

Establishment Guide

UPLAND & MEADOW SITES

UPLAND SITES are characterized as being dry most of the time. The soil is sandy, shale-like clay, with very little topsoil and subject to drought.

Examples of UPLAND SITES:

- ◆ Naturally rocky soil that has been subject to erosion or steep road cuts
- ◆ Abandoned building sites and industrial sites

MEADOW SITES are characterized as having moderately well-drained, silt loam, and clay-like, fertile soil, with moderate organic content.

Examples of MEADOW SITES:

- ◆ Abandoned farm fields
- ◆ Previous lawns
- ◆ Vacant land
- ◆ Roadsides



SITE PREPARATION

Competition from invasive or undesirable vegetation is the most limiting factor in meadow preparation. Black plastic may be used to smother weeds in small areas before planting. Eradicate existing vegetation by having a licensed spray technician apply an approved herbicide; i.e., Glyphosate (Roundup®), or tilling the weeds into the soil. Good pre-seeding weed control may require spraying two applications of Glyphosate (at least two weeks apart). Close mowing two weeks prior to spraying is recommended to stimulate weed growth. Glyphosate needs green growth to carry spray to the weed roots. The second application is needed when the first spraying does not control the weeds. If excess dead plant material remains on the surface, burning or tilling may be necessary to get good seed to soil contact and sunlight penetration.

Habitat: Upland and meadow sites are generally in full sun for at least one half of the day, with good air circulation.

Fertility: Natural fertility on these sites is generally adequate. No fertilizer or lime is needed. Check your soil pH and select species adapted to that pH.

Seeding Method: Hand seed, broadcast, hydroseed, or drill seed.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

Grassy weeds or persistent perennials can re-establish in this type of soil. Monitoring and controlling weeds is very critical in the first and second years. Burning (by experienced professionals) about every three years, in early spring, can prevent shrub invasion.

FIRST YEAR MAINTENANCE

Observation of the growth of desired species and weed competition is essential to making maintenance decisions. When the undesirable vegetation reaches 12"-18" tall, mow to no less than 6" high (with a mower or weed eater) to prevent the weeds from going to seed. Most native plants will grow deeper root systems than tops in the first year, and mowing to 6"-8" high will not hurt them. This allows sunlight to reach desired species. **DO NOT MOW WITH A LAWN MOWER.** Mowing too close encourages weedy species.

SECOND YEAR MAINTENANCE

Mow once, close to the ground, in early spring. This allows the soil to warm more quickly and young native plants to emerge. If you postpone mowing until early spring, birds and other wildlife can enjoy your native site during the winter.

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