

Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644D), Cropland – Forage Management for Waterbirds

644D – Specification

July 2015

Definition

This practice is designed to enhance the value of rice, corn, and other small grains as foraging habitat. After harvest, Greater Sandhill Cranes and other migratory waterbirds will feed on waste grain if it is not incorporated deeply in to the soils.

Requirements

Chop-and-roll (Corn)

- Chop corn stalks after harvest with a chopper, reel disk, or other equipment that will cut the stalks into 6 inch pieces while working only the very top of the soil surface.
- Roll the chopped stalks to ensure they are knocked down so that most of the stalk is brought in contact with the soil. Rolling is not required if most of the stalks are laid down during the chopping process.
- Implement within one month of harvest and postpone all other post-harvest soil/residue management activities until after January 1st, including flooding.



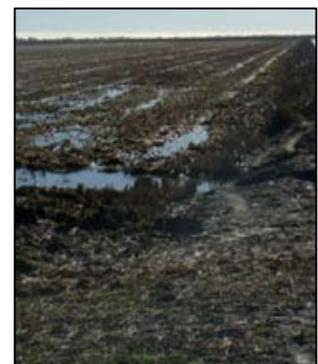
No-till, no-chop (Rice or other grains)

- Rice, or other small grain residue is left standing after harvest. Postpone all post-harvest soil and residue management activities until after January 1st, including flooding.
- Stripper-header harvesters are not allowed in this practice due to reduced waste grain abundance.



Residue management with boards-in (Rice)

- Following harvest, fields are prepared by chopping, stomping, light disking/ chiseling, burning, or baling that leaves at least 60% residue on the surface of the soil.
- If disking/chiseling, a ring or rice roller will follow to reduce clod height.
- Place boards into the check boxes within two weeks of harvest and maintain in place until at least February 1. Take necessary measures to minimize leakage of water control structures (pack with dirt, etc).



Planning considerations

- Priority area for chop-and-roll corn: Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.
- Residue management with boards-in: For maximum habitat value, it is recommended that water is released gradually on a similar schedule to Variable Drawdown (practice 644A).

Operation and Maintenance

- Implementation of this practice will include a plan for monitoring and maintenance of structural, hydrologic, and vegetative measures.