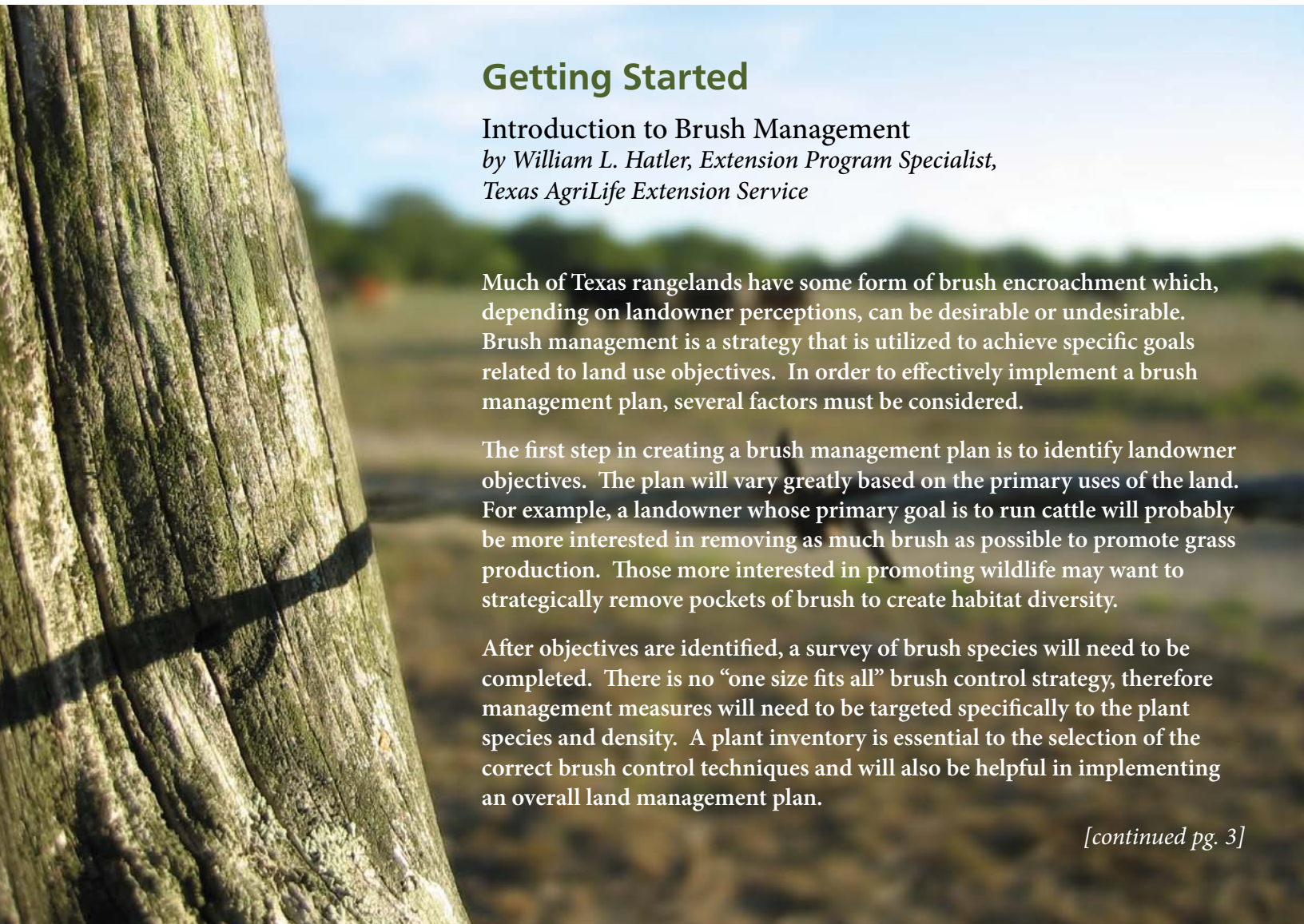




Texas Forest Service ■ The Nature Conservancy of Texas
 Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center ■ Lower Colorado River Authority
 Natural Resources Conservation Service ■ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 Texas AgriLife Extension ■ Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
 U.S. Forest Service ■ Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board



Getting Started

Introduction to Brush Management

*by William L. Hatler, Extension Program Specialist,
 Texas AgriLife Extension Service*

Much of Texas rangelands have some form of brush encroachment which, depending on landowner perceptions, can be desirable or undesirable. Brush management is a strategy that is utilized to achieve specific goals related to land use objectives. In order to effectively implement a brush management plan, several factors must be considered.

