

HABITAT MANAGEMENT (CSP Enhancements)

Enhancement Activity Task Sheet

March 2005
WA-CSPEHM-TS



Enhancement Activities

Enhancements activities refer to actions that provide resource benefits beyond the level prescribed by NRCS Conservation Practice Standards. Once implemented, enhancement activities should result in an observable or measurable improvement to the condition of one or more of the soil, water, air, plant, or animal resources, or provide for more efficient resource utilization and/or energy conservation.

Enhancement Activity Benefits

Enhancement activities associated with Habitat Management, such as interseeding native forbs or adding large organic matter to wetlands, can result in benefits to the producer and the environment:

- Increased biological diversity
- Reconnection of wildlife corridors
- Improved habitat for threatened and endangered species
- Restoration of aquatic habitat and improvement in water quality

CSP Payments

You can earn payments by participating in any of the following management activities:

- Manage field borders to improve wildlife habitat and filtering capacity. (must be twice the minimum width)
- Manage wildlife water so that no point on the farm is greater than a quarter mile from water. (natural or developed)
- Manage and improve raptor habitat by using perch poles.
- Manage winter food plot – cover crop. (five percent maximum cropland acres)
- Manage livestock grazing for nesting improvement.
- Restoration of declining habitat
- Manage incidental woodlands for wildlife.
- Manage herbaceous vegetation to maximize aquatic habitat.
- Manage amphibian habitat.

CSP Enhancements earnings are subject to payment caps. Your actual payment will depend on your CSP Tier level and the number of acres enrolled.





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Client's Acknowledgement Statement:

I am currently applying or agree to apply the following Habitat Management activities and understand the requirements of the selected activities (Check all that apply):

- | Currently
Apply | Agree
to Apply | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Increase field border width for wildlife cover (Worksheet 1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Manage livestock grazing for wildlife nesting cover (Worksheet 2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Manage raptor habitat by creating and maintaining perch poles (Worksheet 3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Restore and manage declining habitats (Worksheet 4) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Management of wildlife water (Worksheet 5) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Management of incidental woodlands for wildlife (Worksheet 6) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Manage annual winter food plots (Worksheet 7) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Manage herbaceous vegetation to maximize aquatic habitat (Worksheet 8) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Manage amphibian habitat (Worksheet 9) |

I agree that the following information will be provided to NRCS upon request:

- Written documentation of the activity performed (use attached worksheets or equivalent).
- Copies of dated receipts for equipment or services purchased.

I understand that CSP Enhancements earnings are subject to payment caps and that my actual payments will depend on my CSP Tier level and the number of acres enrolled.

I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain all necessary permits and to comply with all ordinances and laws pertaining to the application of these activities.

Accepted by: /s/ _____ Date: _____

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Worksheet 1 – Increased Field Border Width up to twice minimum required

Payment = \$160/Acre/Year to increase the width of a field border up to twice the minimum width required for water quality resource concerns.

Definition: Widening of field borders will increase and improve cover for wildlife, as well as creating a travel corridor.

Purpose: To increase the amount of cover available to wildlife for nesting. Wider field borders reduce predator success while increasing the area available for the brooding of young birds. Wider field borders also provide travel lanes for wildlife moving between feeding areas and bedding or roosting areas, or watering areas.

Where Used: Use on cropland around the entire field.

Operation and Maintenance: Annual mowing in late summer after August 1st, but before September 15th. Landowner is to control noxious weeds.

Worksheet 2 – Managed Grazing to Improve Nesting Habitat for Wildlife

Payment = \$20/Acre/Year to manage grazing on grassland and shrub-steppe habitat leaving 7” herbaceous stubble height over winter through July 1.

Definition: Manage grazing on grassland and shrub-steppe habitat leaving understory (herbaceous) vegetation 7” or taller stubble height over winter through July 1.

Purpose: Ground nesting birds utilize herbaceous vegetation for nesting cover during the breeding season. Grass vegetation either residual from last year or actively growing is needed for nesting cover.

