

Aspen Regeneration & Restoration Grant

Information & Practice Descriptions

Lawrence County Conservation District was awarded a grant to complete regeneration and restoration of quaking aspen on private lands. Grant funds will assist landowners with the costs of completing projects on their land. Aspen is a tree species that is dependent upon disturbance (fire, harvesting) for regeneration. Over time, disturbance has decreased, leading to the decline of aspen across the landscape in the Black Hills.

There will be three practices eligible for cost share assistance as part of this grant. Those projects implementing all three practices will receive preference for funding. Funding may be provided if it is available at the conclusion of the grant for those implementing partial projects or individual practices.

The maximum reimbursement for a single applicant/project will be \$10,000.

Practice 1: Conifer Removal/Select Cutting of Aspen (Thinning & Slash Disposal)

This involves removing pine and spruce from within and around aspen areas. Select over mature aspen may also be cut to stimulate regeneration. All slash must be treated within the unit (i.e. piling, removal, chipping, etc.) Cost estimates and reimbursements will be on a per acre basis. Cost share will be 50% and the maximum allowable rate will be \$650/acre. **Maximum reimbursement will be \$325/ac.**

Practice 2: Mechanical Root Stimulation

This practice involves 'ripping' the lateral roots around the edges of aspen stands to stimulate suckering of new shoots. It can be completed with an implement attached to equipment such as a tractor or bulldozer. Disking results in excessive disturbance of roots and is not an approved practice. Cost estimates and reimbursements will be on a *per hour* basis, so any associated move in/out costs should be built in to the estimate as such. Cost share will be 50% and the maximum allowable rate will be \$175/hr. **Maximum reimbursement will be \$87.50/hr.**

Practice 3: Fencing

Fencing must be used to protect new aspen growth from browsing and grazing. A specialized fence (woven wire, heavy construction, etc.) must be used to be effective. Fencing must be **at least 5 feet** tall to be eligible for cost share. Fencing must also be maintained until new growth is well established. Fencing will be installed 35+ feet away from existing aspen areas, depending on tree height. Cost estimates and reimbursements will be on a linear foot basis. Cost share will be 50% and the maximum allowable rate will be \$1.21/Lf. **Maximum reimbursement will be \$0.61/Lf.**

The overall goal is to implement all three practices for the optimal outcome of projects. Thinning will enhance the stand conditions. The root stimulation will regenerate and expand the aspen area. Fencing will protect the new growth allowing the stand to persist over time.

For more detailed information, or to schedule a site evaluation for potential projects, contact Parks Brigman, 605-394-2395, email: john.brigman@state.sd.us or Allyssa Gregory, 605-584-2300, ext.217, allyssa.gregory@state.sd.us. Both are foresters with the state Division of Resource Conservation & Forestry.