



E512K

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Establishing native species into forage base to improve diversity for both livestock and wildlife

Conservation Practice 512(K): Forage and Biomass Planting

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture, Associated Ag Land

RESOURCE CONCERN: Plants, Animals

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 5 years

Enhancement Description

Establishing adapted and/or compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of perennial, herbaceous native species into pastures that can provide the structure and composition needed to enhance livestock and wildlife habitat, particularly when targeted forage supply and quality, cover, and shelter are not available in other pastures.

Criteria

- Select native perennial, grass/ forbs/ legume plant species and their cultivars based on climatic conditions, soil condition, landscape position and resistance to disease and insects, that benefit wildlife species of concern. If native forbs/legumes are not available, use introduced species that provide the same wildlife benefit.
- Plants will be selected that help meet livestock forage demand during times that normal farm/ranch forage production is inadequate while improving habitat for wildlife species of concern.
- Planting will take place when soil moisture is adequate for germination and



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establishment.

- Federal, state or local noxious species will not be planted.
- Recommendations for planting rates, methods, depths, and dates from land grant universities (LGU), plant materials program, extension agencies, or agency field trials will be followed.
- Prepare seed bed for planting that does not restrict plant emergence or leave the site vulnerable to erosion.
- Plant nutrients and/or soil amendments for establishment purposes will be applied according to a current soil test. Legume seed will be pre-inoculated or inoculated with the proper viable strain of Rhizobia immediately before planting.



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Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- Prior to implementation, select a perennial forage species or grassland mixture for establishment that benefits both livestock and wildlife.

Species	Species type (grass, legume, broadleaf)

- Prior to implementation, select planting technique, seeding rates and timing appropriate for the site and climatic conditions. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.) Inter-seeding should not disturb critical life stages of wildlife species of concern.

Planting Date	
Planting Technique	
Seeding rates	

- If livestock are included in the system, prior to implementation a grazing plan must be developed to keep grazing periods sufficiently short to allow for forages to recover before re-grazing occurs.
- During implementation, keep the following documentation:
 - Records and photographs of planting preparation and any materials purchased or materials on hand used for the implementation of the enhancement.
 - Documentation of seed rate basis (Pure Live Seed) and any fertilizer or soil amendments used for the implementation of the enhancement.
- If livestock are included in the grazing system, documentation and photographs of turn in/turn out grazing records for each field.



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- After implementation, make the forage planting and grazing records available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement.

NRCS will:

- As needed, provide technical assistance to meet the criteria of the enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Forage and Biomass Planting (Code 512) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
- If livestock are included in the system, prior to implementation a grazing plan must be developed to keep grazing periods sufficiently short to allow for forages to recover before re-grazing occurs.
- As needed, prior to implementation, NRCS will provide technical assistance:
 - Planning site preparation and establishment specifications meeting NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Forage and Biomass Planting (512).
 - Prepare specifications for applying this enhancement for each site using approved specification sheets, job sheets, technical notes, and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.
 - If livestock are included in the system, develop a grazing plan to keep grazing periods sufficiently short to allow for forages to recover before re-grazing occurs.
- During implementation, evaluate any planned changes to verify they meet the enhancement criteria.
- After implementation, verify the planned perennial grassland mixture was established to specifications developed for the site.



- After implementation, make the forage planting and grazing records available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement.

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NRCS Documentation Review:

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I have reviewed all required participant documentation and have determined the participant has implemented the enhancement and met all criteria and requirements.

