Standard 3

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PLANTING AND REPLANTING TREES

Part of managing your forest sustainably involves ensuring that there will be another generation of trees. **Standard 3** addresses restocking after a harvest or converting open areas to tree cover. A general rule is to restock harvested sites within five years of a harvest—and sometimes sooner if required by local regulations. This Standard also addresses the best practices for reforesting your woodlands with appropriate tree and plant species.

Performance Measure 3.1

*Reforestation or afforestation **shall** be achieved by a suitable process that ensures adequate stocking levels.*

INDICATOR 3.1.1

*Harvested forest land **shall** achieve adequate stocking of **desired species** reflecting the **landowner's objectives**, within five years after harvest, or within a time interval as specified by applicable regulation.*

Fires, floods, hurricanes, ice storms, or a pest outbreak may also be reasons for you to replant or restore your forest. A natural disaster sometimes provides an opportunity to plant different species. In the United States Southeast, for example, some woodland owners are planting fire- and hurricane-resistant native longleaf pine to replace less-resilient loblolly pine species. Or, you may decide to plant trees that will attract a desired animal to your land.

STANDARD 3:
Reforestation and Afforestation

Landowner completes timely restocking of desired species of trees on harvested sites and nonstocked areas where tree growing is consistent with land-use practices and the **landowner's objectives.**

In all these cases, be sure to consult with your forester or natural-resource experts to help you make the best decisions on what to plant and when. Federal and state agencies usually have stocking guides that you can use as a reference when choosing seedlings.

RESOURCES

- Find your State Forestry Agency: www.mylandplan.org/your-state-forestry-agency
- Find your state extension forestry experts: www.mylandplan.org/extension-foresters
- Learn about how to choose the right trees for the right place, as well as other resources on planting trees: www.mylandplan.org/plant-trees

Guidance on Using Native Species

The official Guidance for **Standard 3** recommends that, whenever appropriate for your land and objectives, you use native, locally grown species that are well-adapted to your local site conditions when planting or replanting.

Non-native species are not, generally, used by family woodland owners in the United States. If you plan to use a non-native species, the Guidance cautions, you, "**should** consult or seek guidance from qualified natural-resource professionals, such as agencies, academic institutions, or professional associations, to ensure that potential negative impacts on the ecosystem and on the genetic integrity of native species and local provenances have been evaluated, and to determine whether negative impacts can be avoided or minimized."

TREE-PLANTING CHECKLIST

√ Look for large, high-quality seedlings with sizeable roots, as these have a better shot at surviving.

√ If your site is remote or hard to access or if your tree species is hard to find in seedling form, consider starting from seed.

√ Do not plant until after the ground thaws or the danger of frost has passed in your area.

√ Choose a cool (40- to 60-degree) overcast day with little or no wind. This is an ideal setting for seedlings, particularly hardwood seedlings. Not sure when to plant? Check with your forester to choose the ideal time for planting in your location.

√ Plant each tree using the appropriate technique for planting on level ground or on a slope. Again, your forester can help.

√ Consider machine planting for large sites, as this is less labor intensive, permits precise spacing and planting depths, and may lead to higher survival rates for your seedlings.

√ Make sure your newly planted trees get enough water—ideally about 25 gallons per tree, per week.

√ Apply mulch around each tree to reduce evaporation—just not right on the trunk, which can grow moldy if mulched.

√ Keep a weed-free area around each seedling that is at least three or four feet in diameter. Weed control is crucial in the first two or three years of seedling growth.

Replanting a forest after a devastating fire

Nancy Livingston, Hancock, Wisconsin

"Like a phoenix rising" is how forest owner Nancy Livingston describes the 180 acres on her 280-acre Hancock, Wisconsin, Tree Farm that are bursting with growth after being completely destroyed by wildfire in 2005.

Reforesting Livingston's land became a community effort that garnered support from businesses and individuals in her community, from local fourth-graders who planted the first trees after the fire, to the Plum Creek Timber Company, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, and even the University of Wisconsin women's basketball team. With their help, Livingston and a host of volunteers are slowly restoring her burned acres, one seedling at a time. More than 150,000 trees have been planted since the fire.

Livingston lives in a farmhouse surrounded by 100-year-old white pines on land originally purchased by her father as a retirement property in the 1950s. After the fire, 70-year-old Livingston took a job at a local convenience store so she could continue to pay her property taxes, and refinanced her home to pay for the clearing of the burned acres and for the purchase and planting of new trees.

Her restoration plan includes providing habitat for the endangered Karner blue butterfly, and planting jack pines, red pines, and blueberry to attract federally endangered Kirtland's warblers. Once found only in Michigan, the birds now nest just eight miles from Livingston's home; her reforestation plan aims to make sure they stay.

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