CRP Mid-Contract Management Option: Integrated Wildlife Management (645)

Conservation Practice Job Sheet

ID - CRP, JS-20 Revised

August 2013

The purpose of mid-contract management activities is to enhance the wildlife habitat value of the enrolled acres by encouraging a diverse community and controlling noxious weeds and other invasive species. This mid-contract management activity provides maximum flexibility to producers to ensure that CRP lands meet program requirements, and goes beyond the annual maintenance requirements to protect all resources and maximize benefits.

Purpose

An integrated, adaptive management approach will help rejuvenate deteriorating CRP lands in order to increase community diversity and improve cover and food sources, benefitting wildlife and soil and water resources. The objectives of this activity are to:

- Improve the diversity of vegetation on CRP lands, encourage the establishment and growth of native species, and improve the quality and quantity of vegetation for wildlife needs (food, cover, etc.), especially during critical periods.
- Control state-listed noxious weeds and other invasive species on CRP lands using an approach that emphasizes prevention and avoidance techniques in addition to suppression methods.

The goal of integrated management is to focus on the species and communities that are desired to benefit wildlife, rather than on simply eliminating weeds, while maintaining or improving soil and water resources.

Practice Specifications

Integrated management must include three components: 1) plan development, 2) scouting/weed inventory, and 3) implementation.

Plan development: The producer should work with a qualified professional to develop an integrated wildlife plan for the CRP lands. Alternatively, a producer may use a basic integrated plan available through NRCS and adapt it to his/her specific site conditions, with assistance from NRCS, Extension, IDFG, County Weed Superintendent, or similar entity. Plans and practices used should be recommended by NRCS biologists to ensure wildlife needs are met. **The plan should specifically state the benefits to wildlife that will result through implementation.** Any practice proposed that could impact nesting birds or incur short-term losses in wildlife or habitat should have concurrence from IDFG. Implementation of practices shall not occur during the primary nesting period, unless specifically recommended and approved by IDFG and FSA.

Scouting/Weed Inventory: Scouting is the first step in getting the best evaluation of any undesired plant populations and using the best management strategy. The weed population is quite transitional and different species may be present at different times of the year. Additionally, the species and density of weeds and other non-desired populations will vary within and between fields. **Producers have the option of scouting their CRP fields one, two or three times each year. Timing of scouting should match the weed population so that weed control is performed at the best time to achieve desired results. A map must be prepared each time that they scout or apply any management activity.**

Implementation: The producer **must implement at least 2 specific management activities identified in the plan**, in addition to establishing a weed inventory and preparing detailed maps. Ideally, the plan will prioritize species for manipulation and provide timeframes for activities, with **a minimum of 2 years**. For example, small clusters of pioneer species with the greatest impact for harm could be the focus of management the first implementation year, followed by more widespread management the following year. **All activities must be recorded**. Activities are designed to manipulate the plant community to ensure biodiversity, to protect forbs and legumes that benefit native pollinators and other wildlife, and to provide insect food sources for grassland nesting birds while assisting with management of noxious and invasive weeds.

Implementation Activities

Recommended activities that may be included in an integrated plan on CRP lands are listed below. Other practices may also be included in the plan, and will depend on individual field requirements and objectives.

Fertilization of stands dominated by cool season, introduced grasses. Introduced cool-season grasses, unlike native species, typically require a higher soil fertility to maintain health and vigor. On these stands, noxious weeds can gain a foothold and are very difficult to control, even with annual maintenance. Plant diversity is lost as weeds take over, often creating monocultures in areas of the field. Fertilization of these stands at the proper time can invigorate the grasses, increasing their competitive ability, while maintaining a large variety of native forbs within the community. Enhanced diversity and improved cover reduces the encroachment of noxious weeds and the potential for soil and water impacts while improving wildlife habitat quality. This practice may have a negative impact on CRP cover if not implemented properly. Specific timing and rates of application must target cool-season grasses, and shall not be used where a large percentage of the field is comprised of winter annual weeds.

