

Guide for Toolkit CPO's for CRP Continuous Conservation Practice CP38B & 38C Black Bear

Conservation maps will be created for every contract showing all the area that is enrolled in CRP. **Practices** that are planned for the whole field do not have to be shown on the map, but must have a schedule showing field number, acres and date practice is to be applied below the applicable practice narrative. Practices that will be applied to only parts of a field(s) **MUST** be indicated on the conservation map showing the specific location of the practice. In addition a schedule showing field number, acres and date practice is to be applied will follow the applicable practice narrative that also includes a statement indicating the practice is shown on the map. **This statement may need to be added to the narrative if the practice is normally a whole field practice.** Codes for eligible cost-share rates are shown in parentheses, (), immediately following applicable narratives.

Practices to include in all contracts for all fields:

Practice Code 327, Conservation Cover:

CRP1 Maintenance: This land as indicated on the conservation map is in the Conservation Reserve Program. This conservation plan, developed in coordination with the participant, describes the schedule of operations and conservation practices required to solve the identified natural resource concern. For CRP, the cost-share agreement is this conservation plan. Cost-share approvals will be issued only according to this conservation plan based on percent of cost, not to exceed the approved rate per unit of measure for the practice to be implemented. FSA will include non-cost-shared practices or components on the proper form, as required. Routine maintenance will be carried out as follows: Appropriate cover as required by the planned conservation practice will be maintained for life of the contract. Pest (undesirable vegetation, noxious weeds, insects, rodents, etc.) that pose a threat to existing cover or may adversely impact other landowners will be controlled, as needed based on NRCS and COC joint recommendations. CRP cover maintenance is the participant's responsibility. Participants shall maintain practices, according to the conservation plan without additional cost-share throughout the CRP-1 period. If practices fail because of a natural disaster or other reason(s), the participant must notify the local FSA Office immediately. The FSA County Committee, or designee, will review the circumstances of the failure and may authorize additional cost-share for re-establishment within policy guidelines. Certain modifications may be made to this conservation plan if determined to be in the best interest of CRP and upon approval by the FSA County Committee. Periodic or annual mowing for cosmetic purposes or generic weed control is **prohibited**. The primary nesting period for wildlife in Mississippi is April 1 through August 15 each year, CRP contract acreage may not be disturbed during this nesting period.

Practice Code 472, Access Control:

CRP2B Use exclusion: The area enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program as indicated on the conservation map shall not be harvested or grazed by domestic livestock including managed harvesting or routine grazing during the life of the contract/easement. Excessive use of fertilizers, pesticides, or other chemicals, and non-essential vehicular traffic should be avoided.

Practices to include in all contracts for all fields (cont.):

Practice Code 644, Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management:

CRP4 Mid-Contract Management: Control exotic invasive species that pose a threat to the approved cover established on the area enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program as indicated on the conservation map or may adversely impact other landowners in the area. Exotic invasive species include such species as kudzu, cogon grass, Chinese privet, Chinese tallow tree, and tropical soda apple. Clear-mowing will not be allowed as a management activity. However, mowing may be allowed as needed to prepare sites for necessary herbicide applications, strip-disking, or prescribed fire (disking fire breaks). Current recommended herbicides and methods will be applied to achieve control of undesirable species. Follow all label directions and restrictions relating to rates, timing and setbacks to insure control while reducing the possibilities of the pesticides polluting surface and ground waters. Follow all MCES and MAFES pesticide application guides, identify pests properly, select proper methods, calibrate application equipment and store and dispose of containers in a safe manner. Chemicals used must be federally, state, and locally registered. Refer to attached job sheet, MS-CRP-05. Management activities will not be done during the primary nesting season of April 1 through August 15. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. However, all mid-contract management practices are subject to contract lifetime maximums. (If cost-share is planned in the contract then additional mid-contract management narratives in addition to this narrative will be required as appropriate from practices such as P.C.'s 314, 315, 338, 647 and/or 666.)

Practice Code 657, Wetland Restoration:

CRP1 SAFE CP38B/C – Wetland Restoration: Restored bottomland hardwoods and/or wetland area has wetland functions and values. The area will be managed and maintained to provide valuable food, cover, and wetland and riparian habitat for black bears and other wildlife.

