



North Carolina
Forest Service

FORESTRY Leaflets

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FM-6c

Site Prep: Bedding

Bedding

- Soil is tilled and consolidated into a mounded strip called a bed. Beds may range in height from a few inches to nearly 2-feet depending on the soil, moisture and topography of the site.
- Bedding is a proven site prep method on wet-natured soils. The increased elevation of the raised bed improves the site conditions, thereby promoting more success in the survival of the seedlings and enhanced root growth after planting (*see bottom-left photo of a wet-natured site that has been bedded*).
- Bedding can be effective on upland soil sites that are not wet-natured (*see middle photo*).
- The ground surface must be sufficiently free of woody debris, standing trees and other obstacles so the bedding plow can be pulled in a consistent and uniform manner. Bedding plows are pulled by large tractors or bulldozers. Multiple passes with the bedding plow may be needed on difficult sites.
- Beds will need time for the loosened soil to settle before planting trees atop them. Settling will minimize air pockets that could dry out seedling roots, especially if a lot of woody debris is in the beds. However the beds should not remain exposed for a long period of time, because this extra time will allow weeds, grass and undesirable plants to take over the bed.

View of a typical bedding plow used in forestry.



The tract above had a site prep treatment that included KG + pile + bedding. The tract shown at left is a wet-natured site that has been bedded. Bedding may be beneficial on dry or wet sites.



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