



United States Department of Agriculture

# CRP Practice CP30

## Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer

Natural Resources Conservation Service - Indiana - March 2016 (ver. 1.1)

### Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer Program Job Sheet



Photo courtesy of CA USDA NRCS

#### WHAT IS CRP MARGINAL PASTURELAND WETLAND BUFFER?

A Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer is a band of vegetation used to limit sediment, nutrients, pesticides, and other contaminants from entering water bodies. In addition, Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffers enhance and/or restore hydrology and plant communities associated with existing or degraded wetlands, and provide valuable wildlife habitat.

#### WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On fields that meet eligibility requirements for the Conservation Reserve program (CRP) as determined by the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

#### CRP POLICY

For CRP Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffers:

- The site must meet all marginal pastureland eligibility requirements. Cropland, forestland, and woodland are not eligible for marginal pastureland.
- Establishment of the Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer should result in a substantial reduction of pollutants reaching the adjacent stream or water body.

- The minimum width of the Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffer depends upon the slope of the field, the soil type, and the pollutants contained in the runoff. The minimum width is 20 feet. The maximum average width is 120 feet.
- The site must be **immediately adjacent and parallel to wetlands** capable of reducing damages by sedimentation and associated pollutants. They are also eligible adjacent and parallel to streams, sinkholes, karst areas, and permanent bodies of water such as lakes/ponds **IF at least 51% of the soils in the CRP buffer area are considered hydric.**
- Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffers must begin at the edge of the wetland, or the top of the stream bank. If the site already contains existing vegetation that is not eligible for CP30, these acres will be included in the calculation of maximum width and included in the CRP Plan, but will not be eligible for payments.
- For CRP in Indiana, **Native Grasses & Wildflowers** (Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, Indiangrass, Switchgrass, Canada Wildrye, etc.) **&/or Non-Native grasses & legumes considered wildlife friendly** (Timothy, Redtop, Orchard Grass, clover, Alfalfa, etc.) **&/or Native Trees and Shrubs will be encouraged.**
- CRP Marginal Pastureland Wetland Buffers will be installed according to the Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390) or Riparian Forest Buffer (391) Standard in the local NRCS eFOTG. Site-specific requirements are listed on the attached Specifications Sheet. Any prepackaged mixes must be approved before seeding. Site-specific requirements are listed on the attached Specifications Sheet.

## **BUFFER PLANTING**

Plant the vegetation according to the attached plan/design sheet. Any changes to these specifications should be approved by NRCS.

All construction and seeding must be completed within 12 months of contract approval to remain in compliance. If circumstances beyond the landowner's control prohibit completion within the first 12 months, the local FSA County Committee may approve an extension to the next construction and planting season.

**Grasses and Trees - Site Preparation:** It is very important to plant the vegetation into a weed-free seedbed. Weed control efforts should begin prior to planting, and may require multiple applications in both the fall and spring prior to planting. Use herbicides or tillage (however do not use spring tillage for tree planting) to eliminate competing vegetation. If necessary for erosion control, seed a temporary cover. Eliminate the temporary vegetation at planting time with tillage or herbicides.

Contact your local Purdue University Extension Agent for specific herbicides to use. **Apply all herbicides according to the label.**

**Lime and Fertilizer (Introduced Grasses):** Apply lime and fertilizer according to a recent (less than four years old) soil test for establishment of introduced grasses.

**Lime and Fertilizer (Native Grasses):** Lime and fertilizer should not be applied to native grasses at establishment unless a current soil test shows phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) are in the deficient range or the pH is 6.1 or less. Do not apply any nitrogen (N) during establishment to minimize weed competition.

## **SEEDING DATES**

Selected species will be planted within the dates in the specification sheet that will be provided for the site.

**Seed preparation:** Inoculate legume seed before seeding with the proper Rhizobia bacteria specific for the species. Re-inoculate seed if it was pre-inoculated more than 60 days prior to seeding. Be careful not to blend seed of varying size, shape and weight as this can make calibration of equipment and seeding uniformity difficult.

**No-Till seeding:** Use a no-till drill to reduce the risk of erosion and possible loss of seedlings. Ensure the drill is designed to handle the seed

being planted (especially important for native grasses). Your local Soil and Water Conservation Districts may be able to assist in locating equipment. Set the drill to provide an ideal planting depth of no more than ¼ inch unless otherwise directed. Seeding native grasses deeper than ¼ inch will lead to potential failure. Soils that are too wet or too dry can also cause improper seed placement.

