



VEGETATIVE COVER – GRASS – ALREADY ESTABLISHED Michigan CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM CRP – CP10

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

October 2006



Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for this practice with the General or Continuous Conservation Reserve Program, the land must either be an existing, expiring CRP contract, or the land must have been cropland, but planted to grasses/legumes as part of a rotation between 1996 and 2001. Further, for the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program, the land must be within 2000 feet of an approved public wellhead.

CRP POLICY

For General CRP, if the National Ranking factor for the cover type is 10, the field will contain **at least 1 non-native grasses or legumes** (such as brome, timothy, orchard grass, red clover, alfalfa, etc.) for the life of the contract. If the National Ranking factor for the cover type is 40, there will be **at least 1 native grass** (such as switchgrass, big or little bluestem, Indiangrass, etc.) for the life of the contract. If the National Ranking factor for the cover type is 50, there will be **at least 3 native grasses, plus at least 2 native wildflowers or shrubs and no non-native grasses** for the life of the contract.

Existing conditions that are not consistent with CRP Policy or NRCS Standards and Specifications must be corrected at the landowner's expense.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Undesirable plants, insects, and pests shall be controlled, including such maintenance as necessary to avoid detrimental effects to the surrounding land. Some of the most common pests that need controlled on CRP acreage include Autumn Olive, Multiflora Rose, Spotted Knapweed, Quackgrass, etc.

Use mowing or burning to maintain the stand according to your CRP conservation plan. Maintenance activities are allowed only on a spot basis and only if necessary to maintain stand health, maintain stand diversity, or control pests that will damage the CRP cover or adjacent lands. **MOWING** is only authorized between Aug 1st and Aug 20th to protect ground-nesting wildlife and to allow re-growth for winter cover. Other maintenance activities or Mid-Contract Management will only be allowed outside the designated dates to protect ground-nesting wildlife. Designated dates are from May 1st to August 1st. If management or maintenance activities are needed within these dates, the FSA County Committee **must** approve the management activity **prior to** the activity occurring.

Mowing for generic weed control or for cosmetic purposes is prohibited.

REQUIRED MANAGEMENT

All new CRP contracts must have mid-term contract management activities scheduled that are site specific and will ensure plant diversity, wildlife habitat, and protection of soil and water resources. Management activities that will ensure these benefits in Vegetative Cover - Grass - Already Established offers include prescribed burning (according to an approved burn plan), disking, interseeding of legumes in non-native grasses, interseeding native wildflowers in native grasses, etc. All management activities must be performed according to NRCS Standards and Specifications as found in the FOTG, and CRP policy.

MANAGED GRAZING/HAYING

These plantings may be used for managed haying or grazing. These activities must be performed according to NRCS Standards and Specifications as found in the FOTG and CRP policy. The same acreage may not be hayed or grazed more than once every 3 years. Annual CRP rental payments will be reduced based on the value of the forage removed. All managed haying and grazing activities must be included in the conservation plan prior to harvesting the forage.

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LOCATION AND LAYOUT SKETCH & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: