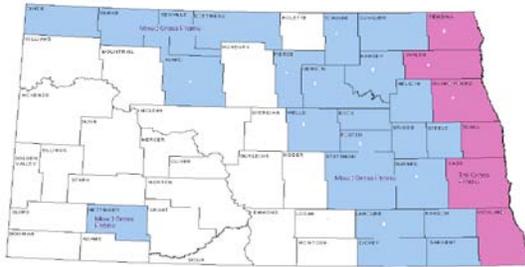




Rare and Declining Habitat CP25 (ver 03/11)

Purpose

The purpose of practice CP25, Rare and Declining Habitat, is to restore the functions and values of critically endangered and threatened habitats. The CRP practice will be used to re-establish or maintain existing stands of tall and mixed grass prairie in North Dakota in areas where these plant communities have had at least a 70 percent loss since European settlement. Eligible cropland may be enrolled for a 10 to 15 year period.



Designated Area

The above map shows the area of North Dakota that is eligible for practice CP25. Tall grass prairie will be restored in eastern North Dakota and the mixed grass prairie will be restored in the balance of the designated area.

Wildlife

This practice is well suited for wildlife food and habitat. Selection of native grass and forb species will affect what type of wildlife will utilize these acres. Supplementing the grass planting with other wildlife practices or plantings will further enhance the cover.



Grass Species

Native plant species and varieties selected are those best adapted to the climate and the soils in the field being established to permanent vegetative cover. Refer to the attached listing of acceptable species for establishing tall and mixed grass plant communities.

A conservation plan will include selected species and seeding rates. Seeding rates are based on pure live seed (PLS).

Refer to ND Extension Service Publication, R-794 (revised) "Grass Varieties for North Dakota" for the names of approved grass varieties. Acceptable points of origin for non-varietal or common grasses are the states of ND, SD, NE, MT, WY, MN and the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

All seed must meet the requirements of the North Dakota State Seed Laws. All seed must be officially tested for purity and germination to enable PLS calculations to determine the proper seeding rate. Germination tests for all species should be made within nine months prior to planting. If seeding is delayed, the lot may need to be retested.

Specifications

The native grass and forb cover must be established according to the practice specifications and the conservation plan. The specifications are prepared in accordance with the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide practice standard (643) Restoration and Management of Declining Habitat.

Establishment Considerations

A nurse crop may be used for spring seeded grasses and legumes for erosion control and weed suppression. Use a maximum of 10 lbs./acre of oats or barley, or 7 lbs./acre of flax. No companion crop is required for late summer seeding but it may be desirable for erosion control and to protect developing seedlings.

Companion crops shall be clipped prior to the boot stage to minimize competition with emerging grass and legume plants. A second and subsequent clippings may be necessary when re-growth provides competition during the first year of establishment. Clipping height should be above developing seedlings.

Seeding Dates

Cover should be seeded within 12 months of the contract's effective date. For cool season grass species mixtures:

Season of Planting for Cool Season Species	Area of the State	
	North of North Dakota Hwy 200	South of North Dakota Hwy 200
Spring	Prior to May 20	Prior to May 10

Late Summer	Aug 10 to Sept 1	Aug 10 to Sept 15
Late Fall	After Oct 20	After Nov 1
Warm Season Species	May 10 – June 25	May 10-June 25
Warm/Cool Season Mix	May 1-June 15	April 20-June 1

If legumes are part of a late summer seeding, the seed is to be planted by August 25. Warm season species mixtures should be planted in the spring from May 10 to June 15.

Seed bed Preparation

The seedbed must be essentially free of competing vegetation. It should be firm enough to permit seed placement at the desired depth and protected against erosion. A firm seedbed should hardly reveal adult footprints. This will allow for placement of the seeds at a depth of 1/4 to 3/4 of an inch into the soil.

Seedbed preparation will be mechanical or chemical. Refer to North Dakota Weed Control Guide (NDSU Circular W-253) for specific herbicide and weed control recommendations.

Seeding Operation

The seed may be planted with a grain drill or grass drill. Broadcasting seed does not meet practice specifications and is ineligible for cost share payments. Grain drills are normal seeding equipment, including air-seeders, that can deliver the desired amount of seed to the proper depth.

The seeding depth will be as follows:

Soil Texture	Seeding Depth
Fine to Medium	1/4 to 3/4 inch
Coarse	1/2 to 1 inch

Operation and Maintenance

Operation and maintenance will include but not be limited to the following:

1. Control annual weeds and other competition the year of establishment, with early and timely clipping before seed heads appear, or timely application of herbicides.
2. After the cover is established, prevent disturbance of cover during the primary nesting season for wildlife, which is April 15 through August 1.
3. After cover is established, control all weeds to the extent they do not adversely impact

the required cover or surrounding landowners by: a) treating with chemicals per label directions, or b) spot mow before seed heads form. When possible delay use of control measures until after August 1st to protect nesting wildlife. Spot treatment on problem areas may be authorized by FSA during the primary nesting season.

4. Protect the acres from haying and grazing year round. Fences may need to be constructed and maintained to exclude livestock throughout all 12 months of the year.
5. Re-seed any areas that do not have adequate permanent cover.
6. Do not use the contract area for field borders, field roads or other uses that will damage or destroy the cover.
7. Do not use the field for disposal of livestock or organic waste unless that use is authorized in the additional specifications and remarks.
8. Control rodent infestations that adversely affect the perennial ground cover.

Cover Management

All CP25 contracts are required to have management activities that are site specific and ensure:

- Plant diversity
- Wildlife benefits
- Protection of soil and water resources.

Management activities may include:

- Light disking
- Heavy harrowing
- Clipping and removal
- Prescribed burning
- Interseeding legumes

Management of cover will be required once for during the contract period. The cover management activity must be completed before the eighth year of the contract. Cost share may be available for the management activity.

Use of Pesticides

Only those pesticides, which are labeled for the specific use, will be recommended. University and Extension publications and specific label instructions will be used for guidance on herbicide selection and use.

This table shows approved cover for the tall grass and mixed grass prairie. The costs are estimates.

Tall Grass Praire

		PLS/ac.	PLS/Mix
Big Bluestem	15%	7.5	1.1
Indiangrass	10%	7.0	0.7
Switchgrass	10%	4.5	0.9
Green Needlegrass	10%	7.5	0.8
Western			
Wheatgrass	5%	10.0	0.5
Little bluestem	5%	4.5	0.2
Sideoats grama	5%	7.5	0.4
Canada wildrye	5%	7.5	0.4
Blue grama	5%	2.5	0.1
	70%		
Maximilian Sunflower	5%	0.7	0.04
Purple Prairieclover	5%	3.8	0.19
Canada Milkvetch	5%	4.0	0.20
Blanket flower	5%	0.4	0.02
Yellow Coneflower	5%	1.5	0.08
Lewis Blue Flax	5%	0.2	0.01
	30%		

Mixed Grass Prairie

Slender wheatgrass	5%	5.5	0.3
Big bluestem	5%	7.5	0.4
Green Needlegrass	20%	8	1.5
Western			
Wheatgrass	10%	10	1.5
Little bluestem	10%	5	0.5
Sideoats grama	10%	8	1.1
Canada wildrye	5%	8	0.4
Blue grama	5%	3	0.1
	70%		
Maximilian Sunflower	5%	0.7	0.04
Purple Prairieclover	5%	3.8	0.19
Canada Milkvetch	5%	4.0	0.20
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