**Conventional Seeding:** Use a drill with seven (7) inches or less row spacing or a culti-packer seeder, designed for the seed to be planted. The seedbed should be worked to a minimum depth of three (3) inches and firmed before seeding. Grass seed should be drilled uniformly and seeded no more than 1/2 inch deep.

**Broadcast Seeding:** Seed may be broadcast if completed in a uniform manner. Pre-mixing the seed with 200 lbs. per acre of pelletized lime and utilizing an airflow applicator is also effective. Seedbeds should be worked to a minimum depth of three (3) inches and firmed before seeding. The seedbed should be culti-packed before and after seeding. It is acceptable to see up to ⅓ of the seed on the soil surface. Wind speed should be 15 m.p.h. or less when broadcasting.

**Weed Control During Establishment Period:** Mow, burn, or apply herbicides as needed to control unwanted vegetation until a ***Final*** Status Review is issued, or for a maximum of three (3) years after planting. Mow when competing weeds are taller than the planted vegetation, and at a height above the planted vegetation.

## **Trees and Shrubs**

**Planting:** Plant trees according to the attached Specifications Sheet.

Bare rooted stock (seedlings) shall not be planted when the soil is frozen or dry and will be planted with the root collars approximately at or slightly below the ground line.

Bare rooted stock shall be planted in the spring after the ground thaws, but no later than June 1. It is important that tree species are randomly planted throughout the site and not planted with like species unless otherwise indicated in the planting plan.

**Weed Control During Establishment Period:** For information on herbicide controls, contact a local consultant or Purdue Extension Specialist.

Always apply herbicides according to labeled directions.

### **Weed Control After Establishment Period:**

Weed control is also important to ensure survival and maximum growth of the trees after they are planted. Nine (9) ft<sup>2</sup> around each tree should remain weed-free to maximize tree growth.

Mowing is not recommended for weed control for trees.

CRP cost share is authorized for one weed control application within 24 months after planting trees.

## **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Noxious weeds and other undesirable plants, insects, and pests shall be controlled, including such maintenance as necessary to avoid detrimental effects to the surrounding land.

**After** the Final Status Review or three (3) years (whichever comes first), maintain the planting according to your CRP conservation plan. Maintenance activities are allowed only on a spot basis and only if necessary to maintain stand health, maintain stand diversity, or control pests that will damage the CRP cover or adjacent lands. Burning must be in accordance with a prescribed burn plan. MOWING and other maintenance activities are not authorized between April 1 to August 1 to protect ground-nesting wildlife (i.e. - the Primary Nesting and Brood-Rearing season). If maintenance activities are needed during these times, the FSA County Committee **must** approve the maintenance activity **prior to** the activity occurring. Native grasses will not be mowed lower than 12 inches, and non-native grasses lower than four (4) inches.

**Mowing for generic weed control or for cosmetic purposes is prohibited.**

Exclude all acres from haying and grazing year round, unless authorized. Fences may need to be constructed and maintained to exclude livestock throughout the entire year.

The contract area cannot be used for field roads or other uses that will damage or destroy the cover.

## **MID-CONTRACT MANAGEMENT**

Mid-Contract Management (MCM) is required on this practice. If the CRP acres are less than 5 acres, the entire acreage can be managed in a single year; otherwise, the maximum amount that can be disturbed during any one year is ½ of the contract acreage. For maximum habitat value, disturb no more than 1/3 of the contract acreage in any given year.

MCM activities will be avoided on environmentally sensitive areas including:

- a) Concentrated flow areas,
- b) Critical areas,
- c) Within the first 20 feet of a practice that borders a water resource to avoid water quality resource concerns, and
- d) Other areas where gully erosion is likely.

Environmentally sensitive areas will be marked on the plan map to ensure Mid-Contract Management activities are avoided on these areas.

Areas devoted to grass have the following options:

- Prescribed Burning
- Strip Disking
- Strip Spraying
- Inter-seeding forbs/legumes/pollinator habitat

Areas devoted to trees have the following options:

- Inner Seedling Planting (re-enrollments)
- Inter-seeding forbs/legumes/pollinator habitat
- Follow-up Weed Control
- Pruning
- Thinning (re-enrollments)

MCM activities operations will not be performed from April 1 through August 1 for contracts starting in 2008, to protect the primary nesting period for grassland bird species. It is also recommended, but is not required, to delay MCM activities until after August 15 to reduce the chance of harming fledgling birds and other young wildlife.

