

Overview

This standard is about the skills you need to identify, plan and oversee habitat management work. This involves identifying the need for work to be carried out and planning the necessary work. It also involves the selection and briefing of a suitable workforce and evaluating that the habitat management work achieves its objectives.

The standard is applicable to the management of all types of habitats and covers the full range of appropriate management techniques from the coppicing of native woodlands, through the management of grazing regimes to the cutting of reed beds and the control of erosion. It also covers the management of habitats for a variety of reasons.

You must carry out your work in line with appropriate permissions and licences. Permissions and licences may relate to work on designated sites (sites of scientific interest, nature reserves, conservation areas etc.), to specific types of work (tree felling, etc.) or to the presence of protected species within that site.

This standard is designed for countryside staff supervising habitat management work.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 use information to identify the need for, and objectives of, habitat management
- P2 recognise the environmental value of sites and take account of this in your planning
- P3 select appropriate habitat management methods and identify the resources required to achieve the objectives
- P4 carry out risk assessments and ensure health and safety requirements are met in your area of responsibility
- P5 establish measures for the recycling or disposal of waste and superfluous materials in accordance with legal and other requirements
- P6 identify the most appropriate workforce for the planned habitat management work
- P7 seek agreement from all relevant interested parties and ensure all necessary permissions are in place
- P8 produce work plans and specifications for the identified work in a suitable format
- P9 brief those carrying out the work and check their understanding
- P10 oversee habitat management work as it is taking place
- P11 take required corrective actions without delay, and inform the appropriate people of any changes that may affect them
- P12 maintain effective communications with those involved in the work
- P13 ensure records are completed in line with organisational and legislative requirements
- P14 ensure the habitat management work has been completed in accordance with work plans and specifications
- P15 monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of habitat management in creating desired conditions over appropriate timescales
- P16 use the outcomes of your monitoring to inform the planning of future habitat management work

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 how to identify the need for habitat management
- K2 how to identify the objectives of required habitat management
- K3 how to recognise the environmental value of sites and how this affects the planning of work
- K4 how your planned work fits into local organisational objectives, site management plans and biodiversity action plans
- K5 how to identify hazards and assess risks, and develop safe working procedures
- K6 correct methods of disposing of waste and excess material
- K7 how to select a workforce that is appropriate for the planned work
- K8 how to determine the resources required to carry out the work
- K9 how and when to seek agreement for your plans
- K10 the circumstances where permissions or licences are required and how to go about obtaining them
- K11 the importance of producing work plans and specifications and how to do this
- K12 the importance of how to schedule and oversee habitat management work that is being carried out
- K13 the importance of briefing the workforce and how to do this
- K14 how to identify and minimise the effect of problems or disruptions including an awareness of possible corrective actions
- K15 how to establish and maintain systems to monitor work and how to identify potential improvements
- K16 methods of communication that are likely to promote understanding and goodwill
- K17 the importance of maintaining complete and accurate records that comply with organisational procedures
- K18 how to evaluate the success of habitat management work following completion
- K19 the importance of longer-term monitoring to determine whether habitat management has been effective and the appropriate methods for doing so
- K20 how to use the outcomes of monitoring to inform future habitat management work

Glossary

Habitat-specific work:

- opening up of woodland canopy or coppicing to promote woodland wildflowers
- management to encourage the growth of food plants for specific insects
- improving native species through re-introductions
- control of invasive, non-native plant and animal species
- manipulation of water levels
- erosion control
- scrub control in reed beds, grasslands or heathlands
- site amelioration and habitat creation in urban or post-industrial sites
- creation of open areas in woodland through selective felling
- management of marine habitats improving marsh, wetland, seagrass or riparian communities through re-vegetation and natural re-contouring of landscapes
- improving shellfish beds through seeding juvenile shellfish, creating adult spawner sanctuaries, introducing appropriate substrates etc.
- working with coastal and marine authorities to develop ecologically compatible dredging, shoreline protection and recreational activities
- control of grazing animals

Information:

- site monitoring
- reports from others
- site management plan
- biodiversity action plan

Objectives:

- to create or maintain suitable conditions for particular species
- to create or maintain a desired mix of habitats for access and recreation
- to conserve desirable physical or archaeological features
- to reduce the pressures of human activity on habitats
- to promote site safety

Environmental value:

- ecological
- archaeological
- recreational

Resources:

- natural
- physical
- human
- financial

Work plans and specifications:

- schedule
- methods and procedures
- legal requirements
- standard of outcome required

Brief:

- work specification
- environmental value of the site and its implications for the planned work

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Suite Environmental Conservation; Treework; Agricultural Crop Production; Crofters and Smallholders

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