

Animal Enhancement Activity –ANM08- Improve the plant diversity and structure of non-cropped areas for wildlife food and habitat



Enhancement Description

Improve the plant diversity and structure of non-cropped areas for wildlife food and habitat through the planting and/or management of native plant species.

Land Use Applicability

The enhancement is applicable to cropland and pasture land.

Benefits

Intensively managed agricultural land does not provide the habitat required for many species of birds and animals. By establishing or improving the composition and structure of native plant species in non-cropped areas, essential habitat will provide wildlife, including pollinators, with food and cover for nesting, fawning, loafing, roosting, travel and escape from predators and adverse weather.

Criteria to improve the plant diversity and structure of non-cropped areas for wildlife food and habitat

1. Vegetation type will primarily be native to the site or recognized by NRCS standards as suitable wildlife and pollinator habitat. Vegetation density will be sufficient to control erosion, retard sediment from leaving the site, and to permit runoff water to be of high quality. Livestock will be excluded from the site unless prescribed grazing is identified in the management prescription.
2. If the non-cropped area is being managed as early successional habitat, it will be maintained by prescribed fire, periodic disking or suitable mechanical disturbance, prescribed grazing, or selective herbicide application. Maintenance activities will be conducted outside of the nesting/fawning season or by NRCS prescription. The non-cropped area will not be smaller than 0.1 acre and there will be 1 acre of habitat for every 40 acres of cropland.
3. If the non-cropped area is being managed as woodland, tree species typically associated with natural site conditions will be planted and/or maintained. Woodland patches will not be smaller than 1 acre and minimum width will be 90 feet. Woodland patches included in this enhancement will not be harvested or cut for firewood during the contract. Natural understory vegetation snags and down woody material will be maintained naturally.
4. Any existing wetlands used as the non-cropped areas for wildlife will be at least ½ acre in size and will be surrounded by a minimum of 33 feet of vegetation. See number 1 above.
5. Invasive, exotic vegetation must be controlled in all managed non-cropped habitat.



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Documentation Requirements for Improve the plant diversity & structure of non-cropped areas for wildlife food and habitat

- Map showing areas and size to be treated.
- Identify what type of land use applies to each area.
- Documentation of the existing plant species.



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NH State Supplement

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Criteria

Typically NH farm fields are surrounded by forest land so the best fit for most producers will be to “soften the edge” of the forest by removing invasive species and planting native shrubs. A few particularly valuable mast producing trees are included as considerations, but it is unlikely they will produce mast by the end of the contract.

Tree and shrub species must be selected based on a soils map or a natural community normally found on the site. NRCS will provide a list of appropriate species for a particular site if requested. Minimum planting densities are 300 trees and shrubs per acre.

NRCS will make a site visit if requested to determine the best approach for adding structure, wildlife food, in addition to identifying invasive plants.

Suggested Tree and Shrub Species for Wildlife Habitat

		Wet Site	Dry Site	Pollinator	Wildlife Mast
Tree Species					
Scientific Name	Common Name				
<i>Quercus alba</i>	white oak	X			X
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	northern red oak		X		X
<i>Prunus spp</i>	Cherry (choke, black etc)			X	X
<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	Green Ash	X			X
<i>Carya ovata</i>	Shagbark Hickory	X			X
Shrub Species					
<i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>	shadblow serviceberry		X	X	X
<i>Amelanchier laevis</i>	allegheny serviceberry		X	X	X
<i>Corylus americana</i>	hazelnut		X		X
<i>Rhus typhina</i>	staghorn sumac		X	X	X
<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	common elderberry	X		X	X
<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	arrowwood viburnum	X		X	X
<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	Black Chokeberry		X	X	X
<i>Cornus racemosa</i>	Grey Dogwood	X		X	X
<i>Cornus sericea</i>	Redosier Dogwood	X		X	X
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Witch Hazel	X		X	X
<i>Rubus</i>	Red and Black Raspberry		X	X	X

<i>Salix discolor</i>	Pussy Willow	x		x	
<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	high bush blueberry	x	x	x	x
<i>Viburnum Casinoidies</i>	Northern Wild Raisin	x		x	x
<i>Viburnum lentago</i>	nannyberry	x		x	x
<i>Alnus rugosa</i>	Alder	x			
<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	Winterberry Holly	x			x