



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY
E512133Z2

CONSERVATION
STEWARDSHIP
PROGRAM

Forage plantings that enhance bird habitat (structure and composition)

Conservation Practice 512: Forage and Biomass Planting

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture, Associated Ag Land

RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Degraded Plant Condition

PRACTICE LIFE SPAN: 5 years

Enhancement Description

Establishing adapted and/or compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of herbaceous species suitable for pasture, hay, or biomass production that can provide cover and shelter components of bird habitat.

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 0.75 or greater.
- Select native, perennial, grass/forb/legume plant species 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 bird species of concern when they will be present.



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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.
- 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 bird 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 bird species of concern.

Documentation Requirements

- The state's approved NRCS Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) as completed and certified by an NRCS or partner wildlife biologist when applicable. Specific bird species targeted will be notated on the WHEG, and total score after implementation will equal 0.75 or greater.
- Documentation of seed (Pure Live Seed) and any fertilizer or amendments purchased.
- Completed forage balance sheet for farm/ranch and grazing records.