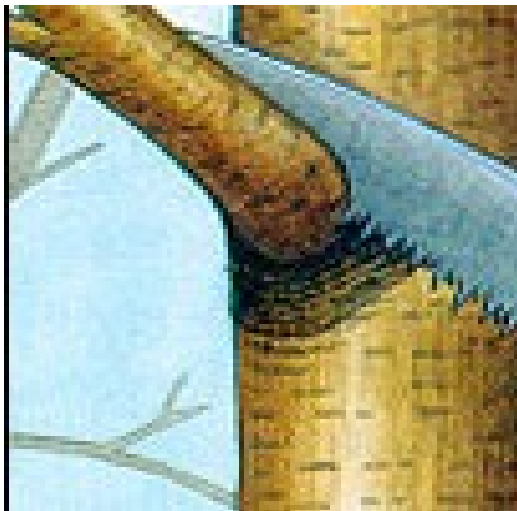


# Tree/Shrub Pruning (660)

## Conservation Practice Jobsheet



### Definition

Removing all or parts of selected branches, leaders or roots from trees and shrubs.

### Purpose

- Improve the appearance of trees or shrubs, e.g., ornamental plants and Christmas trees.
- Improve the quality of wood products.
- Improve the production of plant products, e.g., nuts, fruits, boughs and tips.
- Reduce fire and/or safety hazards.
- Improve the growth and vigor of understory plants.
- Adjust the foliage and branching density or rooting length for other specific intents, such as wind and snow control, noise abatement, access control, and visual screens and managing competition.

- Improve health and vigor of woody plants e.g. disease, insect and injury management.

### Conditions Where Practice Applies

On any area with trees and shrubs.

### Conservation Management System

Tree/Shrub Pruning is an enhancing practice to a conservation management system. Pruning is a labor intensive operation and should only be applied where a high level of management will be carried out. The practice is used to produce high quality (clear) wood on growing trees, reduce fire hazard in forest lands, increase understory vegetation production, increase plant (fruit) quality and production and increase branch/foliage density.

A successful management system is comprised of many different practices, all based on the goals or products desired. Forest stands must be properly stocked, so

pruning wounds can quickly heal and to maximize clear wood growth. Pruning and shearing should be conducted at timed intervals to minimize plant stress and disturbance to seasonal wildlife activities. Debris and vegetative material left on the site after treatment must not present an unacceptable fire or pest hazard or interfere with the intended purpose and other management activities.

### **Plans and Specifications**

Site specific requirements for the installation, operation and maintenance of the practice shall be prepared for each treatment unit in accordance with the Conservation Practice Standard. The site specifications are recorded in the following section of this Jobsheet and are to be discussed with and acknowledged by the client.

**Tree/Shrub Pruning – Jobsheet**

Jobsheet Prepared for					
Client Name:				Owner or Operator:	
Business Name:		Farm No.:		Tract No.:	
Treatment Unit Name:			Treatment Unit Size (acres):		
Jobsheet Prepared by					
Name:			Title:		Date Prepared:

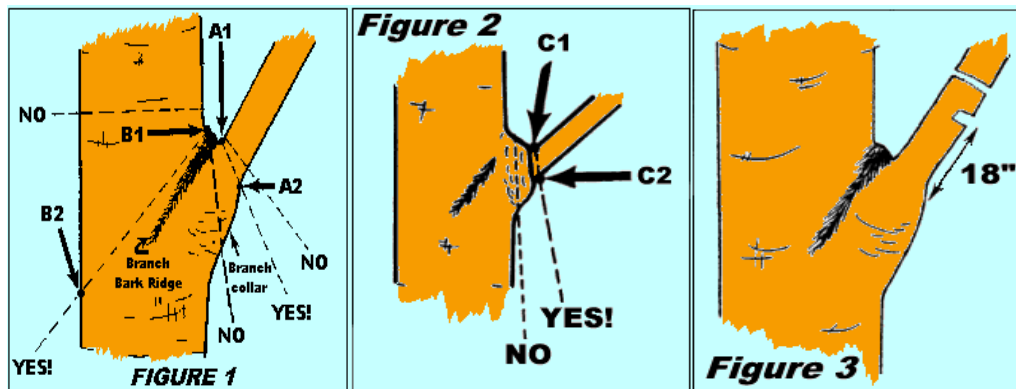
Purpose for Client Installing Practice	
Primary Purpose:	
Other Purpose(s):	

Treatment Description	
Acres to be pruned:	
Species to be pruned:	
Treatment description:	

**General Pruning Guidelines**

To find the proper place to cut a branch, look for the branch collar or branch bark ridge. The collar is the swollen area at the base of the branch and the branch bark ridge is the tissue that separates the branch from the main stem. Make the cuts as close to the collar and branch bark ridge as possible, without damaging them. Do not leave a stub. Refer to Figure 1. Remove a live branch by cutting from A1 to A2. For crown reduction, make the cut from B1 to B2 on the main stem. Removing a dead branch is done in the same manner as a live branch. Refer to Figure 2. Large branches are removed by eliminating the outer portions first. Refer to Figure 3. Make a cut 18 inches from the main stem to the underside of the branch. Then make a cut from the top starting a few inches out from the first cut. Cut completely through at this point. Use the same method when cutting the main stem in crown reduction. By cutting in this manner, the possibility of the branch snapping and causing the bark to tear is avoided. Cut branches smoothly. Do not tear bark or leave jagged splinters. Do not remove more than 50 percent of the live crown at any pruning. Do not treat pruning wounds with paint or wound dressing, as this will not help prevent decay. Pruning equipment must be clean and sharp.

