

# BUILDING A SLASH WALL AT THE MOOREHEAD WOODLOT

The Moorehead's recently implemented its Forest Management Plan by conducting a thinning project and establishing a 7-acre habitat clearing surrounded by a slash wall on their woodlot in Putnam, CT.

Their Forest Management Plan and Bird Habitat Plan both recommended that early successional forest be created for birds and other wildlife that utilize such habitat. This location was chosen due to its potential for oak regeneration, which is lacking in southern New England, and its proximity to other diverse habitats including an open water wetland and stream corridor.

The habitat clearing includes a few retained oaks per acre, as well as a few standing dead snags and cavity trees. The logging contractor (David Gokey of Green Development, LLC) utilized tree tops and the smaller material on-site to build the slash wall, which needs to be 10' high and 20' wide.

Slash walls to keep out deer could be an alternative to the more expensive 8' tall deer fencing. Slash walls here in the northeast are being established on an experimental basis, led by Dr. Peter Smallidge at Cornell University's Arnot Forest in Ithaca, New York. They've established several slash wall operations, with the largest at about 60 acres in size.

More information, gallery, new publication available at [www.slashwall.info](http://www.slashwall.info).

The wall includes 8' tall wire fence gated openings. This will allow us to observe the effectiveness of the slash wall over time. Did we build the slash wall wide enough to dissuade adult deer from jumping in? What sort of tree regeneration will become established with no or minimized deer browse? How will other plants respond, such as the wildflowers, forbs, and shrubs, and the wildlife that nest in them as part of a healthy understory? And what sort of habitat values will the slash wall itself provide? Will it harbor non-native invasive plants?



## NRCS PRACTICES & COST-SHARE OPTIONS

Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) 647 – Early Successional Habitat Development & Management: Scenario: Heavy mechanical high intensity cut. Their FM plan recommended early successional forest be created for wildlife. This location has great potential for oak regeneration and is near other diverse habitat.

CPS 612 – Tree / Shrub Establishment: Scenario: Tree/shrub regeneration area with protection. The slash wall will protect natural regeneration following the creation of the early successional forest.

CPS 472 – Access Control: Scenario: Trails/roads access control. Two gates allow access for monitoring, fire suppression, and future stand tending.

## ECONOMICS OF BUILDING A SLASH WALL

Equipment & Labor Costs: (7 ac. = 1,957 lin.ft.)

Feller Buncher 46 hours @ \$300/hr = \$13,800

Skidder 16 hours @ \$250/hr = \$4,000 = **(\$17,800)**

Cost per acre = \$2,543 (\$9.10/linear foot)

Value of Material within the wall itself:

3,300 tons of pine & hardwood pulp (estimated)

Net Chip value = \$3,300 (\$0 stumpage value)

Net Stumpage Value within the 7-acre Clearing:

135 Mbf WP & 15.5 Mbf oak = \$21,875

NRCS cost-share revenue: = \$16,155

7 acre hab. clearing: \$1,747/ac

2,000 lin. ft. of slash wall: \$458/ac

2 gates: \$695