

Definition

Permanent Native Grasses is establishing and maintaining cover to protect soil and water resources on land retired from agricultural production.



Purpose

Permanent Native Grasses is used to reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, improve water quality and create or enhance wildlife habitat

Where Used

Permanent Native Grasses is used on land retired from agricultural production, including land entered in retirement programs. This practice does not apply to plantings for forage production or to critical area plantings.

Conservation Management System

Permanent Native Grasses 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 (643) Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities.

- Cover must consist of at least 15 species
 - minimum 5 grasses, and a minimum of 5 forbs with at least 1 forb being a legume
- No trees and/or other woody vegetation are allowed.
- No food plots are allowed.

Management Considerations

On highly erodible sites it may be desirable to seed a companion crop with native grasses unless no tilling into a temporary cover, row crop residue cover providing at least companion crops shall be clipped after jointing but before heading out unless otherwise directed by NRCS. A second and subsequent clippings may be necessary when re-growth provides competition during the first year of establishment. Clipping height should be above developing seedlings. Where excessive growth has accumulated, the vegetation should be chopped rather than swathed.

Weed control is critical for the successful establishment of native grasses. Severe infestations of noxious or any competing weeds will usually require application of an appropriate herbicide. Weed control shall be accomplished by using mechanical and/or chemical control methods.

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Seeding Dates

- * May 15 - June 30
- * Dormant Seeding after November 1 or a consistent soil temperature of $< 50^{\circ}$

Nutrients

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. Re-seed any areas that do not have adequate permanent cover.
6. Do not use the contract area for field borders, field roads, or other uses that will damage or destroy the cover.
7. Do not use the field for disposal of livestock or organic waste unless that use is authorized in the additional specifications and remarks.
8. Grassland management actions are beneficial during the contract to remove duff build up, control invading cool season grasses, or improve plant vigor. Management actions will only be done according to an approved CRP grassland management plan.
9. Use all chemicals according to label instructions.
10. Control rodent infestations that adversely affect the perennial ground cover.

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Practice Specifications Approval and Completion Certification

LANDOWNER/OPERATOR ACKNOWLEDGES:

- They have received a copy of the specifications and understand the contents including the scope and location of the practice.
- 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.
- No changes will be made in the installation of the job without prior concurrence of FSA.

SEE SIGNATURE COVER SHEET

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:

JOB CLASS:

Designed By:	Date:	
Approved By:	Date:	

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:
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