre-treatment Condition

  Pine - adequately stocked stand with a substantial documented hardwood component in the understory or midstory that negatively impacts tree growth or wildlife habitat. NOTE: overstocked pine stands must be appropriately thinned to a stocking level for forest productivity or wildlife habitat to be eligible for this scenario.

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

- Midstory/understory vegetation controlled by mechanical or chemical removal, felling or killing to meet the post treatment condition below.

  Post-treatment Condition

  Pine - Hardwood midstory/understory removed or killed leaving an adequately stocked stand of well distributed trees released on at least three (3) sides.
- Midstory/understory control 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

- Active management of woodland is required to maintain use-value property taxation in North Carolina...a forest management plan developed to maintain use-value property tax should include EQIP forest stand improvement practices.
- A midstory/understory component of some types of hardwoods can be beneficial for wildlife and forest health...where these conditions exist consider preserving beneficial hardwoods in areas of the stand.

- When possible, time forest stand improvement to minimize disturbance of seasonal wildlife activities.
- 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.
- Inspect stand regularly for future forest stand improvement needs…especially thinning**; and,**
- Consider recurring prescribed burning if/when trees are an appropriate size/age. Burning to continue control of understory and midstory is highly recommended in pine stands that are capable of being burned.
- Protect treated stands from destructive wildfire where trees are felled and left. Slash, especially pine slash, can be highly flammable for a number of years after felling.

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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. Midstory/understory control is determined feasible by a registered forester; and documented appropriately (see Minimum Practice Requirements above). Documentation should include tree type, average DBH, 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 post-treatment condition.

☐ **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; and, discuss appropriate application of prescribed fire, if the site is capable of being burned.

Certification

Midstory-understory control 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