

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) has been around since 1996 and has seen a growth in popularity and funding. EQIP is NRCS' principal program for delivering conservation technical and financial assistance to private landowners. EQIP supports the needs of agricultural operations with or without livestock by offering ideas, solutions, and guidance for a successful and sustainable conservation operation. Practices described, and others, can be selected and installed after developing a conservation plan designed to address your specific resource concerns. For cropland operations, the following list of conservation practices are the most commonly used.



### Forest Stand Improvement (Conservation Practice Standard 666)

Forest Stand Improvement assists landowners in managing tree species, stand structure, and by cutting or killing selected trees and understory vegetation. This practice:

1. Increases the quantity and quality of forest products, such as, sawtimber, veneer, wood fiber, poles, maple syrup, and nuts and fruits,
2. Initiates forest stand regeneration,
3. Reduces potential of damage from wildfire, pests, and moisture stress,
4. Improves aesthetic, recreation, and open space values,
5. Improves wildlife habitat,
6. Achieves a desired level of crop tree stocking and density, and
7. Increases carbon storage in selected crop trees.



### Grade Stabilization Structure (Conservation Practice Standard 410)

Grade Stabilization Structures are used to stabilize the grade and control erosion in natural streambanks or artificial channels. These structures help prevent formation of gullies, enhance environmental quality, and reduce pollution hazards. Conditions where this practice can be applied include areas where the concentration and flow velocity of water require structures to stabilize the grade in channels or to control gully erosion.



### Grassed Waterway (Conservation Practice Standard 412)

A Grassed Waterway is a natural or constructed channel shaped or graded to required dimensions and established with suitable vegetation. This practice may be applied as part of a conservation system to support one or more of the following:

1. Move water runoff from terraces, diversions, or other concentrated water flows without causing erosion or flooding,
2. Reduce or prevent gully erosion, and
3. Protect and improve water quality.



### Residue Management (Conservation Practice Standards 329,344,345,346)

Residue Management is a practice that manages the amount, orientation, and distribution of crop and other plant residue on the soil surface year round while reducing soil disturbing activities. There are four residue management options that include No-Till, Mulch-Till, Ridge-Till, and Seasonal Tillage. These practices may be applied as a part of a conservation system to accomplish one or more of the following objectives:

1. Reduce sheet and rill erosion,
2. Reduce wind erosion,
3. Improve soil organic matter content,
4. Increase soil moisture, and
5. Provide food and cover for wildlife.

## General EQIP Practices



### Streambank Shoreline Protection (Conservation Practice Standard 580)

Streambank and Shoreline Protection practices stabilize and protect banks of streams, lakes, reservoirs, or constructed channels for one or more of the following:

1. Prevent, control, or minimize the loss of land or damage to land uses adjacent to the banks,
2. Maintain the flow capacity of the water body (streams or channels),
3. Reduce sediment loads causing downstream damage and/or pollution, and
4. Improve or enhance the stream and riparian corridor for fish and wildlife.



### Terrace (Conservation Practice Standard 600)

A Terrace is an earth embankment, or a combination ridge and channel, constructed across the field slope. These practices may be applied as part of a resource management system to reduce soil erosion. The practice applies where:

1. Soil erosion by water is a problem,
2. Excess water runoff is a problem,
3. Soils and topography are such that terraces can be constructed and farmed with a reasonable effort, and
4. A suitable water outlet can be provided.



### Tree/Shrub Establishment (Conservation Practice Standard 612)

A Tree/Shrub Establishment practice introduces woody plants to an area by planting seedlings or cuttings, or direct seeding. The practice may be applied as part of a conservation system to support one or more of the following:

1. Establish woody plants for forest products,
2. Provide wildlife habitat,
3. Provide long-term erosion control,
4. Improve water quality,
5. Treat potential waste problems,
6. Reduction of air pollution,
7. Capture carbon emissions, and
8. Enhance aesthetics.



### Nutrient Management (Conservation Practice Standard 590)

Nutrient Management addresses the rate, form, timing, and placement of nutrients to adequately supply soils and plants what they need to produce food, forage, and fiber. The techniques, used with other conservation practices, minimize nutrient losses from fields and protect surface and ground water supplies. Properly applied, these practices can:

1. Budget, supply, and conserve nutrients for plant production,
2. Minimize agricultural nonpoint source pollution of surface and groundwater resources,
3. Use manure or organic by-products as a plant nutrient source,
4. Protect air quality by reducing odors, nitrogen emissions (ammonia, oxides of nitrogen), and formation of atmospheric particulates, and
5. Maintain or improve the physical, chemical, and biological condition of soil.



### Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (Conservation Practice Standard 645)

Upland Wildlife Habitat Management provides treatment of upland wildlife habitat concerns identified during the conservation planning process. This practice enables wildlife mobility; provides shelter and cover; and provides food in proper amounts, locations, and times to sustain wild animals that inhabit uplands during a portion of their life cycle. This practice applies on lands:

1. Where the landowner has identified an objective for conserving a wild animal species, groups of wildlife, or ecosystem, and
2. Within the range of targeted wildlife species and capable of supporting the desired habitat.

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