

Management Guidelines for the Jaguarundi and Ocelot

The following guidelines address land management practices that can be used to maintain, enhance, or create habitat for the Jaguarundi and Ocelot. They are intended primarily to serve as general guidance for landowners or managers of livestock/wildlife operations in South Texas. The guidelines are based on our current understanding of the biology of these species.



Habitat restoration – planting native brush species
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Dense mixed brush habitat
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Habitat Preservation

Conservation of dense stands of mixed thornshrub, which serve as habitat for the Ocelot and Jaguarundi, is vital to the survival of these cats in Texas. Habitat preservation around the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, and in counties directly north of this area is particularly important.

Mechanical or chemical brush control, including prescribed burning, should not be conducted in habitat areas or in brushy corridors connecting larger areas of habitat. In everyday agricultural operations (i.e., livestock water facilities, fence construction), it is important to minimize disturbances that would destroy the integrity of a habitat tract or corridor. Tracts of at least 100 acres of isolated brush (of the required density and structure), or 75 acres of brush interconnected with other habitat tracts by brush corridors, are considered important habitat. Useful habitat can be provided by smaller tracts especially if these tracts are adjacent to larger areas of habitat.

On rangeland that does not provide the required brush cover and density (non-habitat areas), normal brush management practices, including prescribed burning, are not considered detrimental.

Habitat Restoration

Where dense mixed brush has developed into a tree form, or shrub density below four feet is inadequate, mechanical brush treatment methods such as chaining or roller chopping may be used to restore or create suitable habitat. These mechanical methods encourage basal sprouting by breaking off limbs or trunks of established plants, and can be used to increase cover and density of brush below the four foot level.

Adapted native shrubs, such as ebony, brasil, and granjeno, can be planted to increase habitat or to provide interconnecting corridors to existing habitat. Methods are currently being developed to allow for more successful establishment of these species.

Technical assistance in habitat management is available to landowners and managers by contacting the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, or the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute.