**Section 1536.55 Pruning Hardwood Crop Trees**

The purpose of pruning is to improve the quality and quantity of crop trees in a forest stand.

a) Acceptable pruning of crop trees is corrective pruning to a single leader with side branch pruning. The flat rate payment for this practice is $105 per acre. The base cost is $140 per acre.

b) The IDNR Forester must give prior approval of a practice area with individual trees marked and/or having a detailed written prescription addressing a minimum of 40 crop trees per acre having a minimum of 4 inches diameter at breast height (DBH).

c) Prune to total height of 17 feet and retain at least 40% of total tree height as live crown. Prune no live limbs over 3 inches in diameter.

d) All pruning final cuts must be targeted as close to the stem as possible without disturbing the branch bark ridge and branch collar. Assure that no branch stubs or flush pruning cuts are left on pruned trees.

e) Corrective pruning to influence tree form may be required in the Plan during the establishment of a forest stand. Early corrective pruning shall not be cost-shared unless undertaken along with side branch pruning as described in this Section.

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