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Dear woodland owners,

Here are some of the primary ways we use herbicides to control competing brush in forest settings.

Hack and Squirt

This method of controlling unwanted trees and large bigleaf maple clumps is very easy and effective. The tools required are a small hatchet and a trigger-squeeze squirt bottle of chemical.

Timing: Good to do most any time of year except during the spring sap flow, when the buds swell and leaves begin to grow. Avoid the months of April through May.

Bigleaf Maple, Madrone, and other species mix:

50:50 mix of Imazapyr 4 SL® + water.

Method: For large bigleaf maples with single stems, hack once every 3 inches around the stem.

For bigleaf maple resprout clumps of stems, such as from a stump, the methods are different. It works best on older clumps that are usually at about 4-7 years after the original tree is cut down. Then hack the 12-15 largest stems once each and squirt in the same 50:50 mix.

Red Alder and Douglas fir control mix: 100% Glyphosate 5.4

Method: For most red alder and most other hardwood tree species, hack once every 3 inches around the stem. Squirt in about 1 milliliter into each hack. Be sure to hack through the bark and into the cambium layer. Any chemical that drips outside of the hack will not help kill the tree.

Douglas fir and most conifers: 100% Glyphosate 5.4

Method: To control conifers in places such as a chemical thinning, hack through the bark, into the cambium and squirt about 1 ml of straight Glyphosate 5.4. Make the hacks closely spaced around the tree, about about 1-2 inches apart. Avoid the months of April through May.

Cut Stump Treatment

Since many hardwood trees resprout vigorously after cutting, an application of herbicide to the cambium layer can prevent this. The cambium is the only living tissue of a tree and it lies just inside the bark.

Mix: Usually we use full strength herbicide out of the jug. Garlon 3A, Garlon 4 Ultra, and Glyphosate 5.4 are most often used.

Method: Cut the tree stump low and flat and try to avoid any tears in the bark of the stump. Stumps cut lower than 2 feet tall are best to prevent resprouting.

For the use of Garlon 3A or Glyphosate 5.4, apply the chemical to the stump within 15 minutes of cutting.

For the use of Garlon 4 Ultra, apply the chemical within 1-3 weeks of cutting.

Low Volume Basal Spraying

This spray method is used to kill smaller resprouted clumps of hardwoods such as Bigleaf Maple, cherry, alder, willow, and others. The best time of year for this control is fall and winter when the leaves are off and access to the base is easier.

Mix: 20 % Garlon 4 Ultra + 80% WEB Oil. The WEB Oil is used for penetration of the bark and to carry the herbicide throughout the stems. The resprouts should be at least 1 year old since cutting to be big enough to catch chemical and kill the roots.

Method: Spray the lower 12 inches of the resprouted stems lightly on all sides. The bark should be dry and free of moss and piles of leaves. Spray as if you are painting a car...no runs and puddling, hence the name, Low Volume Basal.

Spot liquid herbicide sprays: Meter-Jet®

This tool is attached to the hose of your backpack sprayer and is a trigger with an adjustable liquid reservoir, a long wand and special solid cone nozzle. Care must be taken to calibrate the amount of liquid sprayed per trigger pull...we recommend about 12 milliliters per pull.

Mix: Most herbicides can be used with this tool, such as Oust™, Velpar®, Westar®, and Atrazine 4L. Refer to the labels for rates.

Method: This will spray a solid even cone of herbicide + water mix over a 3-4 foot diameter circle. Measure carefully the size of circle you are spraying to calculate the area covered, the amount of liquid used and then calculate the amount of herbicide to mix in with the water.

Waving Wand Hand Broadcast Spraying

Using a backpack sprayer, use a larger bore adjustable nozzle to walk at a comfortable pace while spraying horizontally in front of you while waving the wand left and right. This method takes a lot of practice, nozzle selection, and measurements to get good, even coverage on an area. Practice with water and a dye for best results. This method works well for small brush and weeds under knee high. A good applicator can cover many acres a day!

Mix: Most herbicides can be used with this tool, such as Oust, Velpar, Westar, Rodeo, Garlon, and Atrazine. Refer to the labels for rates.

Spot foliage brush spraying

Using a backpack sprayer you can spot spray the leaves of most brush for good control.

Mix: Most deciduous brush can be controlled with Glyphosate 5.4, Imazapyr 4 SL, or Garlon. The best time for long-term control is in the late summer and fall before leaf coloration. The applied herbicide enters the leaves and goes down to the roots before winter to more thoroughly kill the plant. For general deciduous brush use 2 % Glyphosate

5.4 + ¼% SylTac surfactant in water and spray lightly to wet. For Bigleaf Maples, use 2.5% Imazapyr 4 SL + ¼% Syl-Tac surfactant in water. For blackberries and evergreen brush use 1% Garlon 4 Ultra+ ½ % Super Spread MSO surfactant in water.

Method: Spray the outside leaves lightly to wet, avoid contact of the spray onto desirable conifers.

Examples of rates: 1% Garlon 4 Ultra + ½ % Super Spread MSO surfactant in water for excellent control of blackberries, scotchbroom, and most brush. Spray the leaves lightly to wet. Best control is seen in mid Summer to before leaf fall. Blackberries can be controlled almost 12 months out of the year, but add more surfactant in the dead of winter.

For deciduous brush, spray 1.5% – 2% Glyphosate 5.4 + ½% Syl-Tac surfactant in water in mid to late summer before leaf coloration. This mix controls most deciduous brush (except bigleaf maples), also controls growing grasses and small broadleaf weeds.

Summary

This general guide should show you that there are many ways that you can control your competing vegetation by yourself without owning a helicopter! Always calibrate your equipment and yourself carefully to put on the right amount of chemical so you can kill the weeds and not your trees.

Always read the herbicide label carefully and follow the directions.

Give me a call if you have any further questions or to order chemicals.

Bruce Alber, CF