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Participant Name _____

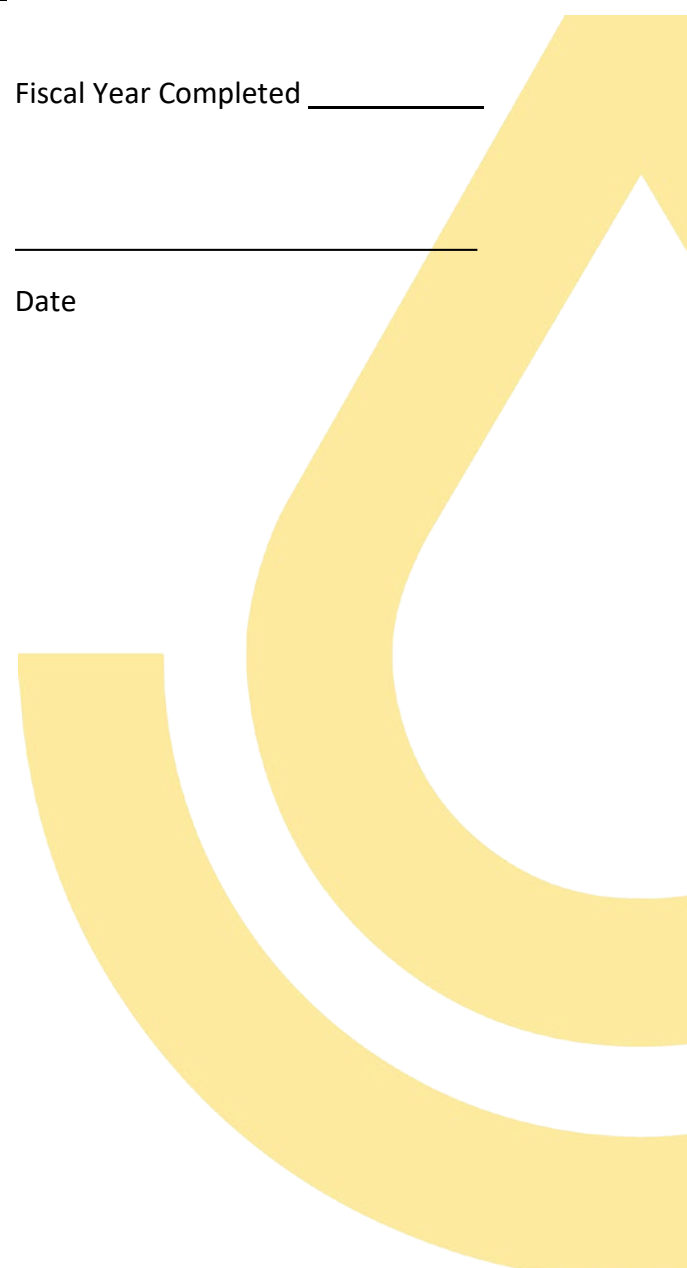
Contract Number _____

Total Amount Applied _____

Fiscal Year Completed _____

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature

Date





SOUTH DAKOTA (SD) SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

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Additional Criteria for SD:

In addition to the criteria specified in the national job sheet E512K, the following additional criteria apply in SD:

- As referenced from Biology Tech Note No 15, page 3, “All plant species ***native to the ecological site are considered acceptable wildlife habitat*** and provide wildlife food, cover, shelter, and space. Additionally, plant species identified in SD Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) wildlife fact sheets are acceptable wildlife habitat. Plant community heterogeneity (vertical and horizontal structure) and periodic disturbance provides the key components to sustainable wildlife habitat.”
- See the SD Range Technical Note No. 4 (found in Section 1 of the SD Technical Guide at <http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov>) for information on approved varieties, seeding rates, species characteristics and adaptability, and allowable species by forage suitability group and Major Land Resource Units (MLRA).
- If current forage base is more than 70 percent (%) native species, interseeding of native grasses, forbs, and/or legumes may meet the requirements of this enhancement. The following criteria can be applied in this situation:
 - Prior to planting, competition from existing vegetation should be reduced through intensive grazing, mowing, burning, low herbicide rates, or light tillage (the intent is to temporarily set back the existing vegetation, not kill it).
 - If current forage base is less than 70% native species, total destruction and replanting of stand is required. Refer to SD Range Tech Note 4 for establishment guidelines.

If planting is to be grazed after establishment, criteria related to the written grazing management plan (see National Jobsheet for more information also):

- Start of grazing period will be changed by a minimum of 2 weeks in each pasture/paddock each year during the growing season.
- Adequate recovery periods must be provided:



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- Minimum of 30 days between grazing events on pasture. Longer recovery periods will be needed during slow growth period and during drought.
- Maximum utilization will not exceed 50% by weight of the total current year's growth.

If planting is to be hayed after establishment, additional criteria:

- Provide suitable habitat for one or more wildlife species identified as common species for your geographical area. Please see Biology Technical Note No. 15, Attachment's A (Minimum Habitat Requirements for Selected Non-Game Species) and B (Minimum Habitat Requirements for Selected Game Species). Any species Identified by the producer and the planner as lacking habitat needs on the Planned Land Unit (PLU) will be eligible for this enhancement.
- Consult the local NRCS office to determine the wildlife and/or pollinator requirements. Wildlife life cycle requirements are found in Biology Technical Note No. 15, including attachments. The local NRCS office shall follow and use the species or guild habitat requirements as identified in Biology Technical Note No. 15 and its attachments.
- The state specified minimum mowing height is six inches for all species of forage.
- Nesting/fawning dates in SD are May 1 through August 1.

Additional Documentation Requirements for SD:

In addition to the documentation requirements specified in the national job sheet E512K, the following additional documentation requirements apply in SD:

- Complete the SD Seeding Tool (SD-CPA-4).
- Complete the SD Wildlife Habitat Quality Rating Worksheet (SD-CPA-19).
- Complete the SD Grazing Tool (SD-CPA-39 Forage/Animal Inventory, Grazing Schedule using the SD-CPA-15 or similar form, and SD-CPA-16 or similar grazing records document) *if applicable*.
- Complete a drought contingency plan using the SD Drought Tool or provide the participant with a copy of the example drought contingency plan located within the SD Prescribed Grazing Technical Note 9 *if applicable*.