United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

2012 Ranking Period 1

Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM 21 – Prairie restoration for grazing and wildlife habitat

Enhancement Description
This activity consists of restoring/renovating prairie habitat by establishing native vegetation and managing the restored plant community.

Land Use Applicability
Cropland, Pastureland, Rangeland

Benefits
Establishing and managing native prairie vegetation will provide food, cover, and nesting habitat for adapted species, especially grassland nesting birds.

Conditions Where Enhancement Applies
This enhancement applies to sites that have soils that indicate it was once a prairie or can sustain native prairie species.

NOTE: this enhancement can only be initiated in the 1st or 2nd year of the contract to ensure the activity has time to establish before the end of the contract.

Criteria

1. The resulting plant community will consist of at least 4 species of native perennial grasses and at least 4 species of native forbs adapted to the soils. In areas where seed availability and site adaptability is an issue, the NRCS State Office can modify the seeding combinations to meet local conditions.
2. Seeding must be done in a properly prepared seed bed as determined by the NRCS State Office.
3. Species appropriate fungal and microbial inoculants will be used during establishment where appropriate. Additional planting conditions may be specified if an ecological site description has been developed for the area.
4. During the establishment phase, weeds shall be controlled on the site.
5. After establishment:
    a. The site will be protected from grazing and disturbance during the primary nesting and fawning season as defined by the NRCS State Office.
    b. The site will be deferred from use for up to 3 years.
6. A grazing management plan will be developed and implemented.

Adoption Requirements
This enhancement is considered adopted when the applicant has successfully established the minimum number of native perennial grasses and forbs to the subject area.

Documentation Requirements
Following implementation of this activity, the participant must:

1. Document the list of the species planted,
2. Maintain the receipts for the seeds purchased,
3. Document the seeding dates,
4. Document the area (acres) restored by delineating the location of the restored prairie on a map or aerial photograph, and
5. Document the grazing management plan was implemented.

North Dakota Requirements
This enhancement is not applicable to rangeland. Implementation of this enhancement must meet NRCS Field Office Technical Guide standards and specifications for 528-Prescribed Grazing and 645-Upland Wildlife Habitat Management. The planting must consist of a minimum of four native grasses and four native forb species. No grazing is allowed from April 1 to August 1.