

**Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM49 – Early successional habitat between first rice crop and ratoon crop**



**Enhancement Description**

This enhancement is to encourage the manipulation of rice stubble by rolling to create early successional habitat for migratory and resident wildlife species.

**Land Use Applicability**

Cropland

**Benefits**

Many declining suites of wildlife species rely on early successional habitats for at least part of their life cycle needs. Migratory shorebird species in particular rely on open, moist soil or shallowly flooded conditions for foraging and security. Rice farms support many migratory and resident water bird species. The first rice crop harvest often coincides with the arrival of early migrating shorebirds. This time of year is also the highest rainfall months. If standing rice stubble from the first crop is rolled to push above-ground stalks level with the soil surface, the first component of this type of habitat is met. When moisture is added to this situation, short-term habitat is available until the ratoon crop initiates growth to a height beyond that which would provide benefit to the early successional species.

**Conditions Where Enhancement Applies**

This enhancement applies to crop land use acres with leveed fields where a ratoon crop is grown.

**Criteria**

Implement the following:

1. Develop a wildlife habitat management plan for the suite of species targeted.
2. Immediately after first crop rice harvest, the standing rice stubble is forced to the soil surface with a rolling implement.
3. Close water control structure affecting the planned area no later than two days after harvest
4. Capture ephemeral moisture and/or encouraged moist soil conditions.

Note: This activity may be grouped with Animal Enhancement Activity-ANM44-Close structures to capture and retain rainfall for waterfowl and wading birds during winter and Animal Enhancement Activity-ANM45-Manipulate vegetation on fields where rainfall is to be captured and retained.

**Adoption Requirements**

The enhancement is considered adopted when the majority (>80 percent) of rice stubble is at or below the soil surface on the land use acre, and when water control structures are in place to capture rainfall to affect the same land use acre.



United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

2015 Ranking Period 1

### **Documentation Requirements**

1. Copy of the wildlife habitat management plan
2. Date of harvest
3. Date the first crop stubble was rolled level to the soil surface
4. Date the structures closed
5. Representative digital photographs of the water control structures and the early successional habitat provided

### **References**

Vermillion, W.G. 2012. Fall Habitat Objectives for Priority Gulf Coast Joint Venture Shorebird Species Using Managed Wetlands and Grasslands, Version 4.0. Gulf Coast Joint Venture, Lafayette, LA. 31 pp + appendices.