

**Landowner:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Definition**

Permanent wildlife habitat is creating, maintaining, or enhancing areas for food and cover for upland wildlife on land retired from agricultural production.



**Purpose**

Permanent wildlife habitat is used to create or enhance wildlife habitat by accomplishing one or more of the following:

- \* Provide food for the desired kinds of upland wildlife.
- \* Provide cover types for the desired kinds of upland wildlife.
- \* Manage wildlife habitat to achieve a viable wildlife population within the species home range.

**Where Used**

Permanent wildlife habitat is used on land retired from agricultural production, including land entered in retirement programs.

**Conservation Management System**

Permanent wildlife habitat usually is all that is required to meet the requirements of a Conservation Management System. There may be other resource concerns present and could require other practices to also be installed to meet program requirements. In addition, other wildlife practices can be installed to enhance the wildlife benefit of the cover that will result from this practice.

**Wildlife**

This practice is well suited for wildlife food and habitat. Selection of grass species will affect what type of wildlife will utilize these acres. Supplementing the grass planting with other wildlife practices will further enhance the cover.

**Planning Considerations**

1. Select plant species and varieties best adapted to the climate and the soils in the field being established to permanent vegetative cover.
2. Consider the long-term use objectives in selection of vegetative cover species.
3. Consider the needs of wildlife species.
4. Consider existing wildlife habitat on land areas surrounding the field being established to permanent cover.
5. Consider adding nectar and larval host milkweed plants beneficial to the Monarch butterfly and other pollinators.

**Specifications**

Site-specific requirements are listed on the specifications sheet. Additional provisions are entered on the job sketch sheet. Seeding plans will be prepared in accordance with the NRCS Agronomy Technical Note #31, Practice Standard (327) Conservation Cover.

## **Management Considerations**

Manipulation of habitat may impact more than the desired kinds of wildlife. These possible effects will should be evaluated and taken into consideration during the planning process. This practice will be used to promote the conservation of declining species, including threatened and endangered species.

Linking fragmented habitats of cover types with corridors may greatly increase the use of an area by the species of concern. In general the wider the corridor the more species use it.

Manipulation to favor an individual species of wildlife will impact the entire animal community. The effects on non-target species may be beneficial or harmful, depending upon the nature of the prescribed management and the habitat requirements of the resident wildlife.

Many wildlife species prosper at some stage of plant succession before climax. Others are dependent on climax communities. Knowledge of the local plant communities, plant species successional stages, and associated animals is essential.

Numerous habitat types in small units provide a maximum amount of diversity or edge important for most farmland wildlife species. However, creating edge could result in habitat fragmentation for some wildlife species and adversely affect them. Larger blocks of habitat are most beneficial.

## **Grass Seeding Establishment**

Procedures and adapted cultivars are covered in the standard and specification for Conservation Cover (327).

## **Nutrients**

For introduced grasses and legumes a soil test from the year of seeding or during the two preceding calendar years is required to determine the need for commercial fertilizer and liming materials. Lime and fertilizer are usually not required for native grass species.

## **Use of Pesticides**

Only those pesticides which are labeled for the specific use will be recommended. University and Extension publications and specific label instructions will be used for guidance on herbicide selection and use.

## **Operation and Maintenance**

O&M will include but not be limited to the following:

1. Control annual weeds and other competition the year of establishment, with early and timely clipping before seed heads appear, or timely application of herbicides.
2. Prevent disturbance of cover during the primary nesting season for wildlife as established by FSA.
3. After the seeding is established control all noxious weeds as identified by state and local laws, by: a) treating with chemicals per label directions, or b) spot mow before seed heads form. When possible delay use of control measures until after August 1st to protect nesting wildlife. Spot treatment on problem areas may be authorized by FSA during the primary nesting season.
4. Protect the acres from unauthorized haying and grazing. Fences may need to be constructed and maintained to exclude livestock throughout all 12 months of the year.
5. Replace dead trees and shrubs as necessary control undesired vegetative competition to promote a fully functional tree/shrub planting. Control and grass competition around trees and shrubs a minimum of 2-4 feet using cultivation, mulch, or chemical control measures.
6. Do not use the contract area for field borders, field roads, or other uses that will damage or destroy the cover.
7. Control rodent infestations that adversely affect the perennial ground cover.
8. Grassland management actions are beneficial during the contract to remove duff build up, control invading cool season grasses, or improve plan vigor. Management actions will only be done according to an approved CRP grassland management plan.



## Practice Specifications Approval and Completion Certification

**LANDOWNER/OPERATOR ACKNOWLEDGES:**

- a. They have received a copy of the specifications and understand the contents including the scope and location of the practice.
- b. They have obtained all necessary permits and/or rights in advance of practice application, and will comply with all ordinances and laws pertaining to the application of this practice.
- c. No changes will be made in the installation of the job without prior concurrence of the NRCS.
- d. Maintenance of the installed work is necessary for proper performance during the life of the practice. The practice life is \_\_\_\_\_.

**I have reviewed all specifications and agree to install as specified:**

Landowner/operator name and title (type or print):		
Landowner/operator Signature:		Date:
Landowner/operator name and title (type or print):		
Landowner/operator Signature:		Date:

***NRCS Review Only***

**DESIGN INSTALLATION AND LAYOUT APPROVAL:**

Designed By:	Date:	Job Approval Authority (JAA):
Approved By:	Date:	Job Approval Authority (JAA):

**RECORD OF COMPLETION AND CHECK OUT CERTIFICATION:**

Treated Acres:	Date Completed by Client:	Date Certified:

**Certification Statement:**

I certify that implementation of this conservation practice is complete, meets criteria for the stated purpose(s), and meets the NRCS conservation practice standard and specifications.

NRCS Signature:	Date:	Job Approval Authority (JAA):