



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E512101Z2

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Forage and biomass planting for water erosion control to improve soil health

Conservation Practice 512: Forage and Biomass Planting

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture

RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Soil Erosion

ENHANCEMENT 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 for reduced soil erosion, improving soil health.

Criteria

- Select perennial grass/forb/legume plant species and their cultivars based on climatic conditions, soil condition, landscape position and resistance to disease and insects, and will provide the ground cover and root mass needed to be sufficiently protect the soil from wind and/or water erosion.
- 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.

E512101Z2- Forage and biomass planting for water erosion control to improve soil health	December 2017	Page 1
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CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

- 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.
- Deep-rooted, perennial species will be selected that will contribute to maintaining or increasing underground carbon storage.
- New plantings will be monitored for water stress. Depending on the severity of drought, water stress may require reducing weeds, early harvest of any companion crops, irrigating when possible, or replanting failed stands. Plantings will be protected from grazing until an adequate stand is established and meets the species specific, local standard for beginning grazing.



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Documentation Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- Prior to implementation, select a perennial forage species or grassland mixture for establishment. If livestock are included in the system, forage species selected will meet the desired level of nutrition for the kind and class of the livestock to be fed. (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	

- If livestock are included in the system, prior to implementation a grazing plan must be developed to keep grazing periods sufficiently short to allow for forages to recover before re-grazing occurs.
- During implementation, keep the following documentation:



CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

- 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. If livestock are included in the grazing system, during implementation in areas where animals congregate, establish persistent species than can tolerate close grazing and trampling.
- 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, use selected mixture and site information to calculate the before and after soil loss from water erosion using current NRCS wind and water erosion prediction technologies. **Soil erosion BEFORE ____t/ac/year and AFTER ____t/ac/year**
- As needed, prior to implementation, NRCS will provide technical assistance:
 - Planning site preparation and establishment specifications meeting NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Forage and Biomass 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 meet the enhancement criteria.
- After implementation, verify the planned perennial 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

