CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E512140Z

Native grasses or legumes in forage base

Conservation Practice 512: Forage and Biomass Planting

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Crop (perennial); Pasture; Associated Ag Land

RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Livestock Production Limitation

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 5 years

Enhancement Description

Establishing adapted and/or compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of perennial, herbaceous species that can provide the structure and composition needed to enhance livestock and wildlife habitat, particularly when targeted forage supply and quality, cover, and shelter are not available in other pastures.

Criteria

• 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, that meet the cover demand for movement by the wildlife species of concern.

• Recommendations for planting rates, methods, depths, and dates from land grant universities (LGU), 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 livestock forage demand during times that normal farm/ranch forage production is inadequate. When wildlife species are of concern, plant selection will be made and maintained based on the state's approved NRCS habitat evaluation procedure.

• Forage species selected will meet the desired level of nutrition for the kind and class of the livestock to be fed. Forage species planted as mixtures will exhibit similar palatability to minimize selective grazing.
**Documentation and 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.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Species type (grass, legume, broadleaf)</th>
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- Prior to implementation, select planting technique, seeding rates and timing appropriate for the site and climatic conditions. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planting Date</th>
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<th>Planting Technique</th>
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<th>Seeding rates</th>
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- 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.

- 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.

- 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:

- As needed, provide technical assistance to meet the criteria of the enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Forage and Biomass Planting (Code 512) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
- 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 (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.

Participant Name ______________________________ Contract Number ________________

Total Amount Applied ________________________ Fiscal Year Completed ____________

_____________________________ _______________________
NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature Date
**SOUTH DAKOTA (SD) SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY**

**E512140Z**

**Native grasses or legumes in forage base**

**Additional Criteria for SD:**

In addition to the criteria specified in the National job sheet E512140Z, the following additional criteria apply in SD:

- See the SD Range Technical Note No. 4 (found in Section 1 of the SD Technical Guide at [http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov](http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov)) for more information on:
  - Table 1 lists allowable varieties for use in SD.
  - Table 2 provides seeding rate information.
  - Table 3 provides information on species characteristics and adaptability.
  - Table 4, lists allowable species for each forage suitability group by Major Land Resource Area (MLRA).

- On slopes over 8 percent (%), 50% of the seed mixture (pure live seed (PLS) basis) will be rhizomatous species.

- Fertilization during establishment is not recommended, and soil tests are not required.

- If current forage base is more than 70% native species, interseeding of native grasses, forbs, and/or legumes may meet the requirements of this enhancement. The following criteria can be applied in this situation:
  - Competition from existing vegetation should be reduced through intensive grazing, mowing, burning, low herbicide rates, or light tillage (the intent is to temporarily set back the existing vegetation, not kill it).

- If current forage base is less than 70% native species, total destruction and replanting of stand is required. Refer to SD Range Tech Note 4 for establishment guidelines.
• Do not graze until the stand is fully established. This period will be a minimum of one full growing period.

Criteria related to the written grazing management plan:
• Start of grazing period will be changed by a minimum of two weeks in each pasture/paddock each year during the growing season.
• Adequate recovery periods must be provided:
  o Minimum of 30 days between grazing events on pasture, 45 days on range.
  o Longer recovery periods will be needed during slow growth period and during drought.
• Maximum utilization will not exceed 50% by weight of the total current year’s growth.

Additional Documentation Requirements for SD

• In addition to the documentation requirements specified in the National job sheet E512140Z, the following additional documentation requirements apply in SD:
  o Complete the SD Range Tool (SD-CPA-39 Forage/Animal Inventory, Grazing Schedule using the SD-CPA-15 or similar form, and SD-CPA-16 or similar grazing records document) if applicable.
  o Complete a drought contingency plan using the SD Drought Tool or provide the participant with a copy of the example drought contingency plan located within the SD Prescribed Grazing Technical Note 9 if applicable.
  o Complete the SD Seeding Tool (SD-CPA-4).