

2011 Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) At A Glance

Do you want to develop/improve the following on your privately-owned land:

- ✔ **Natural Wildlife "Buffets"?**
- ✔ **Migrating Bird "Pit Stops"?**
- ✔ **Habitat Diversity?**



Private Lands Wildlife Biologists, hired through a cooperative agreement with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, have made nearly 400 site visits since January 2010 to help landowners establish or maintain about 31,500 acres of early successional habitat and help restore Virginia's quail population.

Program Description



WHIP emphasizes wildlife and fisheries habitats of national, regional or state significance that have experienced or are experiencing significant declines. NRCS must evaluate existing habitat in comparison with the planned or desired condition to predict the effectiveness of the planned conservation practices.

To participate in WHIP, you must own or have control of the land you wish to enroll for the length of the agreement. Agreements generally last 2 to 10 years from the signed date.

Participants agree to install and maintain the WHIP practices, allow NRCS or its agent access to monitor the effectiveness of the practices, and establish at least one essential practice within the first 12 months. NRCS provides technical assistance and pays up to 75 percent of the cost of installing the practices (maximum payment per year is \$50,000).

2011 Resource Concerns	Description	Sample Practices
Upland Wildlife Habitat Creation 	<p>Owners must offer at least two acres of land to create new upland habitat for different wildlife species.</p> <p>Community can consist of hardwood savannas, longleaf pine forests, wildflower meadows, early successional habitat for quail, rabbits, and other species.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Borders • Whole-Field Wildlife Plantings • Hedgerow Establishment • Hardwood Forest Planting • Fescue Conversion • Pollinator Habitat

2011 Resource Concerns	Description	Sample Practices
<p>Aquatic Habitat Creation</p> 	<p>Owners must offer two acres or 300 linear feet of land for creating new aquatic habitat. Projects may consist of wetland restorations, shallow water wetlands, stream restoration, and riparian corridors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shallow Water Impoundments • Streambank Stabilization • Planting Trees, Shrubs or Herbaceous Plants • Fish Passage
<p>Habitat Maintenance</p> 	<p>Owners must offer at least two acres of land to maintain or improve existing habitat.</p> <p>Potential projects include invasive species control, seasonal water management, early successional habitat management and natural food rejuvenation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discing • Prescribed Burning • Herbicide Application • Mechanical Brush Control • Pre-Commercial Thinning to Promote Hardwoods

Program Prohibitions



Public land, land currently enrolled in another federal program such as CREP, CRP, WRP, etc., converted wetlands, and land not meeting habitat program requirements does not meet these eligibility requirements.

WHIP funds cannot be used for mitigation of any kind. WHIP funds also cannot be used when restoration of wildlife habitat is a condition of federal, state, or local permits or approvals, or required by law.

The use of loblolly pines is prohibited and cost share will not be provided for pine thinning. However, burning of pines already thinned is an acceptable practice.

Grazing of livestock is prohibited. Haying is not permissible unless it is done for biofuels production during grass dormancy. WHIP funds cannot be used for the development of ponds, planting of woodland cutover areas or creating openings in woodlands.

Food plots and deer management are also prohibited. WHIP cannot be used for changing one quality habitat to another habitat.

If you or someone you know could benefit from participating in WHIP, visit www.va.nrcs.usda.gov or contact your local USDA Service Center. NRCS staff will be happy to help you.