

Early Successional Habitat Development/Management Virginia Conservation Practice Job Sheet **647**



Early shrubland habitat provides nesting sites, escape cover and food for wildlife.

Early Successional Habitat

Early successional habitats are areas with vegetation ranging from herbaceous annuals and perennials to persistent shrubs or seedlings to sapling-sized trees. This includes grassland, shrubland and young forests that provide vital nesting, brood rearing, feeding and escape habitats for early-successional wildlife.

Definition: Manage to benefit desired wildlife or natural communities early plant succession.

Purpose: To increase plant community diversity, provide terrestrial wildlife or aquatic habitat for early successional species, and provide habitat for declining species.

Where Used: This practice is applicable on crop, hay, pasture, woodland and urban land uses where vegetative manipulations are needed to fulfill one of the above purposes.

Conservation Management System: Early successional development and management may be a component on conservation management systems that address wildlife resources as part of the conservation system.

Specifications: Practice specifications will be developed individually for each site with the landowner. Specifications will comply with Standard 647, and the decisions concerning location, vegetation manipulation and other specific technical decisions will be documented on this job sheet.

Operation and Maintenance: O&M will consist of recommendations to maintain the desired plant vegetation successional stage, protection from unwanted grazing, renovation activities, pest and invasive species control, and timeliness of any disturbance activities.

Early Successional Job Sheet

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<i>Landowner:</i>	<i>Farm #:</i>
<i>Field(s):</i>	<i>Tract #:</i>
<i>Assisted By:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Drawing No(s):</i>	<i>Signature:</i>

Purpose plant diversity wildlife declining species

Field Number	Successional Stage (grassland, shrubland, young forest land)	Management Type (prescribed grazing, prescribed burning, disking, mowing, drum chop, herbicides, natural succession)	Planned Date and frequency	Other
EX 1	Early shrubland – max 30% cover of shrubs, remaining stand herbaceous	disking	Every 3 rd year	Natural succession; No planting required

Seeding recommendations _____

Shrub species to be planted _____

Site preparation requirements _____

Installation shall be in accordance with the specified drawings, specifications, and special requirements. **No changes are to be made in the drawings or specifications without prior approval from the technical specialist developing the plan.**

Sketch of Layout

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Operations and Maintenance Plan

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- 1) During the year of establishment (or first year of management of habitat):
 - a. Control competing vegetation to allow the planting stock to become established, if applicable. Natural succession is encouraged. Chemical, mechanical or agronomic methods may be used.
 - b. Control and eliminate invasive species.
 - c. Monitor any plantings and replace dead plants.
 - d. Monitor the habitat for desired successional stage.
 - e. Insure protection from grazing livestock when not specifically used as the management technique prescribed by this job sheet.

- 2) After establishment:
 - a. Fertilize periodically to promote vigorous growth and maintain plant vigor.
 - b. Monitor and control invasive species.
 - c. Monitor the habitat for desired successional stage.
 - d. Manage desired successional stage as prescribed by this job sheet (e.g. mowing, disking, and grazing per recommended frequency).
 - e. Protect from grazing unless part of the management plan as described by this job sheet.
 - f. Schedule management activities to avoid the nesting season (April 15 through Aug 15).
 - g. Replace dead or missing plants of planted stock.