*Additional site specific pruning guidelines, if any:*



**General Requirements Application to All Purposes**

The pruning and shearing method and timing will match the limitations of the site, soils and plants and minimize damage to the residual plant bole/stems and limbs. For a high degree of removal of crown foliage, pruning and shearing shall be done in two or more timed intervals to minimize plant stress.

Debris and vegetative material left on the site after treatment will not present an unacceptable fire or pest hazard or interfere with the intended purpose and other management activities. Refer to the standard Forest Slash Treatment (384).

Burning of removed vegetation shall follow the criteria and considerations listed in the Prescribed Burning (338).

Ground vegetation and/or conditions must be left in a manner to address erosion and other natural resource concerns to acceptable levels.

Disinfect pruning and shearing tools to minimize the spread of pathogens.

*Additional site specific requirements, if any:*

*Additional requirements per specific purposes follow. Remove or edit sections as applicable.*

**Requirements to Improve the Appearance of Trees or Shrubs**

Prune trees and shrubs to the desired shape, and at the appropriate time. Prune with a sharp pruning tool or a mechanical shearer. Prune leaders when they reach the desired length. Prune sides and leaders at the same time, to maintain shape.

*Additional site specific requirements, if any:*

**Requirements to Improve the Quality of Wood Products**

The primary objective of commercial pruning is to increase the amount of clear wood product produced which will bring a higher market price. Due to the financial investment, pruning should be limited to trees on highly productive sites and high value tree species.

Prune young trees when the DBH (diameter at breast height) reaches four to five inches. Do not prune every tree. Select 50 – 100 dominant and co-dominant trees per acre or about twice the number needed for final harvest. Pre-commercial thin or commercial thin first, if needed. Prune trees to heights of marketable logs. Remove all branches, dead or alive, regardless of size. It may be advisable to prune in two to three vertical stages. Consult a qualified Forester for the proper pruning techniques to achieve quality logs that are free of knots and the desired length.

*Additional site specific requirements, if any:*

**Requirements to Improve the Production of Plant Products**

Prune trees and shrubs for fruit, nut, leaf, bough, of other production. Prune at the proper time and pruning pattern to enhance production and quality.

*Additional site specific requirements, if any:*

**Requirements to Reduce Fire and/or Safety Hazards**

Prune lower branches on all trees to a minimum height of 10 feet above ground level. Never remove more than 50 percent of the live canopy. If pruning more than four vertical feet of branches, pull cut branches away from tree bole. If pruning above 10 feet, prune in two vertical intervals unless trees are taller than 40 feet.

*Additional site specific requirement, if any:*

**Requirements to Improve the Growth and Vigor of Understory Plants**

*Site specific requirements to improve the growth and vigor of understory plants, if any:*

**Requirements to Adjust the Foliage and Branching Density or Rooting Length**

Prune branches to increase foliage density for controlling wind, noise reduction, create visual screen and access control. Be sure that the plant species to be pruned will send out lateral branches. Older branches on some species will not produce new branches after pruning.

*Additional site specific requirements, if any:*

**Requirements to Improve Health and Vigor of Woody Plants**

Site specific requirements to improve the health and vigor of woody plants e.g. disease, insect and injury management, if any:

**Job Sketch**

Job sketches, maps and/or photographs showing the location of the treatment unit and pruning requirements that will assist with practice implementation have been prepared and attached to this Jobsheet.

**Operation and Maintenance Requirements** (To be carried out after practice installation throughout the life of the practice.)

The area of treatment will be periodically inspected and follow-up treatments planned as needed. Any new branch development on the previously pruned tree bole shall be removed. Success of the practice shall be determined by measuring the height of pruning and the length of the remaining unpruned branched bole.

If using power equipment, extreme care will be used to carry out practice implementation in a safe and secure manner.

*Additional site specific requirements, if any:*

**Tree/Shrub Pruning – Client’s Acknowledgement and Practice Certifications**

**Client’s Acknowledgement** (To be signed after Jobsheet completed and before practice installation.)

By signing below, I acknowledge that I:

- have reviewed the site specific installation, operation, and maintenance requirements in this Jobsheet and have an understanding of them;
- will install, operate, and maintain the conservation practice in accordance with the requirements;
- will make no changes to the requirements, without prior written approval of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS);
- will obtain all necessary permits and/or rights, and comply with all ordinances and laws pertaining to the installation, operation, and maintenance of the conservation practice, prior to the start of installation; and
- will assume responsibility for notifying all utilities affected by the installation, operation, and maintenance of the conservation practice.

Signature	Date

**Required Job Approval Authority or Certification Type**

Required Job Approval Authority for NRCS Staff (Job Class required per scope of practice to design and/or certify practice.) *Enter Job Class (I, II, III, IV, or V), amount, unit and description:*

Required Certification for Technical Service Providers (Type of certification required to design and/or certify practice installation.)

Forestry

**Practice Design Certification** (To be completed after Jobsheet completed and before practice installation.)

By signing below, I certify that:

- the site specific requirements for the installation, operation, and maintenance of the practice on the client’s treatment unit, as recorded in this Jobsheet, have been prepared in accordance with the Conservation Practice Standard and the guidance in the Conservation Practice Specification; and
- I have the required Job Approval Authority for practice Design, if I am NRCS staff, or the required Certification if I am a Technical Service Provider.

Signature	Date
Print Name	Title

**Practice Installation Certification** (To be completed after practice installation and check out.)

By signing below, I certify that:

- the practice has been installed on the client’s treatment unit in accordance with the site specific installation requirements recorded in this Jobsheet; and
- I have the required Job Approval Authority for practice Implementation, if I am NRCS staff, or the required Certification if I am a Technical Service Provider.

Signature	Date
Print Name	Title