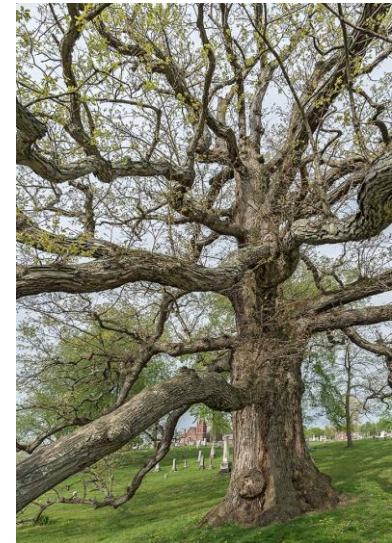


Managing Your Woods for Oaks and Wildlife

Stephanie Downs, Service Forestry Coordinator/NRCS Liaison
Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry



Oak Management

- Complicated!
- Not a one-step process
- Long-term
- Frequent reassessment needed



Management Practices for Oaks

- Invasive plant control
- Forest stand improvement
- Prescribed fire
- Tree planting
- Timber harvesting



Woody Invasive Plant Control

- Removal of invasive trees and shrubs in a woodland
- Increases native diversity and encourages growth of native trees
- Reduces competition
- Improves overall wildlife habitat quality



Herbaceous Invasive Plant Control

- Controlling invasive herbaceous plants
- Reduces competition (even with trees)
- Increases biodiversity and seedling success
- Improves wildlife habitat and food sources



Forest Stand Improvement

- Crop tree release
- Cull tree management
- Mid-story management



Crop Tree Release

- Conducted in young stands
- Favors “crop trees” and helps reduce competition to increase their chances of making it
- Removal or deadening of trees that directly compete to give the crop tree room to grow
- Oaks can be selected as crop trees and released to promote growth and survival



Cull Tree Management

- Removal or deadening of cull trees – those that have little value for meeting landowner objectives to increase growth on better quality or species of trees
- Reduces competition for remaining trees in the stand
- Can be used to increase acorn production on oaks



Mid-Story Management

- Removal or deadening of saplings/understory trees to increase sunlight reaching the forest floor
- In a woodland with canopy oaks and lower levels of shade-producing species (red maple, American beech, ironwood, etc.) with little to no oak reproduction



Prescribed Fire

- Can be used with other practices to reduce competition and increase sunlight to encourage oak reproduction and success
- Requires specific woodland conditions to be effective
- A burn plan written by a Certified Prescribed Burn Manager is required, along with legal permits



Tree Planting

- Primarily works when reforesting an open area
- May require site preparation prior to planting to ensure early survival and protection after planting
- Long-term investment
- Oak species need to be chosen based on site conditions





Timber Harvesting

- If considering a timber harvest, check out resources through Call Before You Cut – <http://callb4ucut.com>
- Not all timber harvesting techniques will result in a new oak-dominated woodland – even if that is what you have now!
- Always use a professional forester to mark and oversee harvest
- Working with a Master Logger is recommended

Timber Harvesting

- Mid-levels of light are required to regenerate oaks
- Single-tree or select cuts do not allow enough sunlight to reach the forest floor
- Clearcuts or deferment cuts allow too much sun to reach the forest floor
- A shelterwood harvest or carefully planned and marked group opening harvest may be used alone or with other management practices to regenerate oak



Funding Sources

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)



Environmental Quality Incentives Program - EQIP

- Incentive program for specific management practices in woodlands (and other land uses)
- Reimbursement program
- Assists financially with non-commercial woodland management





Available Practices

- Brush Management
- Herbaceous Weed Treatment
- Prescribed Burning
- Critical Area Planting
- Multi-story Cropping
- Woody Residue Treatment
- Firebreak
- Wildlife Habitat Planting
- Mulching
- Tree/Shrub Site Prep
- Tree/Shrub Establishment
- Upland Wildlife Habitat
- Early Successional Habitat
- Structures for Wildlife
- Forest Trails & Landings
- Forest Stand Improvement

Conservation Stewardship Program - CSP

- Longer contract length than EQIP
- Whole property is assessed and included, not just woodlands
- Annual payment for maintaining good conservation already occurring
- Enhancements and practices available – designed to enhance existing management





Landowner Eligibility

- Must control or own non-industrial private forestland
- Comply with Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) limitations
- Comply with highly erodible land and wetland conservation requirements
- Have a written forest management plan
- Complete all required paperwork and sign a contract prior to starting work

Benefits of NRCS Incentives Programs

- Reimbursement program for non-commercial woodland improvement work
- Provides a means to hire someone to complete difficult and time-consuming projects
- Increases the health and sustainability of your woods and helps to meet your landowner objectives!





EQIP and CSP Information

- Deadline to apply for 2022 is January 14th
- For more information, contact your state service forester
- To apply, you must:
- Establish farm record with county Farm Service Agency
- Complete application for program with county Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

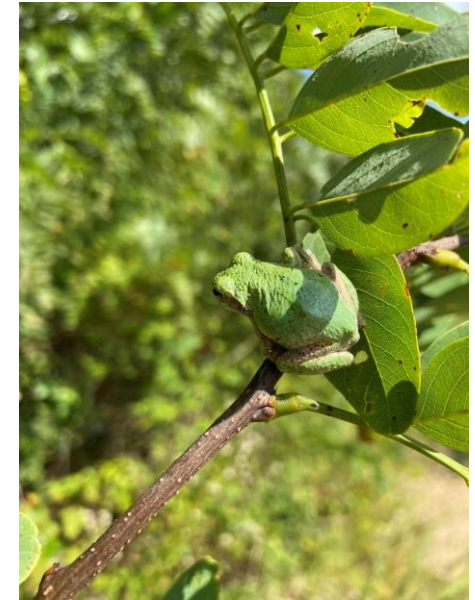


Resources

- **Service Forester Directory:**
<https://ohiodnr.gov/wps/portal/gov/odnr/discover-and-learn/safety-conservation/about-odnr/forestry/landowner-assistance>
- **Farm Service Agency Directory:**
<https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=oh&agency=fsa>
- **NRCS Directory:**
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/oh/contact/local/>



Thank You!



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