United States Department of Agriculture

Conservation Enhancement Activity

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

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.

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- 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

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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.)

Species	Species type (grass, legume, broadleaf)

- ☐ Prior to implementation, select planting technique, seeding rates and timing appropriate for the site and climatic conditions. (NRCS will provide technical assistance, as needed.)

Planting Date	
Planting Technique	
Seeding rates	

- ☐ 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 meets the enhancement criteria.

☐ After implementation, verify the planned perennial grassland mixture was established to specifications developed for the site.

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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

United States Department of Agriculture

INDIANA SUPPLEMENT TO

CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

E512140Z

Additional Criteria for INDIANA

- In addition to the criteria specified in the National job sheet E512140Z the following additional criteria apply in Indiana:

    - A grazing plan will be followed according to the IN FOTG 528 – Prescribed Grazing Standard on all enrolled acreage that is to be grazed and document in the assistance notes that "stop grazing" heights are being maintained as directed in the IN FOTG 528 – Prescribed Grazing Standard during the growing season.

    - Follow IN FOTG 511, Forage Harvest Management if mechanically harvested.

    - "**Native** grasses, forbs, and legumes" will be selected utilizing the Indiana Seeding Calculator: **IN Seed Calculator** (http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/IN/IN_NRCS_Seeding_Calculator.xlsm) for the IN FOTG 512 – Forage & Biomass Planting Standard. Only wildlife friendly species will be used.

    - Utilize and follow the Indiana Seeding Guidelines found at http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/treemenuFS.aspx Folder Tools/Indiana Seeding Tool/Indiana Seeding Guidelines

    - Stop grazing heights will be followed on 80% or more of the enrolled acres based on the following table: (Note: Stop grazing heights are the shortest forages present after grazing; there will be variability in the forage present.) Livestock will be removed from enrolled acreage once stop grazing heights are present or the overwintering height is reached if grazed. A contingency plan will be in place for adverse conditions. Overwintering heights will be maintained for grazed and harvested fields.

Forage Type	Stop Grazing Height (inches)[1/]	Overwintering Height[2/]
Native Grasses, Legumes and Forbs	6	12

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[1/] In continuously grazed systems or systems with only 2 or 3 paddocks, the stop grazing height should be at least one inch taller than in larger rotated systems.

[2/] Overwintering heights are ideally not reached until forages have become dormant.

- Grazing and or mechanical harvest will be deferred until the forages are well established.

Additional Documentation Requirements for INDIANA

- In addition to the documentation requirements specified in the National job sheet E512140Z the following additional documentation requirements apply in Indiana:
  - Certified seed tags are required.

Notes and comments on this National Enhancement:

- The Indiana livestock forage balance sheet will be used.