

Funds May Be Available To Control Bush Honeysuckle

MIKE PLUMER



CARBONDALE, ILL.

The NRCS EQIP program has been adding various practices that can be done on farms. This is a contract program to do different conservation practices. One new practice that has been approved in Illinois, and possibly other states, is a forestry

management practice. When you get time this summer, go in and sign up.

In Illinois, our forest lands have been invaded by another invasive species that is altering the forest makeup and stopping tree regeneration. That invasive species is bush honeysuckle. Once thought to be a good conservation plant, it is now dominating the understory in many woods.

Control can be difficult especially in high-quality woods. The problem is herbicides that will control bush honeysuckle will also kill the desirable plants, unless you properly time the application.

Mowing has not been effective in most situations, especially in more open woods. In fact, it can increase the density of the bush honeysuckle. If you are going to use herbicides, summer application of triclopyr (Garlon) at 2 percent

concentration plus a 0.5 percent non-ionic surfactant will do a good job. But remember, it will kill all broadleaf plants, including tree seedlings, wildflowers, etc.

Glyphosate at 1.5 percent after flowering until mid-September will control mature honeysuckle as well as any other plants you spray. To be more careful, a basal bark treatment of triclopyr at 20 percent concentration mixed with a basal oil is very effective. Spray the bottom 12 to 15 inches of the stem, and control can be 40 percent for plants 5 feet or less. Adding Stalker or Arsenal will greatly increase the control, but surrounding trees may be killed with these products. If you are energetic, you can cut surface treatment of glyphosate at 1:1 concentration painted on the stump.

In high-quality woods with many wild flowers or tree seedlings, wait until late October after these plants have dropped their leaves. Bush honeysuckle will retain its leaves much later, so this narrow window of application timing can be used to spray a glyphosate or garlon foliar spray.

Whatever method you use, applying for an EQIP practice may provide some funds to get this work done. Applications are being accepted until October 1. Δ

MIKE PLUMER: Extension Educator, Natural Resources Management, University of Illinois