

Continuous Signup – Highly Erodible Land Initiative (HELI)

CRP is a voluntary program that helps agricultural producers and landowners use environmentally sensitive land for conservation benefits. Producers enrolled in CRP plant long-term, resource conserving covers to control soil erosion, improve water and air quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 to 15 years. Get the [FACTS HERE!](#)

What Practices Are Available?

Many practices are available to preserve highly erodible, environmentally sensitive land. Learn more by clicking on one of the practice codes below or scroll down to read about all of them.

<u>Conservation Practice</u>	<u>Description</u>
CP-1	Establishment of Permanent Introduced Grasses and Legumes
CP-2	Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses
CP-3	Tree Planting
CP-3A	Hardwood Tree Planting
CP-4D	Permanent Wildlife Habitat (noneasement)

CP-1

Establishment of Permanent Introduced Grasses and Legumes

How to improve your Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) score:

Planting...	Such as...
<u>2 to 3</u> introduced grass species	orchardgrass redtop timothy
At least <u>4</u> species: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• at least <u>3</u> introduced grass species• at least <u>1</u> forb or legume suitable for wildlife in the area	orchardgrass, redtop timothy ladino clover Korean or Kobe lespedeza partridge pea

Note: Fescue and Bermuda grass are considered aggressive plants with little wildlife value and are NOT considered acceptable for CRP use.

Refer to the [NRCS Virginia Plant Establishment Guide](#) (forage tab) for a comprehensive species list and/or the [Forage and Grassland Planting \(512\) Job Sheet](#) for further details.

Mid Contract Management Requirements

To ensure that the CRP conservation cover adequately provides plant diversity, wildlife value and protection of soil and water resources for the length of the contract period, management practices are required and will be provided in the conservation plan. Because mid contract management practices for CRP are site specific, required practices and timing of the practices will be determined during the conservation plan development by the landowner and the NRCS / TSP conservation planner.

A generic example of a conservation plan for management of a CP-1 is shown below:

Year 3 of the contract---- weed & invasive species control

Year 4 and 8 of the contract---- light disking and overseeding

Cost sharing may be available for required management activities listed in the conservation plan at a rate of 50%.

Managed Haying and Grazing is allowed on land enrolled in CP-1. CRP rules restrict haying and grazing - any portion of the enrolled acreage may only be hayed or grazed 1 out of 3 years. Haying and grazing must be addressed in the conservation plan.

Maintenance mowing of the CRP acreage is permitted once per year from January to March, if needed. However, periodic mowing for cosmetic purposes is prohibited.

No work can be done during the primary wildlife nesting season of April 15-August 15.

CP-2

Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses

How to improve your Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) score:

Planting...	Such as...
At least <u>3</u> species: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• at least <u>2</u> native grass species• at least <u>1</u> forb, or legume species beneficial to wildlife	<u>Grasses:</u> Big Bluestem Little Bluestem Indian Grass Switchgrass Eastern Gamagrass <u>Forbs/Legumes:</u> Partridge Pea Maximillian Sunflower Black Eyed Susan Red Chokeberry Indigobush
At least <u>4</u> species: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• at least <u>3</u> introduced grass species• at least <u>1</u> forb, or legume beneficial to wildlife	

***Note:** Shrubs should be planted in clumps and/or rows along the field edge to cover 5% of the field.*

Refer to the NRCS Virginia Plant Establishment Guide (wildlife herbaceous tab) for a comprehensive species list and/or the [Conservation Cover \(327\) Job Sheet](#) for further details.

Mid Contract Management Requirements

To ensure that the CRP conservation cover adequately provides plant diversity, wildlife value and protection of soil and water resources for the length of the contract period, management practices are required and will be provided in the conservation plan. Because mid contract management practices for CRP are site specific, required practices and timing of the practices will be determined during the conservation plan development by the landowner and the NRCS / TSP conservation planner.

A generic example of a conservation plan for management of a CP-2 is shown below:

First year after establishment----Weed invasive species control

Years 3 & 7 of the contract---- burn or light disk one half of the acreage, overseed yr. 3;

Years 4 & 8 of the contract---- burn or light disk the acreage not treated in year 3 & 7; overseed in year 4

Managed Haying and Grazing is allowed on land enrolled in CP-2. CRP rules restrict haying and grazing - any portion of the enrolled acreage may only be hayed or grazed 1 out of 3 years. Haying and grazing must be addressed in the conservation plan.

Maintenance mowing of the CRP acreage is permitted once per year from January to March, if needed. However, periodic mowing for cosmetic purposes is prohibited.

No work can be done during the primary wildlife nesting season of April 15-August 15.

CP-3

Tree Planting

How to improve your Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) score:

Planting...
Solid stand of pines planted @ greater than 550 trees per acre
Solid stand of pines planted @ less than 550 trees per acre with 10-20% openings managed to a wildlife cover. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Openings will be a minimum of 50 feet wide.• In fields 20 acres and larger, openings are should be 2-5 acres in size. Field edges (borders) may be used if they are irregular in shape and average 50 feet in width.

Note: Openings will be either planted to a mixture of at least 2 grasses and 2 forbs/legumes or lightly disked and broadcast with 5lbs/acre of partridge pea.

