United States Department of Agriculture

Conservation Enhancement Activity

E512139Z1

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Establish wildlife corridors to provide habitat continuity

Conservation Practice 512: Forage and Biomass Planting

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture, Associated Ag Land, Farmstead

RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Fish & Wildlife Inadequate Habitat

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 5 years

Enhancement Description

Establishing adapted and/or compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of perennial, herbaceous species that can provide cover needed for wildlife species of concern to move from food/cover/water sources to other food/cover/water sources as needed for their life cycles, and/or to enhance the utility of underused wildlife habitat areas.

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.
- Plant selection will be made and maintained based on the state's approved NRCS habitat evaluation procedure.
- Protection from grazing or other plant defoliation/biomass loss will be provided as needed to assure adequate corridor cover during the primary wildlife movement time frames.
- Grazing or other plant defoliation/biomass operations will be timed as needed to assure adequate corridor cover during the primary wildlife movement time frames.
- Wildlife species of concern for corridor utilization will be specified on the state's approved NRCS Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG).

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, 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.

- ☐ During implementation, ensure that the forage/biomass is protected from grazing or other plant defoliation/biomass loss.
- ☐ 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.
- ☐ Prior to implementation, complete the state's approved NRCS Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG). **Species of concern: _____**
  WHEG score before implementation:_____
  WHEG score after implementation:_____
- ☐ As needed, prior to implementation, NRCS will provide technical assistance:
  - o Planning site preparation and establishment specifications meeting NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Forage and Biomass Planting (512).
  - o 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.
  - o <u>If livestock are included in the system,</u> 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

IOWA SUPPLEMENT TO

CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

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Additional Criteria for Iowa

- In addition to the criteria specified in the National job sheet E512139Z1 the following additional criteria apply in Iowa:
    - By applying "Establish wildlife corridors to provide habitat continuity" In Iowa within pasture, farmstead or associated ag land landscape according to the Iowa Wildlife Action Plan the follows species will benefit but are not limited to: Monarch, Bullsnake, Northern Bobwhite, Barn Owl, Grasshopper Sparrow, Henslow Sparrow, Dickcissel, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Western Meadowlark.
    - If applicant is managing for a species of concern not contained in the above list, reference the Iowa Wildlife Action Plan and contact Biologist.
    - This enhancement requires the establishment of species that are both native and perennial, of which all are considered wildlife-friendly.
    - Consult with the Iowa DNR Biologist for the requirements for the corridor of the species of concern.
    - Consult with the Iowa DNR Biologist for the requirements for protection from grazing or other plant defoliation/biomass operations.
    - Plant nutrients and soil amendments for stand establishment will be based on a current soil test and follow Iowa State University Extension Publications PM1688 (lime) and PM569 (N, P, & K).

- Use Agronomy Tech Note 34 to develop a seeding plan that will be documented on IA-CPA-4 or in the participant documentation section of the national enhancment.
- Switchgrass cannot be seeded at more than 20% of the mixture and is not recommended.
- Livestock Exclusion is required until plants are well established. Refer to PM569 section "Management During Establishment" for guidance.
- Use Iowa Wildlife Working Lands Habitat Evaluation for the WHEG. For Pasture, use Grassland Habitat – Permanent pastureland; for Associated Ag Land or Farmstead, use Grassland Habitat – Idle Grasslands.
- The seed mix for animal congregation areas should include tolerant grasses such as Tall Fescue, Smooth Brome, or Kentucky Bluegrass and tolerant legumes such as White (Ladino) Clover or Red Clover. This will be different than the seed mix for the rest of the enhancement area.