Manual and mechanical techniques such as pulling, clipping, cutting, and otherwise damaging plants, may be used to control some invasive plants, particularly if the population is relatively small. These techniques can be extremely specific, minimizing damage to desirable plants and animals, but they are generally labor and time intensive. Treatments must typically be administered several times to prevent the weed from re-establishing, and in the process, laborers and machines may severely trample vegetation and disturb soil, providing prime conditions for re-invasion by the same or other invasive species. Manual and mechanical techniques are generally favored for small infestations. They are often used in combination with other techniques. When using manual and mechanical methods, it is especially important to thoroughly clean and inspect all equipment and clothing before moving it off-site. This will lessen the probability of spreading the weed(s) to the next worksite. Some control of undesired perennial weeds may be achieved by clipping them in the bud stage of growth. Repeated clipping of weeds may be necessary to achieve most effective control. Clipping winter annual grasses is ineffective for control and may actually enhance growth of the weeds. Intensive clipping has proven a satisfactory method for controlling summer annual broadleaf weeds in establishing perennial cover crops. Targeted spot treatment of patches of undesired species can be accomplished through:

- Hand pulling, clipping or other appropriate mechanical or cultural treatment
- Preparation and seeding of small areas that have poor vigor, bare ground, or otherwise have been disturbed.

This practice applies when plant diversity and wildlife habitat enhancement can best be accomplished by eliminating whole-field spraying, while still being compatible with required noxious weed control.

Any **prescription burn** used to increase vigor of desirable species while controlling vulnerable weeds will follow the guidelines set forth in the stand-alone mid management “prescribed burn” practice outlined by FSA and in accordance with state law. The burn is part of an integrated approach, and additional activities will be required either pre- or post-burn years.

Spot treatment using low hazard herbicides. The timing and type of herbicide is critical to effective control of target species, while minimizing any impact to non-target species. Aggressive control measures applied to small areas of noxious weed infestations may result in less overall pesticide applications. Refer to the PNW Weed Handbook for information on specific control information.

Biological control agents, such as insects or pathogens, can be effective at holding an infestation in check once the weed is established. Typically, biological control agents are slow, relative to other control measures, and complete control or eradication of a targeted species of weed is not possible. Any biological control agents used must be approved for use in Idaho. Many counties have active biological control programs. Use of biological control agents will also require monitoring in subsequent years.

CRP Mid-Contract Management Option: Integrated Wildlife Management (645)

Conservation Practice Job Sheet

ID - CRP, JS-20 Revised

August 2013

Required documentation includes the integrated wildlife management plan, weed inventories and maps, and records of all management activities. The plan must specifically state the benefits to wildlife that will result through implementation.

Participant: _____ **Contract #:**_____

CLIENT'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

The Client acknowledges that:

a. The producer will work with a qualified professional to develop an integrated wildlife plan for the CRP lands, or use a basic integrated management plan available through NRCS and adapt it to his/her specific site conditions, with assistance from qualified individuals.

b. Plans and practices used should be recommended by NRCS biologists to ensure wildlife needs are met.

c. At least two recommended management activities will be implemented. No activities will be implemented during the nesting period without specific permission. Plan implementation will be performed for a minimum of two years.

d. The producer has received a copy of this mid-contract management activity and understands the contents and requirements.

SCOUTING OPTION SELECTED:

- ☐ Once per year
- ☐ Two times per year
- ☐ Three times per year (counts as an activity)

Accepted by: /s/_____ Date:_____

Idaho Department of Fish and Game Certification

The long-term wildlife benefits accomplished by implementing the agreed upon practices during PNS exceed the short-term impacts to wildlife.

Approve: _____ Date:_____
Idaho Department of Fish & Game Biologist

Disapprove: _____ Date:_____
Idaho Department of Fish & Game Biologist

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA Office of Communications (202) 720-2791.

To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

Basic Integrated Wildlife Management Plan for CRP

An integrated, adaptive management approach will help rejuvenate deteriorating CRP lands in order to increase community diversity and improve cover and food sources, benefitting wildlife and soil and water resources.

Landowner Objectives:

_____

_____

Target Wildlife Species:

_____

_____

Identified Limiting Factors to Wildlife:

_____

_____

_____

Statement of Specific Benefits to Wildlife from Proposed Activities:

_____

_____

_____

Potential T and E Species that Could be Found on this Site:

If T and E species or species of concern are within ¼ mile of the field according to the Conservation Data Center database, then these species must be listed in the plan and scouted for. If a T and E species or species of concern are found on a CRP field, all mid-management activities must be planned to protect and enhance this species. List species to be scouted for or planned for:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

Scouting

Scouting is a critical step to identifying noxious weed and undesirable plant populations. It is the first step in getting the best evaluation of any undesired plant populations and using the best management strategy. The weed population is quite transitional and different species may be present at different times of the year. Additionally, the species and density of weeds and other non-desired populations will vary within and between fields. Each year, scouting will be done between one and three times throughout the growing season, depending on the scouting option chosen. A map needs to be prepared each time. Attach scouting reports and maps to the integrated management plan, and briefly record in the table below the basic problems identified. **You can utilize the scouting form on Page 14 as well**.