The first step in creating a brush management plan is to identify landowner objectives. The plan will vary greatly based on the primary uses of the land. For example, a landowner whose primary goal is to run cattle will probably be more interested in removing as much brush as possible to promote grass production. Those more interested in promoting wildlife may want to strategically remove pockets of brush to create habitat diversity.

After objectives are identified, a survey of brush species will need to be completed. There is no “one size fits all” brush control strategy, therefore management measures will need to be targeted specifically to the plant species and density. A plant inventory is essential to the selection of the correct brush control techniques and will also be helpful in implementing an overall land management plan.

[continued pg. 3]

The Central Texas Conservation Partnership is a collaborative effort of several public and private natural resource organizations. Our goal is to provide a centralized, accessible resource for important information and guidelines for effectively conserving the property you already have or enhancing your property to meet your goals. By visiting the website, you will learn about a wide array of training opportunities, programs, services and technical assistance offered by various Central Texas land management agencies and organizations.

www.TexasConservation.org

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Partner Highlight

As a conservation and reclamation district, one of LCRA's primary responsibilities is the preservation and conservation of the lower Colorado River basin's natural resources. LCRA is continuing its rich history of demonstrating and promoting land stewardship by providing education and awareness of long-term land conservation opportunities, such as voluntary conservation easements on private lands. Conservation easements are land management tools that enable landowners to permanently conserve and protect their family's farm and ranchland heritage.



Through co-sponsorship of free workshops, LCRA educates private landowners interested in conservation

easements and other land management activities. LCRA has also produced a video that features Central Texas landowners who are conservation easement donors. It tells the story of their lives, their land and their legacy of conservation. For more information, call Lee Fritsch at 1-800-776-5272, Ext. 4718, or Bobby Humphrey at 1-800-776-5272, Ext. 7155.

LCRA is a conservation and reclamation district created by the Texas Legislature in 1934. It has no taxing authority and operates solely on utility revenues and fees generated from supplying energy, water and community services.



What's on the Web

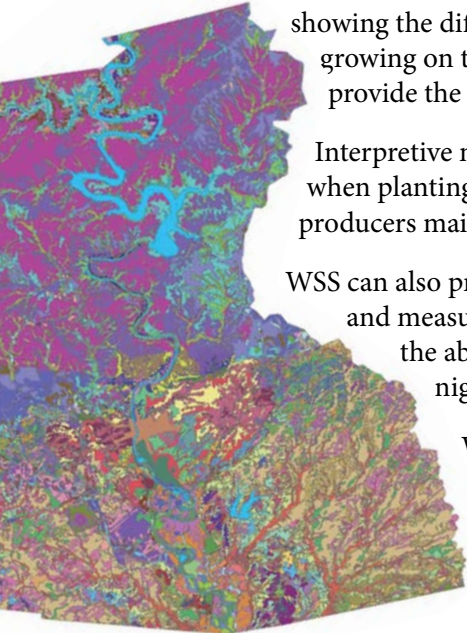
The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has completed the inventory of all the different soil types and their locations for the 254 counties in Texas. The soil inventory provides aerial maps with soil boundaries, soil descriptions, and tables of soil properties and shows how the soil can be used. The soil data is available free of charge online on the Web Soil Survey (WSS) at <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>.

WSS can assist landowners in making decisions relative to farming and ranching operations by, for example, showing the differences in forestland ecological sites and the trees and other plants capable of growing on that site. WSS can also identify the most erosive soils and which soil sites will provide the greatest benefit from aerial spraying or other brush management practices.

Interpretive maps provided through WSS can help the land user determine yield potentials when planting crops and implementing pasture and hayland plantings. The WSS can help producers maintain profits while reducing erosion and improving soil and water quality.

WSS can also provide landowners and agricultural producers with topographic maps and measuring tools to help them manage their resources. Users also have the ability to save and print information and maps, free of charge, day or night.

WSS can help determine sites for homes, roads, and pipelines. It can be used in conservation plans, farm and ranch appraisals, nutrient management plans, and range and wildlife management. WSS can also help identify risks and hazards associated with different soil types.



[continued - Introduction to Brush Management] Once the objectives are identified and brush surveys have been completed, the brush management measures can be selected and implemented. Several techniques for removing brush are available including mechanical, chemical, biological and prescribed burning. Selecting the appropriate technique or combination thereof will be based on plant species, land attributes and location, economics and personal preference.

Evaluation of results is also an essential part of a brush management plan. Following the implementation of management measures, the effectiveness of the selected techniques must be determined. This ensures that the landowner will identify ineffective treatments and adjust the management plan accordingly.