Where Used: On rangeland and pasture where the height of vegetation is important to the identified wildlife species. Operator will follow a prescribed grazing plan which meets NRCS standard for prescribed grazing. Other practices to meet criteria may include Use Exclusion. NRCS will complete a wildlife habitat assessment (i.e. Biology TN-14) or suitable species habitat assessment on the operation. Operators currently practicing this habitat management are eligible for enhancement payments.

Operation and Maintenance: A prescribed grazing system will be followed. The target wildlife species needs to be identified. The primary resource concern will be the target wildlife species habitat requirement; the secondary resource concern will be production grazing.



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Worksheet 3 – Manage and improve raptor habitat by using perch poles

Payment = \$20/Pole/Year to manage and maintain raptor perch poles (maximum 1 pole per 5 acres).

Definition: Raptor perches, which consist of 10 to 15 foot tall poles with 1 to 2 inch diameter perches on top, provide elevated overlooks for hawks and owls. One perch per five acres in areas where the control of voles and mice is desired and human presence is low. Raptor poles can not be actively used electrical poles.

Purpose: A wide variety of predators feed on voles. Voles are relatively easy for most predators to catch and are active, and therefore vulnerable, day and night and year-round. Despite their vulnerability, vole populations usually are not controlled by predators, because voles have a high reproductive potential and can increase their populations at a faster rate than predators. However, predators may help keep populations low once the initial vole populations have been reduced through alternative techniques. Raptor poles are a safe alternative to electrical transmission lines.

Where Used: In areas where no trees exist for predator birds to perch and control of low to normal populations of rodents is desired.

Operation and Maintenance: The target wildlife species needs to be identified as well as the prey species. Area needs to be populated with adequate numbers of poles to be effective.

Worksheet 4 – Restore and Manage Declining Habitat

Payment = \$50/Acre/Year to Restore and Manage Habitats which are important to wildlife but are in decline.

Definition: Restoring and managing rare or declining native vegetated communities and associated wildlife species. Some examples of declining habitats include, but are not limited to, Shrub-Steppe, Garry or Oregon White Oak, Western Washington Prairie, Palouse Prairie and Riparian Habitat.

Purpose: Many species of wildlife are dependent upon habitat which is declining in Washington State. Management of these habitats will require protection from invasive plant and animal species. These sites will require specific management plans to create traditional and non-traditional disturbance allowing the release of the desirable plant species. In some cases re-introduction of plants may be required.

Where Used: On sites where declining or threatened habitats are known to occur or to have occurred and restoration opportunities exist.

Operation and Maintenance: The target wildlife species needs to be identified. An operation and maintenance plan needs to be developed on a site specific basis.



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Worksheet 5 – Management of Wildlife Water

Payment = \$200/Year for the management of wildlife water.

Definition: Manage wildlife water so that no point on farm is greater than a quarter mile from water (natural or developed).

Purpose: To provide wildlife a source of water.

Where Used: On sites where water is a limiting factor for native wildlife populations.

Operation and Maintenance: The target wildlife species needs to be identified. Natural watering sources are the most desirable. Developed watering sources must not have predators denning within 100 feet of the structure. Water quantity and quality must be adequate for wildlife use and availability. Developed watering facilities must be free of toxic aquatic vegetation such as algae and shall not contain mosquito larvae.

Worksheet 6 – Manage incidental woodlands for wildlife

Payment = \$15/Acre/Year.

Definition: On working lands, incidental woodlands can include, but are not limited to, hedgerows, fence lines, windbreaks, small woodlots, riparian buffers, and wildlife corridors. Incidental woodlands must be dominated by native woody vegetation.

Purpose: To improve incidental woodlands as sources of habitat for wildlife to use. When adjacent to working lands, incidental woodlands can increase the diversity of food, cover and water available to a broad variety of wildlife species. Management of incidental woodlands can further increase the value to wildlife by promoting a healthy vegetative community that is appropriately positioned on the landscape.

