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Organization:

Title:

Comments: 1. For Dense Regeneration Creation and Maintenance and Oak Enhancement and Maintenance:

I support the decision to ensure desired species are recruited into the overstory. Lack of management and competition from other less desirable tree species can make it difficult to achieve optimal regeneration and recruitment, especially with oaks. For this reason, prescribed fire and various mechanical and chemical treatments should be considered to control competition from less desirable tree species (red maple and poplar) and promote conditions for advance oak regeneration. Appendix A has an encouraging suite of management options that should all be examined to achieve desired conditions.

Consider implementing all stages of the shelterwood sequence, including the preparatory treatment, establishment cut, and overstory removal. Where there's a "dense midstory" of undesirable tree species, midstory removal is a viable preparatory treatment to improve conditions for advance oak reproduction. In addition, irregular shelterwood harvesting and shelterwood-burn techniques should be considered.

2. For Wildlife Opening Reestablishment and Maintenance:

If not already established, consider a mixture of clovers and native forbs to increase forage and the number of invertebrates available for consumption by grouse chicks. We support the emphasis on maintaining the edges of these areas to provide adequate cover for grouse. It is important to note that grouse tend to favor "smaller (less than 2 acres) and irregularly shaped openings" in the region.

Preservation of Ruffed Grouse and necessary habitat is essential!