MCM activities operations will be performed along field contours, or across the slope, when practical.

**Strips will parallel brushy or woody escape cover when feasible.**

## **OTHER MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

For optimum wildlife habitat, plant a diversity of grasses, legumes, and wildflowers. These mixtures will provide winter and nesting cover and food for a variety of wildlife. When mowing is necessary, restrict mowing to August 1 - August 20 to allow re-growth for winter cover.

# CRP MARGINAL PASTURELAND WETLAND BUFFER (CP-30) SPECIFICATIONS SHEET

<b>Landowner:</b>				<b>County:</b>		
<b>Farm:</b>	<b>Tract:</b>	<b>Field(s):</b>	<b>Acres:</b>	Grasses: Firebreak: Trees: Shrubs:	<b>Date:</b>	

## RECOMMENDED SPECIES and SEEDING RATE (PLS #/ac = Pure Live Seed Pounds per Acre)

EXISTING VEGETATION WILL MEET CRP AND FOTG POLICIES, WITH NO NEED FOR PLANTING.

	NATIVE MIX <small>(see map for location)</small>	RATE PLS#/ac	Total = <small>(Rate X Acres)</small>		NON-NATIVE MIX <small>(see map for location)</small>	RATE PLS#/ac	Total = <small>(Rate X Acres)</small>
<input type="checkbox"/>			0.00 Lb.	<input type="checkbox"/>			0.00 Lb.
			0.00 Lb.				0.00 Lb.
			0.00 Lb.				0.00 Lb.
			0.00 Lb.				0.00 Lb.
			0.00 Lb.				0.00 Lb.

  

	SHRUBS <small>(see map for location)</small>	RATE No./acre	Total = <small>(Rate X Acres)</small>		TREES <small>(see map for location)</small>	RATE No./acre	Total = <small>(Rate X Acres)</small>
<input type="checkbox"/>			0 No.	<input type="checkbox"/>			0 No.
			0 No.				0 No.
			0 No.				0 No.
			0 No.				0 No.
			0 No.				0 No.
			0 No.				0 No.

	SPECIES/ACTIVITY	RATE Lb./acre	Total = <small>(Rate X Acres)</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Firebreaks:			0.00 Lbs.
			0.00 Lbs.

Establish a Bare-Ground Firebreak by disking the Fall & Spring prior to Prescribed Burning  
 Disked areas will be re-seeded after each Prescribed Burn

**NOTES:**

Recommended Wildflowers include:

## BEFORE PLANTING in Year:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Permanent Fence: _____ : _____ ft = (see attached design)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Water Source: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pipeline: _____ ft = (see design)
<input type="checkbox"/> Water Facilities(s): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Livestock Crossing: (see design)
<input type="checkbox"/> Herbicide <sub>1</sub> (per label): _____	Dates = _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Herbicide <sub>2</sub> (per label): _____	Dates = _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Tillage: _____	Dates = _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Seeding: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Structures, Grading, Leveling, Filling – See the attached Design Sheet.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Apply fertilizer and lime according to an approved soil test and Tri-State recommendations for “ESTABLISHING” Native or Non-Native grasses.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	

## Planting Year:

<input type="checkbox"/> Planting Method for Grasses: _____	Date: See Seeding Dates on Page 2
<input type="checkbox"/> Planting Method for Trees and Shrubs: _____	Date: See Planting Dates on Page 2
<input type="checkbox"/> Planting Method for Firebreak: _____	Date: See Seeding Dates on Page 2

If unforeseen circumstances prohibit planting by this date, please contact the local NRCS office as soon as possible.

NOTES:

## Post-Planting Maintenance

**Mowing:**  BEFORE final Status Review, or up to three (3) years after planting, mow to a minimum height of six (6) to eight (8) inches high when the weeds are 12 inches taller than the planted grasses as needed

\*AFTER final Status Review, mow to a minimum height of six (6) to eight (8) inches

Herbicide\* (per label): \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\*NOTE: After the final Status Review has been issued, weed control and other maintenance activities will not occur between April 1 - August 1, and will occur on a “spot” basis only, unless prior approval is granted by the FSA County Committee.

## MID-CONTRACT MANAGEMENT - STARTING IN YEAR:

see the attached Mid Contract Management Job Sheet for details

For CRP Mid-contract Management job sheets see:  
<http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/CRP/crphomepage.html>