



## CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E512J

# CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

### Establish wildlife corridors to provide habitat continuity or access to water

**CONSERVATION PRACTICE: 512 - Pasture and Hay Planting**

**APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture; Associated Ag Land; Farmstead**

**RESOURCE CONCERN: Animals**

**ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 5 years**

#### Enhancement Description

Establishing adapted and/or compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of perennial, herbaceous species that can provide cover needed for wildlife species of concern to move from food/cover/water sources to other food/cover/water sources as needed for their life cycles, and/or to enhance the utility of underused wildlife habitat areas.

#### Criteria

- Select native, perennial, grass/forb/legume plant species and their cultivars based on climatic conditions, soil condition, landscape position and resistance to disease and insects, that meet the cover demand for movement by the wildlife species of concern.
- Recommendations for planting rates, methods, depths, and dates from land grant universities (LGU), plant materials program, extension agencies, or agency field trials will be followed.
- Seeding medium that does not restrict plant emergence will be provided, and planting will take place when soil moisture is adequate for germination and establishment.
- Federal, state, or local noxious species will not be planted.
- Plant nutrients and/or soil amendments for establishment purposes will be applied according to a current soil test. Legume seed will be pre- inoculated or inoculated with the proper viable strain of Rhizobia immediately before planting.

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- Plant selection will be made and maintained based on the state's approved NRCS habitat evaluation procedure.
- Protection from grazing or other plant defoliation/biomass loss will be provided as needed to assure adequate corridor cover during the primary wildlife movement time frames.
- Grazing or other plant defoliation/biomass operations will be timed as needed to assure adequate corridor cover during the primary wildlife movement time frames.
- Wildlife species of concern for corridor utilization will be specified on the state's approved NRCS Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG).

### Documentation and Implementation Requirements

#### Participant will:

- Prior to implementation, select a perennial forage species or grassland mixture for establishment. If livestock are included in the system, forage species selected will meet the desired level of nutrition for the kind and class of the livestock to be fed. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)

Species	Species type (grass, legume, forb)

- Prior to implementation, select planting technique, seeding rates and timing appropriate for the site and climatic conditions. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)

Planting Date	
Planting method	
Seeding rate	



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- If livestock are included in the system, prior to implementation a grazing plan must be developed to keep grazing periods sufficiently short to allow for forages to recover before re-grazing occurs.
- If livestock are included in the grazing system, in areas where animals congregate, establish persistent species than can tolerate close grazing and trampling.
- During implementation, keep the following documentation:
  - Records and photographs of planting preparation and any materials purchased or materials on hand used for the implementation of the enhancement.
  - Documentation of seed (Pure Live Seed) and any fertilizer or soil amendments used for the implementation of the enhancement.
  - If livestock are included in the grazing system, documentation, and photographs of turn in/turn out grazing records for each field.
- During implementation, ensure that the forage/biomass is protected from grazing or other plant defoliation/biomass loss.
- After implementation, make the forage planting and grazing records available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement.

**NRCS will:**

- As needed, provide technical assistance to meet the criteria of the enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Forage and Biomass Planting (Code 512) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, complete the state's approved NRCS Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG).

**Species of concern:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WHEG score before implementation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WHEG score after implementation:** \_\_\_\_\_

- As needed, prior to implementation, NRCS will provide technical assistance:
  - Planning site preparation and establishment specifications meeting NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Forage and Biomass Planting (512).
  - Prepare specifications for applying this enhancement for each site using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes, and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.



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- *If livestock are included in the system*, develop a grazing plan to keep grazing periods sufficiently short to allow for forages to recover before re-grazing occurs.
- During implementation, evaluate any planned changes to verify they meets the enhancement criteria.
- After implementation, verify the planned perennial grassland mixture was established to specifications developed for the site.

**NRCS Documentation Review:**

I have reviewed all required participant documentation and have determined the participant has implemented the enhancement and met all criteria and requirements.

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contract Number \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Applied \_\_\_\_\_

Fiscal Year Completed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## 2024 Alabama Supplemental Guidance for CSP Enhancement

**ENHANCEMENT NUMBER AND TITLE:** **E512J:** Establish wildlife corridors to provide habitat continuity or access to water

### **Conservation Practice: E512 – Pasture and Hay Planting**

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ENHANCEMENT:** Wildlife corridors are defined as narrow strips of land that differs, usually in terms of dominant vegetation, from the surrounding area. They serve as traveling avenues for wildlife species between two similar yet fragmented habitat areas and provide habitat continuity and important sources of food and cover for many species. This enhancement is to establish compatible native plant species, varieties, or cultivars of perennial, herbaceous species that can provide cover needed for wildlife species and to enhance the utility of underused wildlife habitat areas.

### **Important considerations:**

- Corridors can be developed in a variety of ways including natural revegetation, establishment of tree, shrub, and/or herbaceous cover. The main purpose in establishing a corridor is to connect two areas of habitat while also providing a variety of food and shelter, and access to water. Select and establish native, perennial, species such as eastern gamagrass, switchgrass, big bluestem, little bluestem, Indiangrass or establish cool season perennial grasses that grow actively from early spring to early summer. Includes forb/legume plant species and their cultivars that provide habitat continuity.
- The habitat types being connected may include grasslands, wetlands, woods or old fields. A minimum corridor width of 50 feet and a maximum width of 200 feet will provide adequate habitat for species using corridors as a travel lane or for food, nesting or escape cover. Widths of less than 50 feet may encourage nesting activity while not providing enough cover to prevent predators from easily destroying those nests.
- Wildlife species such as deer, fox, raccoon, turtles, and reptiles will use corridors to travel between larger habitat areas. Species using corridors and field buffers to forage and nest in include quail, cottontails, turkeys, songbirds, and insects.
- Use Alabama cooperative extensions recommendations for right plant materials, rates, methods, depths, dates, and planting guide for forage grasses ([Alabama Planting Guide for Forage Grasses - Alabama Cooperative Extension System \(aces.edu\)](https://aces.edu)) and forage legumes ([Alabama Planting Guide for Forage Legumes - Alabama Cooperative Extension System \(aces.edu\)](https://aces.edu)).
- Utilize the forage and biomass planting guide sheet No. AL512 for forage crops commonly grown for pasture or hay in Alabama and, the Geographical Areas for Species Adaptation and Seeding Dates. [512\\_AL\\_GD\\_Forage\\_and\\_Biomass\\_Planting-AL512\\_Guide\\_Sheet\\_2015 \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov)
- Exclude noxious species such as Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*), Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) and Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*) from planting. Pests should be managed according to the Pest Management Conservation System (595) Standard.
- Apply plant nutrients and/or soil amendments based on current soil test. To take a proper soil sample and testing follow the protocol of the Soil, Forage, and Water Testing Laboratory at Auburn University: [Soil, Forage & Water Testing Lab | Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station \(auburn.edu\)](https://www.auburn.edu).

## 2024 Alabama Supplemental Guidance for CSP Enhancement

- Make sure wildlife species of concern for corridor utilization are specified on the state's approved NRCS Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG).

### PROVIDE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS.

- Provide NRCS with the selected forage species, seed tags, seeding rates and dates.
- Notify NRCS of any planned changes in species or mixtures or field operations.
- Provide maps of the area or location(s), digital images/photos of the area and indicate area on map, and dates of completed activity

The attached documents support the full implementation of this Conservation Stewardship Enhancement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CSP Participant Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date