



CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E550B

Range planting for improving forage, browse, or cover for wildlife

Conservation Practice: 550 - RANGE PLANTING

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Range; Crop (Annual & Mixed); Crop (Perennial)

RESOURCE CONCERN: Animals

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 5 years

Enhancement Description

Establishment of adapted perennial or self-sustaining vegetation such as grasses, forbs, legumes, shrubs and trees for the purpose of improving forage, browse, or cover for wildlife on areas that have been degraded beyond recovery via ecological principles, or old crop fields and pastures devoid of desirable, native rangeland species that fit within an ecological site description steady state.

Criteria

- Specified species and cultivars or varieties, planting rates, dates, and methods must be consistent with Plant Materials Center, research institution, or agency demonstration trials, local laws and/or regulations, management objectives, and adapted to the site. Plant materials/seed selected will be compatible with desired ecological site descriptions steady states (or their substitutive documentation from the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide).
- Seedbed preparation and planting methods will be suitable to meet any special needs for obtaining an acceptable establishment of planted materials, and provide adequate cover for erosion control within an acceptable time frame.

E550B – Range planting for improving forage, browse, or cover for wildlife	April 2019	Page 1
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CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

- Recommended planting depths, hydrologic conditions, dates, rates, soil amendments at planting, seed quality requirements, and management during establishment (weed control and/or deferment) must be followed in order to enhance establishment success.
- The plant species, cultivars or varieties selected will be deep rooted, perennial plants that meet the cover, forage, browse, nectar, and palatability requirements for the intended wildlife species (this may include such target species as rangeland birds, ungulates, pollinator insects and non-pollinator insects such as Monarch butterfly as geographically and ecologically relevant).
- Plant species will be selected and planted in a designed manner that will meet some of the life history requirements of the wildlife species of concern.





CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

Prior to implementation, prepare a range planting plan that details seedbed preparation techniques, planting method, planting dates, and seeding rates. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)

Planting Date(s)	
Seedbed Preparation	
Planting Method and Depth	
Seeding rates	

During implementation, notify NRCS if there are any changes to the range planting plan.

After implementation, provide documentation for review by NRCS of actual seedbed preparation technique, planting method, planting date, seeding rates, and percentage success of the plantings.

NRCS will:

Prior to implementation, provide the ecological site description(s) or other reference documents (if the ecological site description is not available) that outlines the best approximation of the desired plant community composition, structure, and function.

As needed, assist the participant with development of a range planting plan which details seedbed preparation, planting method, planting dates, and seeding rates.

During implementation, evaluate any changes to the range planting plan to verify they meet the enhancement criteria.

After implementation, review actual planting date and seeding rates to determine if the enhancement was implemented to meet criteria.



CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

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.

Fiscal Year Completed _____

Participant Name

_____ Contract _____

Number _____ Total Amount

Applied _____

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature Date





WASHINGTON SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Range Planting (550) References:

Range Planting (550) practice standard can be found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 4 – Practice Standards and Supporting Documents/Range Planting folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>

Ecological Sites for planning unit soils can be found by using the **Web Soil Survey** <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>

Ecological Site Descriptions can be found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 2 /Ecological Site Descriptions/ESD-Archives (Reference Only) folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>

Appropriate plant species for this Enhancement can be found in the **Plant Materials Technical Note 1 Seeding Guide** in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 1 /Reference Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Plant Materials <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>

In depth information on **suitable range and pasture species** can be found in **Plant Materials Technical Note 2**, March 2011, Grass, Grass-Like, Forb, Legume, and Woody Species for the Intermountain West. This document is found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 1/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Plant Materials. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>

Planning and installation of range and pasture seedings can be found in **Range Technical Note 101** (August 2007) Eastern Washington Range and Pasture Seeding, Planning-Installation-Evaluation. This document is found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 1/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Range folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>



Wildlife References and WHEGs:

Biology Technical Note 29: Eastern Washington Monarch Butterfly Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (updated 2022); note that one will need both the datasheet (XLS) and instructions/appendices (PDF) documents. These are located in FOTG Section 1/Reference Lists/Technical Notes by discipline/Biology.

Pollinator Habitat Assessment Form and Guide - Farms and Agricultural Landscapes (Plant Materials Technical Note 23 OR Biology Technical Note 31). This assessment guide will be available in both discipline areas during 2023; see: FOTG Section 1/Reference Lists/Technical Notes by discipline/

Beneficial Insect Habitat Assessment Form and Guide - Farms and Agricultural Landscapes (Plant Materials Technical Note 25 OR Biology Technical Note 30). This assessment guide will be available in both discipline areas during 2023; see: FOTG Section 1/Reference Lists/Technical Notes by discipline/

Biology Technical Note 28: Habitat Planning for Beneficial Insects - Guidelines for Conservation Biological Control. This is located in FOTG Section 1/Reference Lists/Technical Notes by discipline/Biology.

In depth information on **pasture species for the Intermountain West** can be found in **Plant Materials Technical Note 19**, November 2009, Pasture – Species Selection and Grazing Management Guidelines. This document is found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 1/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Plant Materials.

<https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA>

Use the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) **Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) database** to identify priority wildlife and habitat in your area.

<http://wdfw.wa.gov/mapping/phs/>

For Washington State's **Sage Grouse Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG)**, and other species **WHEG's**, – contact the NRCS State Biologist for the current guide.

Consult Biology Technical Note 24, **Plants for Pollinators in the Inland Northwest, Revised 2016** for appropriate plant species east of the Cascade Mts. and for guidance on establishing pollinator habitat, located in FOTG Section 1/Reference Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Biology.