For many weeds and undesirable plants, scouting should begin very early in the season, within a week or two of snow melt, or late March/early April. This is the time when annual seedlings and biennial rosettes can be identified, and they are typically vulnerable to suppression at this stage. Make sure to scout around the entire field, and look for weeds coming in from adjacent roads, fencelines, waterways, etc. A month or two later, depending on type of weeds present, is also a good time to scout to identify weeds prior to seed set. Mechanical methods of control should be used prior to flowering/seed set to reduce spread. Once flowering has begun, weeds are typically not controlled with herbicides. Scouting in the late summer/ fall can help determine the effectiveness of early spring control efforts, and can help identify winter annuals that have germinated. Depending on the weed, some may be controlled with fall suppression methods. Choose scouting time(s) appropriate to the weed populations present.

Year 1 Scouting – Problem(s) Identified:

	Date of Scouting	Locations Scouted	Weeds/Non-desirables Found	Extent of Weed Populations
1				
2				
3				

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

Year 2 Scouting – Problem(s) Identified

	Date of Scouting	Locations Scouted	Weeds/Non-desirables Found	Extent of Weed Populations
1				
2				
3				

Year 3 Scouting – Problem(s) Identified

	Date of Scouting	Locations Scouted	Weeds/Non-desirables Found	Extent of Weed Populations
1				
2				
3				

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

<u>Selected Management Activities to Address Identified Problems</u>:

Refer to Page 2 of the Jobsheet for specific activities. If activities other than those shown on page 2 will be used, you must provide a description of the activity and how it will address the identified problems. All management activities selected need to be approved by NRCS and should only be selected AFTER a site visit has been completed. NO ACTIVITY (OTHER THAN SCOUTING) WILL BE IMPLEMENTED DURING THE PRIMARY NESTING PERIOD (April 1 – August 1) UNLESS PERMISSION HAS BEEN OBTAINED FROM FSA AND IDFG.

Location and timing of all management activities should be shown on a scouting map. The selected IWM activities and associated acres will be recorded on the IWM Activities Record on Page 8. The activity sheets on pages 9 - 13 can be used to record mid-contract management, by year.

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

Integrated Wildlife Management (IWM) Activities Record - Activity Code 645

Acres:_____

Fiscal year practice will be implemented (Oct. 1 - Sept 30)

*** NOTE TRACT & FIELD # WHERE ACTIVITY WILL BE APPLIED ***

	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year
	Acres Applied	Acres Applied	Acres Applied
REQUIRED: Scouting and Mapping *(1 X per year for 2 year minimum)*			
(REQUIRED: Completed scouting worksheet and map each year)			
IWM Mid-Management Activities Options:*(Select a minimum of 2)*			
Fertilization *(Note fertilizer recommendation on line below)*			
_____			
Light Disking ……			
Light Chiseling ……			
Harrowing ……			
Re-seeding *(REQUIRED: Seeding plan CPA-025)* ……			
Prescribed Burn *(REQUIRED: Burn plan & permits)*			
Mow and Remove Residue ……			
Rotary Mowing ……..			
Chemical Spot Treatment *(REQUIRED: treatment records each year)*			
Biological control agents *(List controls to be used on line below)*			
_____			
Full-level scouting each year (three times)			
Other *(Enter detailed description on lines below)* …….			
_____			
_____			
_____			

Participant's Signature _____ Planner: _____

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

Year: 1 2 3 (Circle applicable year of contract)

Spot Treatment Using Herbicides

The timing and type of herbicide is critical to effective control of target species, while minimizing any impact to non-target species. Aggressive control measures applied to small areas of noxious weed infestations identified through scouting may result in less overall pesticide applications. Whenever possible, low hazard herbicides should be used. Refer to the PNW Weed Handbook for information on specific control information, such as the appropriate plant growth stage for application, and the herbicides that can provide the most effective control:

http://weeds.ippc.orst.edu/pnw/weeds

For best results, spot treatment should be done on an annual basis when needed.

