

**Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM32 – Extend existing filter strips or riparian herbaceous cover for water quality protection and wildlife habitat**



**Enhancement Description**

Where existing filter strips or riparian herbaceous covers (i.e., buffers) are utilized, extend them to gain more efficiency in intercepting overland flow and reducing the transport of nutrients, pesticides and agro-chemicals, and for wildlife habitat.

**Land Use Applicability**

Cropland, Pastureland, Rangeland

**Benefits**

Widening existing buffers can provide food and cover for native and game species as well as enhancing aquatic habitat. Extended buffers offer more surface area to filter out sediments and agro-chemicals. Buffers can also mitigate pesticide drift during pesticide applications and pollen drift where the mixing of plant varieties is not desired.

Buffer habitats are important transition zones between terrestrial landscapes and aquatic zones. Wildlife species utilize these transition zones because they provide a unique combination of cover, access to water and often provide important travel corridors. Often buffers are adjacent to riparian areas or are important contributors to clean water, and habitat areas nearby. Extending existing buffers not only enhances wildlife habitat but it increases the effectiveness of water quality protection they provide to the streams.

**Conditions Where Enhancement Applies**

This enhancement only applies to acres of existing buffers on crop, pasture, or range land uses.

**Criteria**

1. Extend the existing buffer for a total of 60 feet or more to enhance habitat and water quality functions.
2. The extended buffers must be composed of at least 5 species of non-noxious, wildlife friendly grasses and/or perennial forbs best suited to site conditions. Include species that provide pollinator food and habitat where possible.
3. All site preparation and plant establishment shall be accomplished according to the appropriate NRCS conservation practice standard criteria and specifications.



4. Any use of the buffer must not compromise its intended purpose. Vegetation from buffers can be harvested for bio-energy as long as the harvesting is done in accordance with a plan that does not compromise the water quality and wildlife benefits of the extended buffer.
5. To the extent possible the buffer areas and extended buffer areas will be shaped and vegetated to increase overland flow interception and increase water quality values of the stream or water body.
6. The extension of buffers can incorporate other buffer types (riparian forest) where applicable to meet specific operator management goals.

#### Operation and Maintenance

1. Once established, buffers must not be mowed, disked, grazed, or otherwise disturbed during the primary wildlife ground nesting period.
2. Buffers will be regularly maintained for the intended purpose through the life of the contract. This includes any removal of vegetation, including grazing.
  - a. Grazing is not permitted unless a grazing management plan is in effect.
  - b. The grazing management plan must protect the integrity, diversity and function of the riparian area.
3. Buffers will have a wildlife management plan to maintain established plant communities through the life of the contract. The wildlife plan will maintain the plant community and its structural diversity and provide habitat for intended species, remove duff, and control woody vegetation.
4. The grazing management plan and the wildlife management plan shall complement each other.

#### **Adoption Requirements**

This enhancement is considered adopted when the buffer has a total width of 60 feet or more for the selected land use.

#### **Documentation Requirements**

1. A map showing the location and size of the existing and enhanced buffer.
2. Documentation of the type and rates of vegetation planted in the new buffer areas.

#### **North Dakota Requirements**

Buffers will be a maximum of 150 ft. wide. The minimum existing average buffer width must be 20 ft. Only vegetation from the "A" list are applicable. Tree and shrub species are not applicable. 390-Riparian Herbaceous Cover, 393-Filter Strip, 528-Prescribed Grazing and 645-Upland Wildlife Habitat Management are required components of the enhancement and must meet standards and specifications of the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide.

## ND Pasture and Hayland Species A and B Lists for CSP

<b>List A - Pasture/Hayland species that promote wildlife conservation</b>	
<b>Plant Common Name</b>	<b>Functional Group</b>
Basin Wildrye	Cool season grass
Beardless Wildrye	Cool season grass
Canada Wildrye	Cool season grass
Green needlegrass	Cool season grass
Slender/Awned/Bearded wheatgrass	Cool season grass
Western Wheatgrass	Cool season grass
American vetch	Legume
Canada milkvetch	Legume
Purple prairieclover	Legume
White prairieclover	Legume
Big Bluestem	Warm season grass
Blue Grama	Warm season grass
Indiangrass	Warm season grass
Little Bluestem	Warm season grass
Prairie Cordgrass	Warm season grass
Prairie sandreed	Warm season grass
Sand Bluestem	Warm season grass
Sideoats Grama	Warm season grass
Switchgrass	Warm season grass
Altai wildrye	Cool season grass
Bluebunch/quackgrass hybrid	Cool season grass
Dahurian wildrye	Cool season grass
Intermediate wheatgrass	Cool season grass
Meadow brome grass	Cool season grass
Pubescent wheatgrass	Cool season grass
Russian wildrye	Cool season grass
Siberian wheatgrass	Cool season grass
Tall wheatgrass	Cool season grass
Timothy	Cool season grass
Alfafa	Legume
Alsike clover	Legume
Hairy Vetch	Legume
Ladino clover	Legume
Red clover	Legume
Sanfoin	Legume
Strawberry clover	Legume
Sweetcover	Legume

<b>List B - Other pasture/hayland species used in North Dakota</b>	
<b>Plant Common Name</b>	<b>Functional Group</b>
Creeping foxtail	Cool season grass
Crested wheatgrass	Cool season grass
Hard fescue	Cool season grass
Reed canary grass	Cool season grass
Smooth brome grass	Cool season grass
Birdsfoot trefoil	Legume
Cicer milkvetch	Legume