



## CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY E612C (WITH MONTANA SUPPLEMENT)

## CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Establishing tree/shrub species to restore  
native plant communities

**CONSERVATION PRACTICE: 612 - Tree/Shrub Establishment**

**APPLICABLE LAND USE: Forest**

**RESOURCE CONCERN: Animals, Plants**

**ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 15 years**

### Enhancement Description

Establish trees and/or shrubs to restore elements of plant communities and diversity that have been lost. Restoring stand-level diversity and function improves health and vigor through planting resilient and/or resistant native plant communities. Additional benefits include providing diversity in wildlife habitat and forage.

### Criteria

- States will apply criteria from the NRCS National Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Establishment (Code 612), and any additional criteria as required by the NRCS State Office.
- Species selected for planting will be native to the site and will create a successional state that progresses toward the identified target plant community.
  - **MT: Refer to [Conservation Trees and Shrubs for Montana](#) to determine the appropriate species to plant that are adapted to the site. Use [Forest Habitat Types of Montana](#) to determine the climax plant community.**
- To enhance native plant diversity, select a minimum of three different species of trees and/or shrubs to be planted. An exception is in situations where a native lost species is being restored to a fully stocked forest stand. (i.e., American chestnut). Selection of species should also be chosen according to the site's natural disturbance regime. Species should be selected based on traits, successional status, structure, and composition.



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- Build forest resilience by favoring existing species that are better adapted to projected future climate conditions, and by enhancing relative compositional and structural diversity.
- Do not plant species on the Federal or State invasive species or noxious weed lists.
- Only viable, high-quality and site-adapted planting stock or seed will be used.
- A precondition for tree/shrub establishment is appropriately prepared sites. Refer to criteria in NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (Code 490).
- Implementation and timing of planting will be appropriate for the site and ensure successful establishment.
- Planting must be protected from unacceptable adverse impacts from insects, disease, wildlife, and/or fire. Apply supporting practices and treatments to protect establishing trees and shrubs, as necessary.
- Each site will be evaluated to determine if mulching, supplemental water, or other treatments (e.g., tree protection devices, shade cards, weed mats) will be needed to assure adequate survival and growth.
- The enhancement will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and with States' Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality.

### Documentation and Implementation Requirements

#### Participant will:

- ☐ Prior to implementation:
  - provide an updated Forest Management Plan that documents intended objectives for restoring native plant communities.
  - select a combination of at least three native tree/shrub species that will increase plant and stand diversity.

Species	Note selected species characteristic(s)



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- During implementation:
  - install and maintain erosion control measures as needed for the site.
  - protect the planting(s) from plant and animal pests and fire.
  - notify NRCS in writing of any planned changes to verify changes meet NRCS enhancement criteria.

TASK	Species	Species	Species
Planting Date			
Planting Technique			
Arrangement/Spacing			

- Prior to implementation:
  - provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (Code 490) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
  - verify the enhancement is planned for the appropriate land use.
  - provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Tree/Shrub Establishment (Code 612) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
  - verify no plants on the Federal or state noxious weeds list are included.
  - NRCS will provide Technical Assistance, as needed, in the following:
    - Selecting a combination of species to meet enhancement criteria.
    - Selecting planting techniques, arrangement and spacing design, and timing appropriate for the site and soil conditions.
    - Planning the use of additional erosion control for the site, as needed.
    - Preparing specifications for applying this enhancement for each site using approved state implementation requirements, national technical notes, appropriate state technical notes, and narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.
- During implementation:
  - evaluate any planned changes to verify they meet the enhancement criteria and were established to specifications developed for the site.



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- ☐ After implementation:
  - verify the plantings were protected from plant and animal pests and fire.
  - verify all erosion control needed for the site is functioning and is maintained 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.

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contract Number \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Applied \_\_\_\_\_

Fiscal Year Completed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date