



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E340102Z - Colorado

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Cover crop to reduce wind erosion

Conservation Practice 340: Cover Crop

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

RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Soil Erosion

PRACTICE LIFE SPAN: 1 Year

Enhancement Description

Cover crop added to current crop rotation to reduce soil erosion from wind to below the soil tolerance (T) level. Cover crops grown during critical erosion period(s). Species are selected that will have physical characteristics to provide adequate erosion protection.

Criteria

- Plant species, seedbed preparation, seeding rates, seeding dates, seeding depths, fertility requirements, and planting methods will be consistent with applicable local criteria and soil/site conditions. Determine method and timing of termination to meet the grower's objective and current NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines.
- Select species that are compatible with other components of the cropping system.
- Ensure herbicides used with crops are compatible with cover crop selections.
- Cover crops may be established between successive production crops, or companion-planted or relay-planted into production crops. Select species and planting dates that will not compete with the production crop yield or harvest.
- Do not burn cover crop residue.



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- Do not harvest or graze cover crop.
- If specific rhizobium bacteria for selected legumes are not present in the soil, treat seed with appropriate inoculum at time of planting.
- Time cover crop establishment in conjunction with other practices to adequately protect soil during the critical erosion period(s).
- Select cover crops that will have the physical characteristics necessary to provide adequate erosion protection.
- Use current erosion prediction technology to determine the amount of surface and/or canopy cover needed from the cover crop to achieve the erosion objective (average annual soil loss below T).
- Crops planted following the cover crop must be no-tilled.



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Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- Prior to implementation, provide NRCS with the current and planned crop rotation and field operation(s) used for each crop.

Current Management Rotation

Field	Planned Crops/Cover Crop (in sequence)	Planting Date	Harvest/Termination Date

Current Field Operations for each crop

Field	Crop	Field Operation	Timing of Field Operation (month/year)

Planned Management Rotation Including Cover Crop

Field	Planned Crops/Cover Crop (in sequence)	Planting Date	Harvest or Termination Date



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Planned Field Operations for each crop

Field	Crop	Field Operation	Timing of Field Operation (month/year)

Cover Crop Mix and Seeding Rate

Species	Variety	Seed Size	Typical Seeding Depth (inches)	Seeding Rate (PLS lbs/acre)	Percent of Mix (%)

Establishment and Management Considerations:

Task	Provide information and details
Seedbed Preparation	
Seeding Date	
Seeding Depth	
Seeding Method	
Fertilizer, as needed	
Weed Management, as needed	
Termination Date (window)	
Termination Method	

Prior to implementation, read and follow current [NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines](#).



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- During implementation, cover crops must not be burned, grazed or harvested.
- During implementation, the crop following the cover crop must be no till seeded into cover crop.
- During implementation, notify NRCS of any planned changes in crops, crop rotation, or unharvested areas to verify the planned system meets the enhancement criteria.
- After implementation, if changes to the cover crop and crop rotation were made, complete the tables above to document the applied Cover Crop for the contract period and provide to NRCS.

NRCS will:

- As needed, provide technical assistance in selecting cover crop mixes for the crop rotations or substitute species that would meet the criteria of the enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, use information provided from the participant to calculate the management wind erosion value for each field using current NRCS wind erosion prediction technologies. Cover crop must decrease wind erosion from the current/benchmark condition and average annual soil loss must be below T.

Benchmark Management Soil Loss T/AC/YR = _____

Planned Management Soil Loss T/AC/YR = _____

- During implementation, evaluate planned adjustments in cover crop selected, timing in crop rotation, or field operations to verify the new system meets the enhancement criteria.
- After implementation, evaluate the applied cover crop in the crop rotation or management using information provided from the participant, if any variation to planned evaluation, then calculate erosion values to document that the applied cover crop met the enhancement criteria.

Applied Management Soil Loss T/AC/YR = _____

Colorado Documentation Requirements

Cover Crop (340) Implementation Requirements document must be completed per the Plans and Specifications for the planned purpose of reducing water erosion.

Reports from the current NRCS water erosion prediction technologies to document the soil erosion estimates (before and after) to show reduction in wind erosion to below T.



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 Acres Applied: _____ Fiscal Year Completed: _____

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature

Date



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