Brush management can be very costly and time consuming, and in order to economically achieve the desired results it is important to have a long term plan. Thinking through all of these steps prior to initiating ground work will help landowners realize success with brush management on their property. There are a wealth of resources available to help landowners develop a brush management plan, including local Texas AgriLife Extension Agents and Natural Resources Conservation Service personnel. Additional information can be found at <http://essmextension.tamu.edu>.

Grass, Forb, Woody

SIDEOATS GRAMA (*Bouteloua curtipendula*)

Side-oats grama is a bunchy or sod-forming grass with 2-3 ft. stems in erect, wiry clumps. Purplish, oat-like spikelets uniformly line one side of the stem, bleaching to a tan color in the fall. The basal foliage often turns shades of purple and red in fall. This is a perennial warm season grass; clump forming. Two varieties are recognized: variety *curtipendula* is shorter and more rhizomatous and ranges from southern Canada to Argentina.

Variety *caespitosa* spreads more by seed than by rhizomes, is more of a bunchgrass, and is restricted mostly to southwestern North America.

Not only is Sideoats Grama the **state grass of Texas**, but this medium-tall grass mixes well in plantings with spring wildflowers, because it stays short in the spring. Birds love the ripe seeds. In nature, this plant increases rapidly when its site is damaged by drought or grazing.

Plant information provided by Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Native Plant Database
<http://www.wildflower.org>



TEXAS BLUEBONNET (*Lupinus texensis*)

Texas lupine has larger, more sharply pointed leaves and more numerous flower heads than similar lupines. Light-green, velvety, palmately compound leaves (usually five leaflets) are born from branching, 6-18 in. stems. These stems are topped by clusters of up to 50 fragrant, blue, pea-like flowers. The tip of the cluster is conspicuously white.

This is the species often planted by highway departments and garden clubs and is one of the six *Lupinus* species which are the **state flower of Texas**.

PECAN (*Carya illinoensis*)

The largest of the hickories, pecan typically grows 70-100 ft. and can reach 160 ft. It is massive-trunked, with stout branches supporting a symmetrical, oval crown. Slate gray bark remains smooth for years. Pinnately-compound, deciduous leaves are 12-20 in. long with 11-17 leaflets. Midrib of the leaflet off center with the wider part of the blade toward the leaf tip. Flowers inconspicuous, male in elongate clusters, both sexes on same tree. Fruit an oblong nut enclosed in a thin husk splitting open at maturity, husk often persistent on the tree for weeks after the nut has fallen.

Pecan is one of the most valuable cultivated plants originating in North America and the **state tree of Texas**. Improved varieties with large, thin-shelled nuts are grown in plantations or orchards in the Southeast; pecans are also harvested locally from wild trees. The wood is used for furniture, flooring, veneer, and charcoal for smoking meats. The word pecan is of Algonquin origin. The Latin species name is from an old term, Illinois nuts, and refers to the region where traders found wild trees and nuts. Native Americans may have extended the range by planting. This tree of the Mississippi valley was unknown to British colonists on the Atlantic coast. Thomas Jefferson planted seeds at Monticello and gave some to George Washington; now these Pecans are the oldest trees in Mount Vernon.





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Interview a Professional

Renee Burks of the Texas Forest Service (Meridian, TX Office)

Q: Tell us about yourself.

A: I am a graduate of Stephen F. Austin S.U. with a major in Forest Management. I have been with TFS since April of 1991. I am married with 4 children; two of which are grown and married, one in college and one in high school.

Q: What kind of work do you do in Central Texas?

A: I was placed in North Central Texas originally to help folks that were dealing with Oak Wilt. Since then my job has expanded to conservation education, urban forestry and forest stewardship – assisting landowners in the management of their natural resources.

Q: What is the most rewarding part of the job?

A: Working with individuals who are concerned about their natural resources and their desires to manage them responsibly. Also, the opportunity to see a wide variety of landscapes within Central Texas and appreciate their natural and unique beauty.

Q: What do you do when you're not working?

A: Free time revolves around family. When I'm able to sneak away you will often find me with my nose in a book.

Q: What advice do you have for landowners who might be starting a project on their property?

A: Find as much information as you can about whatever project your fixing to tackle. There is an abundance of natural resource agencies out here that are more than happy to provide a wealth of information. Perhaps the most important thing to remember is to have patience; very few of the recommendations that we provide show immediate change but often take a series of stages to reach the desired goal.



Find a local professional
www.TexasConservation.org