United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Conservation Reserve Program
MCM Job Sheet

Ohio – January 2013

CRP MID-CONTRACT MANAGEMENT: HERBICIDE APPLICATION

For:					
Field(s):	Acres:	Farm #	Tract #:	CRP CN	
Planned By:					Date:

BACKGROUND

Grassland fields need to be managed so that grasses do not crowd out the forbs and legumes over time. If no disturbance occurs the composition of grassland communities will change over several years through normal plant succession. Typically, grasses begin to dominate stands to the point that beneficial forbs are reduced. Also, the amount of bare ground declines, litter accumulates and overall vegetation density increases. These changes may lead to a decline in habitat value for many desirable wildlife species

PURPOSE

The purpose of this *Herbicide Application* management activity is to enhance the wildlife habitat value of the enrolled acres by encouraging a diverse forb/legume community and a more open stand of vegetation. Forbs (any broadleaf plant) and legumes in grasslands are beneficial to birds, insects such as butterflies, and other wildlife. Herbicide application is an effective management tool that can be utilized where vegetation has become too thick to benefit the target species or a lack of plant diversity does not provide the desired habitat. By spraying, habitat quality is improved through a reduction of woody growth, plant residue and stand density and an increase in favored seed producing plants, bare ground, and insect abundance.

This improvement in habitat is particularly important for brood rearing by pheasant, quail, and wild turkey. The insects associated with annual forb species provide critical nutrients, including protein, and essential amino acids for growing nestlings and chicks. Reduced plant residue, along with increased bare ground, are also critical for young chick mobility in grassland areas.

Many grassland songbirds have shown significant declines over the last 50 years. Providing diversity in vegetation structure benefits a wider range of species. Meadowlarks as well as vesper,

grasshopper, and savannah sparrows all benefit from a more open stand than is typically found in CRP.

Herbicide application for mid-contract management is different than herbicide application used for routine maintenance. Maintenance herbicide application is primarily directed at reducing unwanted vegetation; management herbicide application is focused on altering the plant diversity for wildlife.

The stand assessment will determine the objectives of the management activity. The assessment will identify the plants targeted for suppression as well as the level of suppression desired. It is critical that the management activity be implemented properly.

Failure to implement this activity properly could have significant negative impacts on the CRP cover. It is the landowner's responsibility to assure that CRP cover will not be adversely affected by herbicide application.

APPLICABILITY

This practice may be used on CP1, CP2, CP4B, CP4D, CP9, CP10, CP15A, CP21, CP23, CP23A, CP25, CP27, CP28, CP29, CP30, CP33 and CP39.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

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SPECIFICATIONS

The following are specifications for Herbicide Application on CRP acreage:

- NRCS eFOTG Standard *Upland Wildlife Habitat Management* (645) will be utilized for this practice.
- Grassland fields must be established for a minimum of three years before initiating herbicide application.
- This practice may only be used where recommended by a site assessor based on site conditions.
- Areas treated may be the entire field or portions of it (blocks or strips); treated areas will be based on assessor recommendations.
- Spraying will be done according to label recommendations, and meet all state and federal laws.
- Spray recommendations will be made by industry professionals once the identified plant species targeted are identified and dates of application outlined.
- Spraying will be performed between July 16 and February 28, except in the situations listed below. It is also recommended, but is not required, to delay spraying until after August 15 to reduce the chance of harming fledgling birds and other young wildlife.
- The time period for spraying may be extended until April 30 when either: a) herbicide application follows a previous MCM disturbance activity or b) controlling cool season grasses in a warm season grass cover.
- Spraying shall not be planned in the following areas:
  - Areas where herbicide application will have minimal affect or potentially cause a negative impact on existing cover.
  - Areas planted to trees and/or shrubs.
  - Environmentally sensitive areas marked on the plan map.
- praying operations will be performed along field contours, or across the slope, when practical.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider seeding a mixture of forbs and legumes into areas that have been sprayed. See NRCS CRP Job Sheet *Mid-Contract Management: Inter-seeding* for additional guidance.
- Consider the habitat needs of the target wildlife species. Areas sprayed in late summer or early fall will tend to stimulate the production of hard-seeded plants. These species provide excellent brood-rearing cover and winter food for quail and pheasants.
- In fields with heavy cover, consider connecting sprayed areas to improve brood movement.
- Spraying in low, wet areas currently dominated by wetland vegetation should be avoided because these areas often add additional plant diversity to the site.
- Consider managing vegetation (mowing, burning, etc.) in a way that maximizes spray efficiency.
- Participants should be wary of tile blowholes, groundhog holes, fallen tree limbs, and other hazards that may have developed since they were last in the field.

CERTIFICATION

The participant is responsible for certifying to FSA when the practice has been completed.

Herbicide Application Schedule

CRP Field Number	Targeted Plant to Suppress	Date Spray Application Will Occur	Other Identified Concerns/Recommendations

Mid-Contract Management cost-share payment for this practice is $16.25 per acre for typical mixes or $26.25 per acre for specialty mixes.

Cost-share Payment Limitations for all MCM activities are:

- $50.00 per acre per year
- $100.00 per acre total for the life of the contract

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is responsible for administering the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP policy requires that starting with Signup 26, participants must perform management activities that maintain or enhance the quality of conservation cover for wildlife benefits.

The FSA has requested the assistance of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and/or other partners to conduct an on-site assessment of the conservation cover. NRCS and/or the partners have evaluated the condition and density of the stand; the grass/forb species present; and have recommended this MCM practice to the FSA and the participant. FSA and NRCS representatives will meet with the participant and discuss the MCM options available and the appropriate incentive payments if applicable.

Signing this MCM Job Sheet is considered an addendum to the Conservation Plan of Operations (CPO). No modification of the CPO will be necessary.

SIGNATURES	
NRCS Representative Date	FSA Representative Date

I understand the plan and specifications and agree to perform this practice accordingly.

Participant Date

AD-862 Control Number: