United States Department of Agriculture

Conservation Enhancement Activity

E528J

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Prescribed grazing on pastureland that improves riparian and watershed function

Conservation Practice 528: Prescribed Grazing

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture

RESOURCE CONCERN: Water

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 1 year

Enhancement Description

Grazing management employed will provide cover and density needed in the watershed in order to reduce runoff, improve infiltration, provide for above ground water filtration and sustain applicable fish and wildlife species habitat.

Criteria

- Must follow a written plan for matching the forage quantity and quality produced with the grazing and/or browsing demand by livestock and wildlife.
- Enhance diversity of plants to optimize delivery of nutrients to the animals by incorporating the intensity, frequency, timing and duration of grazing and/or browsing needed as determined by a planning process that includes: 1) Clear objectives, 2) A resource inventory including a forage inventory, structural improvements, and existing resource conditions, 3) Grazing plan, and 4) A contingency plan.
- Supplemental feed and/or minerals will be balanced with the forage consumption to meet the desired nutritional level for the kind and class of grazing and/or browsing livestock.

- Minimize concentrated livestock areas to enhance nutrient distribution and improve or maintain ground cover and riparian/floodplain plant community structure and functions.
- Manage grazing and/or browsing to provide adequate ground cover and plant density to maintain or improve infiltration capacity and reduce runoff.
- Provide adequate ground cover and plant density to maintain or improve filtering capacity of the vegetation by moving livestock appropriately.
- Graze and rest pastures appropriately and with the right numbers, class, and kind of livestock to maintain adequate riparian community structure and function to sustain associated riparian, wetland, floodplain and stream species.
- If nutrients are applied, soil testing and nutrient application will be done according to local land grant university guidance or equivalent.

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- ☐ Prior to implementation, obtain a written grazing plan that identifies the following:
  - Goals and objectives of the plan
  - Forage/Animal Balance
  - A grazing plan narrative describing the basis for when livestock movement or rotation will occur.
  - Contingency plans for forage shortfalls.
  - Monitoring locations, key species, and monitoring techniques.
  - Map identifying all permanent pastures, water sources, and any riparian area or watershed drainage locations improved or maintained by this management.

- ☐ Prior to implementation, a nutrient management plan will be developed if nutrients will be applied. The nutrient management plan will detail appropriate soil testing protocol and acceptable nutrient application tolerances.

- ☐ Prior to implementation, a copy of the developed grazing plan will be submitted to NRCS for review and approval.

- ☐ During implementation, consult with NRCS or a qualified grazing professional to adjust and adapt the grazing plan to current conditions. Changes to the grazing plan will be documented in writing.

- ☐ After implementation, make all records available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement.

NRCS will:

- ☐ Prior to implementation, assist the participant with development of a grazing plan and nutrient management plan if requested to do so. If NRCS does not assist with plan development, the plan(s) will be reviewed by NRCS for approval prior to implementation.

- ☐ During implementation, as requested, assist the participant with adapting the grazing strategy and plan to current conditions.
- ☐ After implementation, review written grazing records provided by the participant to determine if the grazing plan was adequately followed to protect or enhance riparian areas, wetland areas, or overall watershed function.
- ☐ After implementation, if nutrients have been applied, soil testing and application records will be reviewed to determine if nutrients have been applied responsibly.

NRCS Documentation Review:

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

Participant Name _____ Contract Number _____

Total Amount Applied _____ Fiscal Year Completed _____

_____ _____

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature Date

United States Department of Agriculture

South Dakota (SD) Supplement to Conservation Enhancement Activity

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

E528J

Prescribed grazing on pastureland that improves riparian and watershed function impairment from nutrients or pathogens and chemicals or minimizes sediment

Additional Criteria for SD:
In addition to the criteria specified in the national job sheet E528J, the following additional criteria apply in SD:

- Salt, mineral, and feeding locations will not be located near riparian areas.
- Livestock grazing use will result in a minimum of 4 to 8 inches of stubble height along riparian areas, and less than 50 percent (%) utilization to protect streambanks and properly filter sediment.
- Grazing intensity will be increased from the current level. For example, occupation periods will be signficantly reduced and/or recovery periods longer than current management.
- Additional fencing may be required to adquately protect riparian area and facilitate grazing management improvements.
- Livestock use within a riparian area for extended periods of the winter (usually greater than one month) will not meet the criteria of this enhancement due to potential management improvements.

Requirements:

1. Maximum 50% utilization. Occular methods on key or representative areas are adequate, but utilization methods such as landscape appearance or key species should be used to calibrate field estimates. Exceptions include dormant season grazing (60% utilization) and grazing prescriptions on rangeland that are designed to alter the present plant community through intensive grazing by livestock (i.e., suppression of invasive species). In these cases, the desired degree of use of management species should be documented within the grazing plan and/or assistance notes.
2. Adequate plant recovery periods must be provided. On pasture provide a minimum of 30 consecutive days of growing season recovery between grazing events. The growing season is approximately April 1 through October 1.
3. Alter timing of grazing in each pasture by at least 2 weeks from year to year.

4. For additional information see the SD Prescribed Grazing Standard (528) and the appropiate SD Range Technical Note.

Additional Documentation Requirements for SD:

In addition to the documentation requirements specified in the national job sheet E528J, the following additional documentation requirements apply in SD:

- 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).
- Complete a drought contengency plan using the SD Drought Tool or provide the participant with a copy of the example drought contengency plan located within the SD Prescribed Grazing Technical Note 9.
- Additional practice documentation (such as fence, watering facility, etc) if required to improve grazing management of riparian areas.
- Nutrient Management Plan will need to be developed if nutrients are applied. Any nutrient application will require soil tests and to follow SD State University (SDSU) guidelines found in SDSU publication EC750.