Field #	Date	Weeds Identified	Weed Prevalence	Recommended Control Activity	Timing of Control Activity

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

Year: 1 2 3 (Circle applicable year of contract)

Fertilization of Introduced Cool Season Grasses

Introduced cool-season grasses, unlike many native species, typically require a higher soil fertility to maintain health and vigor. On these stands, noxious weeds can gain a foothold and are very difficult to control, even with annual maintenance. Plant diversity is lost as weeds take over, often creating monocultures in areas of the field. Fertilization of these stands at the proper time can invigorate the grasses, increasing their competitive ability, while maintaining a large variety of native forbs within the community. This practice may have a negative impact on CRP cover if not implemented properly. Specific timing and rates of application are critical, and must target cool-season grasses. The practice shall not be used where a large percentage of the field is comprised of winter annual weeds.

Introduced grasses are generally not very responsive to phosphorus fertilizer, but 20 lbs/ac or less may help stimulate desirable forbs. Nitrogen applications of 50 lbs/ac or less are usually recommended. If higher rates are applied, the application rate should be based on a soil test. Fertilizer applications the year following herbicide application or other suppression methods may be more effective in enhancing the stand while minimizing positive growth response of winter annuals and other weeds.

Field #	Date	% of Introduced Cool Season Grasses	% of Winter Annual Weeds	Fertilizer Type and Rate	Timing of Fertilization

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

Year: 1 2 3 (Circle applicable year of contract)

Manual or Mechanical Control Techniques

Pulling, clipping, cutting, mowing may be used to control some invasive plants, particularly if the population is relatively small. These techniques can be extremely specific, minimizing damage to desirable plants and animals, but they are generally labor and time intensive. Treatments must typically be administered several times throughout the growing season to prevent the weed from re-establishing, and in the process, laborers and machines may severely trample vegetation and disturb soil, providing prime conditions for re-invasion by the same or other invasive species. Manual and mechanical techniques are generally favored for small infestations. They are often used in combination with other techniques. When using manual and mechanical methods, it is especially important to thoroughly clean and inspect all equipment and clothing before moving it off-site. This will lessen the probability of spreading the weed(s) to the next worksite. Some control of undesired perennial weeds may be achieved by clipping them in the bud stage of growth. Repeated clipping of weeds may be necessary to achieve the most effective control. Clipping winter annual grasses is ineffective for control and may actually enhance growth of the weeds. Intensive clipping has proven a satisfactory method for controlling summer annual broadleaf weeds in established perennial cover crops. Where manual or mechanical control has created disturbance or bare ground, preparation and seeding of these areas should be done to prevent re-establishment of weeds.

Field #	Date	Weeds Treated	Repeat Treatments?	Type of Mechanical Control	Spot Seeding Done?

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

Year: 1 2 3 (Circle applicable year of contract)

Biological Control

Insects or pathogens can be effective at holding an infestation in check once the weed is established. Typically, biological control agents are slow, relative to other control measures, and complete control or eradication of a targeted species of weed is not possible. Any biological control agents used must be approved for use in Idaho. Many counties and Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs) have active biological control programs. Use of biological control agents will also require monitoring in subsequent years. Many noxious weeds do not currently have biological control agents. Work with your County Weed Superintendent or your local CWMA for help with biological control.

The list of current approved biological control agents in Idaho, by weed species, can be found at:
http://www.agri.state.id.us/Categories/PlantsInsects/NoxiousWeeds/Bio_Control.php

Field #	Date	Biological Control Agent	Approved by State?	Locations and Numbers Released	Future Monitoring Planned?

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

Year: 1 2 3 (Circle applicable year of contract)

Prescription Burn

The use of prescribed fire should be carefully considered and planned. Prescribed fire should not be used when seeding is not planned in conjunction with control. All prescription burns must have a burn plan developed by NRCS or IDL. All burns must follow the crop residue burning requirements, including obtaining and following the specifications in the permit. Attach copy of burn plan.

Crop residue burning requirements are available at:

http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air/prog_issues/burning/crop_residue_burning.cfm

Field #	Date	Objective of Burn	Timing of Burn	Permit in Place?	All burn plan specifications followed?

Participant:_____ **Contract #:**_____

SCOUTING RECORDS
Integrated Wildlife Management (IWM)

Tract #	Field # (s)	DATE SCOUTED	Weed & Map Symbol	Weed Stage of Development