**Section 1536.51 Timber Stand Improvement**

The purpose of Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) is to increase tree growth and quality, improve forest vigor and health, influence tree species composition, enhance diversity of native flora, and improve wildlife habitat in forest stands by eliminating certain trees and vegetation to achieve optimal forest conditions. TSI practice is intended to benefit high quality desirable tree species in the dominant, codominant or intermediate canopy layer. TSI is implemented on the ground by following a detailed quantitative and qualitative prescription.

a) Cost-share is only authorized for TSI based upon a silvicultural prescription, approved by the IDNR Forester, developed using forest stand analysis that supports the purpose for this practice and the goals and objectives stated in the Plan.

b) Cost-Share Rates/Specifications

1) Timber Stand Improvement – The flat rate payment for this practice is a variable amount ranging from $45 to $60 per acre. The base cost is a variable amount ranging from $60 to $80 per acre. The Plan preparer shall conduct a careful field inspection of current tree cover and condition to determine the appropriate category and cost-share rate. The cost-share categories and cost-share rates are:

A) Kill a minimum of 10 square feet for BA (basal area) per acre and release a minimum of 15 desired trees per acre. The flat rate payment for this practice is $45 per acre with a base cost of $60 per acre; or

B) Kill a minimum of 30 square feet of BA per acre and release a minimum of 25 desired trees per acre. The flat rate payment for this practice is $60 per acre with a base cost of $80 per acre.

2) Work will be accomplished using approved methods, including cutting, girdling, herbicide treatment, or a combination of methods to favor and release trees to leave an adequately stocked stand composed of high quality, well-distributed trees. All cut trees not girdled must be completely severed from their stump. Stocking guides and species selection shall be determined by referencing literature and tables in "Recommended Silviculture and Management Practices for Illinois Hardwood Forest Types", Illinois Technical Forestry Association (1972), Illinois Cooperative Extension Service, University of Illinois, 110 Mumford Hall, Urbana IL 61081 or in "Crop Tree Management in Eastern Hardwoods", Arlyn Perkey 1993, NA-TP-19-93, USDA Forest Service, Morgantown WV (no later editions or amendments are incorporated).

3) Herbicide application treatments are required in implementing this practice when utilizing any method. Applications of herbicide must conform to and follow the label on appropriate herbicide products that are labeled and approved by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Herbicide application may be omitted on cut stems or stumps of any desirable forest species noted in the Plan or on certain other species if approved by the IDNR Forester.

4) Cost-share assistance will not be approved for any acre from which commercial products from that acre are sold or traded in the process of carrying out the timber stand improvement practices.

(Source: Added at 41 Ill. Reg. 4272, effective March 31, 2017)