



# CRP CP38E

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

## State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Permanent Wildlife Habitat and Permanent Native Grasses Program Job Sheet



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### PURPOSE

The purpose of this practice is to restore short stature grassland habitat for grassland songbirds and Bobwhite quail and maintain the cover in a diversity of successional stages that meet the nesting and brood rearing requirements of those species.

### WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

On fields that meet eligibility requirements for the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Initiative of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) as determined by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). The contract duration for CP38E is 10-15 years.

### CRP POLICY

#### Permanent Wildlife habitat (only)

- Fields must be located within the counties identified in the Northern Bobwhite or Henslow’s Sparrow Priority Areas (refer to Indiana guidance eligibility maps in 2-CRP).
- Permanent wildlife habitat will consist of blocks or strips of introduced grasses and legumes equally interspersed with blocks or strips of native grasses and forbs.
- For native grass/forb mixtures see [Permanent Native Grasses](#) above.
- For introduced grass/ legume mixtures select species from the Indiana FOTG [Upland Wildlife Habitat](#)

[Management \(645\) Standard](#) criteria for cool season grasses.

- Up to 10% of the acreage may be planted to shrubs or trees planted in clumps or strips, or may be allowed to revert to trees or shrubs through natural succession.

#### Permanent Native Grasses (only)

- Fields must be located within the counties identified in the a) Northern Bobwhite, b) Henslow’s Sparrow, or c) Sedge Wren/Grasshopper Sparrow Priority Areas (refer to Indiana guidance eligibility maps in 2-CRP).

Permanent Native Grass plantings will consist of one of the following two grass mixes (based on the soil moisture), plus a legume/forb mix.

#### **Grass mix (choose one):**

1. On soils with a moisture tolerance of Moderately Well Drained (MWD) to Excessively Drained (ED), use a mixture of Little Bluestem and Sideoats Grama, plus either Canada Wildrye, Virginia Wildrye, or Riverbank Wildrye.  
NOTE: Prairie Dropseed or Tall Dropseed may be added to the mixture.
2. On soils with a moisture tolerance of Poorly Drained (PD) to Somewhat Poorly Drained (SPD), use a mixture of Big Bluestem, Indiangrass, and Switchgrass, plus either Riverbank Wildrye or Virginia Wildrye.

#### **Legume/forb mix:**

1. One (1) legume, plus
2. One-half (0.5) pound/acre of a mixture containing at least 5 forbs  
NOTE: Choose species from the Indiana FOTG [Upland Wildlife Habitat Management \(645\) Standard](#). No one forb or legume can make up more than 20% of the mixture.

Up to 10% of the area may be allowed to revert to trees through natural succession.

## PLANTING

Plant the grasses/forbs/trees/shrubs according to the attached [Specifications Sheet](#). Use seeding rates found in the Indiana FOTG [Upland Wildlife Habitat Management \(645\) Standard](#). Any changes to these specifications must be approved by NRCS.

**To encourage the forb component of the seeding mixture it is strongly encouraged to sow the mixture during the dormant season.**

All construction and seeding must be completed within 12 months of the effective date of the contract 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 planting season.

## SEEDING DATES

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

**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 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:** 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.

**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 3 years after planting. Mow when competing weeds are taller than the planted vegetation, and at a mowing height above planted vegetation.

**Tree/Shrub planting:** 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.

## 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 (allowed on a spot basis only) 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. **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.

**Weed Control in Tree/Shrub Plantings:** 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.

Check survivability of planted tree/shrub species after three (3) years to insure that the desired stocking rate for the site is present, usually 70% survival of the planted rate. Additional planting will be completed if it is determined that additional natural regeneration will not be sufficient to colonize the site within an acceptable time frame (usually 5 years) so that 300 acceptable woody plants per acre are established.

### **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.

Areas devoted to grass have the following options:

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

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.

Grassland areas must be established for a minimum of three (3) years before initiating MCM activities.

MCM activities operations will not be performed from April 1 through August 1 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.

# SAFE CP38E: Permanent Native Grasses and Wildlife Habitat SPECIFICATIONS SHEET

Landowner:				County:			
Farm:	Tract:	Field(s):	Acres:	<u>MIX #1</u> Grasses: Shrubs: Trees: Firebreak:	<u>MIX #2</u> Grasses: Shrubs: Trees:	Date:	

## Recommended Species and Seeding Rates

Use the *Seeding Mixture Calculator* in the NRCS *Upland Wildlife Habitat Management Standard (645)* for seeding rates.  
All rates are in Pure Live Seed (PLS)

	Grasses Mix #1	Rate Lb./acre	Total = (Rate X Acres)			Grasses Mix #2	Rate Lb./acre	Total = (Rate X Acres)	
<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.

  

	Forbs Mix #1	Rate Oz./acre	Total = (Rate X Acres)			Forbs Mix #2	Rate Oz./acre	Total = (Rate X Acres)	
<input type="checkbox"/>			0.00	Oz.	<input type="checkbox"/>			0.00	Oz.
			0.00	Oz.				0.00	Oz.
			0.00	Oz.				0.00	Oz.
			0.00	Oz.				0.00	Oz.
			0.00	Oz.				0.00	Oz.

  

	Shrubs Mix #1	Rate No./acre	Total = (Rate X Acres)			Shrubs Mix #2	Rate No./acre	Total = (Rate X Acres)	
<input type="checkbox"/>			0	No.	<input type="checkbox"/>			0	No.
			0	No.				0	No.
			0	No.				0	No.

  

	Trees Mix #1	Rate No./acre	Total = (Rate X Acres)			Trees Mix #2	Rate No./acre	Total = (Rate X Acres)	
<input type="checkbox"/>			0	No.	<input type="checkbox"/>			0	No.
			0	No.				0	No.
			0	No.				0	No.

	Species/Activity	Rate Lb./acre	Total = (Rate X Acres)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Firebreaks:			0.00	Lbs.
			0.00	Lbs.
<input type="checkbox"/> 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:**

### Site Preparation - BEFORE Planting in Year:

<input type="checkbox"/> Herbicide (per label):	Dates:
<input type="checkbox"/> Herbicide (per label):	Dates:
<input type="checkbox"/> Herbicide (per label):	Dates:
<input type="checkbox"/> Tillage:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Prescribed Burning:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Seeding:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	
NOTES:	

### Planting Year:

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

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mowing:</b> BEFORE final Status Review, or up to 3 years, mow to a <u>minimum</u> height of six (6) to eight (8) inches high <u>when the weeds are 12 inches taller than the planted grasses</u>  *AFTER final Status Review, or up to 3 years, mow to a <u>minimum</u> height of six (6) to eight (8) inches	
<input type="checkbox"/> Herbicide* (per label):	<input type="checkbox"/> Prescribed Burning*: According to an approved plan
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	
*NOTE: <u>After</u> the final Status Review has been issued, or three (3) years (whichever comes first), weed control and other maintenance activities will be conducted outside the nesting season of <b>April 1 - August 1</b> , and on a "spot" basis <u>only</u> , unless prior approval is granted by the FSA County Committee.	

### MID-CONTRACT MANAGEMENT - STARTING IN YEAR:

<input type="checkbox"/> see the attached Mid Contract Management Job Sheet for details
For CRP Mid-contract Management specifications see: <a href="http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/in/programs/?cid=stelprdb1119594">http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/in/programs/?cid=stelprdb1119594</a>

### Additional Information

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