Where Used: Use for incidental woodlands on working lands where management can improve the land use as a value to wildlife.

Operation and Maintenance: Any management action including spraying, grazing or mowing will be evaluated on a site by site basis, addressing fully the target wildlife species and needs to be concurred by NRCS before the management action occurs.



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Worksheet 7 – Annual Winter Food Plots

Payment = \$85/Food Plot /Year

Definition: Establishment of annual food plots and leave over winter for wildlife.

Purpose: To provide winter food for bird and mammal species in areas with limited existing winter food.

Where Used: The enhancement will be used in or adjacent to annually tilled crop fields, hayland or pastures. Site locations should be adjacent to adequate winter cover (woody or tall erect herbaceous vegetation) where possible. Proximity to permanent cover provides escape routes for feeding animals when predators are in the area. Landowners can meet this enhancement by leaving portions of their crop fields unharvested. A target species will be identified in the conservation plan. Annual food plots currently established by operators are eligible for the enhancement payment.

Operation and Maintenance: Tuber crops will be left on the surface. Annual food plots will be left over winter undisturbed for wildlife use. Food plots can be disturbed in the spring for reestablishment. Annual food plot sizes and seed will be established as follows:

Number – maximum 1 food plot per 160 acres

Size – minimum size 1 acre per 160 acres not to exceed 5 % of the field

Minimum width – 25ft.

SEEDING RATES

Pounds of Pure Live Seed per Acre

Location for Use	Eastern Washington		Western Washington
	Dryland	Irrigated	Non-irrigated
Barley/Oats/Wheat	40-60	50-80	80-100
Corn		10-15	15
Millet (foxtail/proso/Japanese)*		15-20	20
Smartweed			10

* Do not use in floodprone areas



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Worksheet 8 – Manage herbaceous vegetation to maximize aquatic habitat

Payment = \$150/Acre/Year to manage wetlands dominated by herbaceous vegetation.

Definition: Improve herbaceous vegetation by managing for native species of value to aquatic dependent wildlife.

Purpose: Many wildlife species are dependent on specific aquatic plant communities which require management for traditional and non-traditional disturbance events. When left unmanaged, plant communities may succeed to large, monotypic stands of plants with limited value to wildlife. These stands can be managed to shift to habitats with greater diversity and wildlife values.

Where Used: In wetlands and aquatic habitats where a shift in the herbaceous plant community is desired in order to improve wildlife habitat.

Operation and Maintenance: Wetlands and other aquatic habitat will be managed to promote diverse plant communities that are beneficial to wildlife. Any management action including disking, flooding, spraying, grazing or mowing will be evaluated on a site by site basis, addressing fully the target wildlife species and needs to be concurred by NRCS before the management action occurs.

Worksheet 9 – Add Large Woody Debris to Wetlands to Enhance Amphibian Habitat

Payment = \$100/Wetland Enhanced/Year to add large woody debris to wetlands.

Definition: Placement of large woody debris (log with root wad) in saturated, seasonally ponded, semi-permanent or permanently ponded wetlands.

Purpose: To enhance the functions and values of wetland habitat for amphibians and reptiles.

Where Used: In saturated, seasonally ponded, or open water wetlands where it has been determined that the addition of large organic debris would enhance the habitat for amphibians and reptiles.

Operation and Maintenance:

- Minimum diameter of debris (log) – 10”
- Minimum length 15 ft. with root wad
- Placement of log – approximately 50% of log in water, 50% on shore for amphibians. If the target species is turtles the log can be anchored and floating.
- Log should be anchored if the water level fluctuates to the point of floating the log away.
- Minimum large organic debris (logs) – 5 logs per wetland
- Coniferous wooded is preferred where available

Operators who already have wetlands with existing large organic debris meeting the minimum criteria in the habitat management sheet are eligible for the enhancement payment.