Refer to the NRCS Virginia Plant Establishment Guide (tree tab) for a comprehensive species list, the Forestry Tree and Shrub Establishment Technical Note 3 and/or the [Tree and Shrub Planting \(612\) Job Sheet](#) for further details.

Mid Contract Management Requirements

To ensure that the CRP conservation cover adequately provides plant diversity, wildlife value and protection of soil and water resources for the length of the contract period, management practices are required and will be provided in the conservation plan. Because mid contract management practices for CRP are site specific, required practices and timing of the practices will be determined during the conservation plan development by the landowner and the NRCS / TSP conservation planner.

A generic example of a conservation plan for management of a CP-3 is shown below:

Year 3 of the contract---- Weed and invasive species control

Year 3 and 7 of the contract---- light disking or burning and overseeding of openings only, selective competition control within the stand.

Managed Haying and Grazing is **not allowed** on land enrolled in CP-3.

Maintenance mowing of the CRP acreage is permitted once per year from January to March, if needed to control competition or invasive species. However, periodic mowing for cosmetic purposes is prohibited.

No work can be done during the primary wildlife nesting season of April 15-August 15.

CP-3A

Hardwood Tree Planting

How to improve your Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) score:

Planting...	Such as...
A stand of nonmast producing hardwood species @ 110 trees per acre.	American Elm, Cottonwood, Green Ash, White Ash, Red Maple, Sycamore, Tulip Poplar, Locust, Bald Cypress
A single hard mast producing species @ 110 trees per acre.	Plantings include a single species of Oaks, Hickories, Beech, Walnut
A mixed stand of 2 hardwood species @ 110 trees per acre best suited for wildlife in the area.	Oaks, Hickories, Beech, Walnut, Persimmon, Black Gum, Pawpaw, Cherry
A mixed stand of hardwood species (≥ 3) best suited for wildlife in the area @ 110 trees per acre.	Oaks, Hickories, Beech, Walnut, Persimmon, Black Gum, Pawpaw, Cherry
Longleaf pine @ 550 or less trees per acre	Longleaf Pine

All hardwood tree plantings will require the use of tree shelters, brush mats, and stakes.

Refer to the NRCS Virginia Plant Establishment Guide (tree tab) for a comprehensive species list and the [Tree and Shrub Planting \(612\) Job Sheet](#) for further details for planting design and procedures.

Mid Contract Management Requirements

To ensure that the CRP conservation cover adequately provides plant diversity, wildlife value and protection of soil and water resources for the length of the contract period, management practices are required and will be provided in the conservation plan. Because mid contract management practices for CRP are site specific, required practices and timing of the practices will be determined during the conservation plan development by the landowner and the NRCS / TSP conservation planner.

A generic example of a conservation plan for management of a CP-3A is shown below:

Hardwood other than longleaf:

Year 3 of the contract--Weed and invasive species control.

Year 4 and 8 of the contract-- Selective competition control.

Longleaf pine: Year 2, 3 & 4 of the contract-- prescribed burn.

Year 8-- selective competition control; weed and invasive species control.

Managed haying and grazing is not allowed on land enrolled in CP-3A.

Maintenance mowing of the CRP acreage is permitted once per year from January to March, if needed to control competition or invasive species. However, periodic mowing for cosmetic purposes is prohibited.

No work can be done during the primary wildlife nesting season of April 15-August 15.

CP-4D

Permanent Wildlife Habitat (noneasement)

How to improve your Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) score:

Planting...	Such as...
A mixed stand of native species including at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 grasses• 2 forbs or legumes• 1 shrub or tree	<u>Grasses:</u> Big Bluestem Little Bluestem Indian Grass Eastern Gamagrass Deer tongue Switchgrass
A mixed stand of native species including at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 grasses• 2 forbs• 1 legume• 1 shrub or tree.	<u>Forbs:</u> Partridge Pea Black Eyed Susan Spurred Butterfly Pea Maximillian Sunflower Lanceleaf Coreopsis <u>Shrubs/Trees:</u> Silky Dogwood Hard mast species American Plum Soft mast species

*Note: Planted in mixes, blocks, or strips best suited for wildlife species in the area.
A wildlife conservation plan must be developed with the participant.*

Refer to the NRCS Virginia Plant Establishment Guide (tree tab) for a comprehensive species list and the [Conservation Cover \(327\) Job Sheet](#), and/or the [Tree and Shrub Planting \(612\) Job Sheet](#) for further details on planting design and procedures.

Mid Contract Management Requirements

To ensure that the CRP conservation cover adequately provides plant diversity, wildlife value and protection of soil and water resources for the length of the contract period, management practices are required and will be provided in the conservation plan. Because mid contract management practices for CRP are site specific, required practices and timing of the practices will be determined during the conservation plan development by the landowner and the NRCS / TSP conservation planner.

A generic example of a conservation plan for management of a CRP-4D is shown below:
Year three of the contract---- Invasive species control
Year four and eight of the contract-- Selective competition control, light disking, burning and/or interseeding

Managed Haying and Grazing is not allowed on land enrolled in CP-4D.

Maintenance mowing of the CRP acreage is permitted once per year from January to March, only if needed. However, periodic mowing for cosmetic purposes is prohibited.

No work can be done during the primary wildlife nesting season of April 15-August 15.