



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E512M

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Forage plantings that improve wildlife habitat cover and shelter or structure and composition

CONSERVATION PRACTICE: 512 - Pasture and Hay Planting

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture; Associated Ag Land

RESOURCE CONCERN: Plants, Animals

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 5 years

Enhancement Description

Establishing adapted and compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of herbaceous species suitable for pasture, hay, or biomass production that can provide cover and shelter or structure and composition for wildlife. Species must be planted into existing perennial stands

Criteria

- Wildlife species of concern for cover and shelter will be specified on the state's approved NRCS Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) and will be a species that would be present for at least part of their life cycle in the geographical/physiographic region.
- The state's WHEG will be completed by an NRCS or partner wildlife biologist. Cover and shelter habitat requirements for the wildlife species of concern will be specified on the WHEG. The total WHEG score after installation of this practice will be 0.60 or greater.
- Select native, perennial, grass/forb/legume plant species (all species must be native) and their cultivars based on climatic conditions, soil condition, landscape position and resistance to disease and insects, which meet the cover and shelter needs for wildlife species of concern when they will be present.
- Prior to planting, graze or mow existing stands as needed to improve seedling competitiveness.



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- Recommendations for planting rates, methods, depths, and dates from land grant/research institutions, plant materials program, extension agencies, or agency field trials will be followed.
- Seeding medium that does not restrict plant emergence will be provided, and planting will take place when soil moisture is adequate for germination and establishment. Minimize soil disturbance during planting operations.
- Federal, state, or local noxious species will not be planted.
- 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.
- Plants will be selected that help meet cover and shelter habitat requirements for specified wildlife species during times that normal farm/ranch forage production is inadequate. Plant selection will help to increase scores on the state's approved NRCS habitat evaluation procedure for the wildlife species of concern.

Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- ☐ Prior to implementation, select a perennial species or grassland mixture for establishment. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)

Species	Forage category (grass, legume, forb)

- ☐ Prior to implementation, select planting technique, seeding rates and timing appropriate for the site and climatic conditions. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)

Planting Date	
Planting method	
Seeding rate	



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- ☐ If livestock are included in the grazing system, prior to implementation a grazing plan must be developed to keep grazing periods sufficiently short to allow for plants 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 (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.
- ☐ After implementation, make the forage planting and grazing records available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement.

NRCS will:

Prior to implementation, complete the state's approved NRCS Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG).

Targeted Species: _____

WHEG score before implementation: _____

WHEG score after implementation: _____

As needed, prior to implementation, NRCS will provide technical assistance:

- Planning site preparation and establishment specifications meeting NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Pasture and Hay Planting (Code 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 meets the enhancement criteria.

After implementation, verify the grassland mixture was established to specifications developed for the site.



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.

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Participant Name _____

Contract Number _____

Total Amount Applied _____

Fiscal Year Completed _____

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature

Date



WASHINGTON SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

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512 - Pasture and Hay Planting References:

Pasture and Hay Planting (512) Practice Standard and Implementation Requirements (IR's) are located in NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 4/Washington Conservation Practices/Pasture and Hay Planting (AC) (512) folder.

[FOTG Section 4](#)

Pasture and Hay (pasture) species, with seeding rates, for **Western Washington** can be found in the Extension Publication **EB1870, Pasture and Hayland Renovation** for Western Washington and Oregon. Also provides guidance on site preparation, seeding and when livestock grazing can resume.

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2079/2015/06/Pasture-and-Hayland-Renovation-for-Western-Washington-and-Oregon-WSU.pdf>

Ecological Site Descriptions and **Forage Suitability Groups** can be found in the **NRCS Field Office Technical Guide** [Washington | Field Office Technical Guide | NRCS - USDA](#) in Section 2. For planning unit ecological sites and forage suitability groups see next item.

Soil information, including productivity, **Ecological Sites and Forage Suitability Groups** for planning unit soils can be found by using the **Web Soil Survey**

<https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>

Seedbed Preparation and Seed to Soil Contact, Plant Materials Technical Note 6, can be found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) in Section1/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Plant Materials.

[Washington | Field Office Technical Guide | NRCS - USDA](#)



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Appropriate plant species, and seeding rates for **Eastern Washington** dryland plantings can be found in the **Plant Materials Technical Note 1 Seeding Guide** in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide in Section 1/Reference Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Plant Materials

[Washington | Field Office Technical Guide | NRCS - USDA](#)

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) in Section 1/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Plant Materials.

[Washington | Field Office Technical Guide | NRCS - USDA](#)

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) in Section 1/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Plant Materials. [Washington | Field Office Technical Guide | NRCS - USDA](#)

Pasture Condition Scoring documents in NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) in Section 1/Reference Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Pasture folder

[Washington | Field Office Technical Guide | NRCS - USDA](#)

Wildlife References and WHEG:

Washington State's Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) is **Biology Technical Note 14 Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG)**. It can be found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) in Section 1/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Biology folder. [Washington | Field Office Technical Guide | NRCS - USDA](#)

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/>

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. FOTG Section 1/References Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Biology [Washington | Field Office Technical Guide | NRCS - USDA](#)



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For west side environments consult **Plant Materials
Technical Note 13, Plants for Pollinators in Oregon**

[Plants for Pollinators in Oregon](#)

Prescribed Grazing:

Available for use – **Prescribed Grazing (528) Design Worksheet/s**. This document has several useful worksheets for developing grazing plans. It can be found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Section 4/Washington Conservation Practices/Prescribed Grazing 528) folder. [Washington - Field Office Technical Guide](#)

Pasture Technical Note No. 105. **The Western Oregon and Washington Pasture Calendar**, A Pacific Northwest Extension Publication PNW 699. Oregon State University, University of Idaho, Washington State University.

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/pnw699.pdf>