Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM19 – Wildlife corridors

Enhancement Description
Wildlife corridors are linear strips of vegetation that connect two or more patches of suitable wildlife habitat. Participants will establish vegetative corridors as described below.

Land Use Applicability: Cropland, pastureland, rangeland and forestland.

Benefits
Corridors connect habitats providing additional life requisites (e.g., feeding, nesting, roosting, escape cover, etc.) as well as interaction among local populations for reproduction or other social behaviors. Fragmentation of habitat with resultant loss of connectivity threatens the continued existence of fish and wildlife populations.

Criteria

1. Continuity –corridors must be uninterrupted strips (i.e., no paved roads (unpaved farm roads no wider than 20 feet are acceptable), vegetative or physical barriers, etc.) connecting 2 or more patches of suitable habitat. Wildlife friendly fencing is not considered a barrier. Suitable habitat may consist of grasslands, rangelands, forests, wetlands, shrubby areas, or natural substrates suitable for use by wildlife species adapted to the landscape and site conditions and conforming to the composition and quality criteria below.
2. Composition - corridor vegetation must be suited to natural site conditions, consistent with the larger natural landscape context, and appropriate for the kinds of wildlife present, hence native vegetation is highly preferred. Vegetation in the "patches of suitable habitat" (above) must also meet these criteria.
3. Where habitat already exists but wildlife is prevented from moving by man-made barriers, the installation or modification of structures to allow wildlife movement will be acceptable under this enhancement. Examples include rangeland and the installation of wildlife friendly fencing, wetlands or riparian areas and the installation of aquatic organism passages and other types of habitat that are cutoff by paved roads and the installation of wildlife passages under the roads. The dimensions defined in #5 below do not apply to this criterion. Base sizing on the target species.
4. Quality – invasive exotic vegetation must be controlled
5. Dimension –the average width must be ≥ 30 feet with no section < 20 feet wide. Since context is so important no one size fits all conditions, however wider corridors are better and irregular boundaries (or borders) are preferred over straight.

Operation and Maintenance
Management activities must be conducted as necessary to ensure the corridor functions as the planned habitat.

Documentation Requirements

1. Map showing location of wildlife corridors connecting suitable habitats with required dimensions
2. Brief descriptions of the habitats to be connected
3. Description of the vegetation composition

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Written documentation of the soil moisture regime and plant species established.

Provide an annual summary of any site management and weed control activities conducted.

A "wildlife friendly fence" is defined as any fence constructed of individual wire strands where the bottom wire is a minimum of 12 inches off the ground, and the top wire height does not exceed 42 inches.