Practices to include for hydrology restoration (CP-38B):

Practice Code 356, Dike:

CRP2 Dike: An earthen embankment will be installed according to NRCS specifications at the location shown on the conservation plan map to create restored wetland habitat. Newly constructed dikes can be established to browntop millet or winter wheat to provide temporary cover to decrease soil erosion until permanent native vegetation becomes established. Operation & Maintenance: Routinely examine conservation practice to ensure structure/practice is functioning properly. Perform necessary repairs as needed. Dikes can be mowed or clipped annually outside of the nesting season for maintenance. Maintain practice for the life of the contract. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. (356-MS-DIKE)

Practice Code 587, Structure for Water Control:

CRP1 SAFE CP38B Structure for Water Control: A water control structure will be installed and maintained as indicated on the conservation plan map. Structure should be adequate to provide 3 or more feet of water and should retain water 9 to 12 months annually. Construction specifications will be provided for the installation of the structure for water control. Operation and Maintenance: Routinely examine conservation practice to ensure structure/practice is functioning properly. Perform necessary repairs as needed. Structures will be inspected to check for debris removal after major storms. Maintain practice for the life of the contract. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. (587-MS-SWC1)

Practices to include for hydrology restoration (CP-38B) (cont.):

Practice Code 646, Shallow Water Development and Management:

CRP1 SAFE CP38B Wetland Management: Restored wetland hydrology areas will be managed to provide an average of 3 feet of water for the majority of the year (greater than 9 months). Restored wetland areas may be manipulated to encourage native wildlife food sources. This can be accomplished by light disking or prescribed burning at least once every three years. Refer to attached job sheet MS-ECS-646-01(JS) and/or specification sheet MS-ECS-646-01 (SS) for more information.

Practices to use as appropriate for vegetative cover/practices (CP38C):

(Tree/Shrub related covers/practices)

Practice Code 490, Tree/Shrub Site Preparation:

CRP T/S-SP Tree/Shrub Site Preparation: Land will be prepared for establishing woody species by controlling weeds, removing slash and debris, or otherwise altering the site conditions to favor tree establishment by planting and/or natural regeneration. Proper site preparation will enhance survival and growth of seedlings and improve planter access. Site preparation will be conducted by burning, mechanical or chemical means as determined appropriate for site conditions. Selected methods will be conducted according to specifications developed or approved by the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) (See the attached MFC Forest Prescription Plan.), NRCS (See attached specifications sheet, MS-ECS-612-01(JS/SS or ESS), OR other designated representative as appropriate. Also refer to attached conservation map for details. (490-MS-HVY; 490-MS-MOW; 490-MS-DISK; 490-MS-SUB; 490-MS-CHEMOPEN; 490-MS-CHEMBAND; 490-MS-CHEMAIR; 490-MS-CHOP; 490-MS-PESP as appropriate)

Practice Code 612, Tree/Shrub Establishment:

CRP4 SAFE CP38C – Tree Planting: Trees will be established as shown on the attached specification sheet [MS-ECS-612-01 or MS-FO-01 (SSE) or MS-CRP-02 (SS)] and located as shown on the conservation plan map. Tree seedlings will be planted at spacing appropriate to achieve 435 trees per acre. Plantings must be a mix of at least 3 SAFE CP38C approved native trees with no more than 60% of seedlings being hard mast species. Bald cypress, water tupelo, and/or overcup oak will be used on flood prone and other areas with suitable site conditions and around restored wetland areas to provide future den trees for black bear and other wildlife. A survival check will be conducted to determine if there is adequate stocking. Site preparation will be used to promote seedling establishment. Noxious weeds and other undesirable plants, insects, and pests shall be controlled during establishment. Field(s) will be protected from wild fire. Existing and planned firebreaks will be maintained as required by the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) plan. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. (612-MS-PTHW)

Practices to use as appropriate for vegetative cover/practices (CP38C) (cont.):
(Tree/Shrub related covers/practices cont.)

Practice Code 612, Tree/Shrub Establishment (cont.):

CRP5 SAFE CP38C – Soft Mast and Shrub Planting: Soft mast tree and shrub/vine plantings are required on 5% of total contract acres. Shrubs will be established within the habitat as prescribed on the attached specification sheet [MS-ECS-612-01 or MS-FO-01 (SSE) or MS-CRP-02 (SS)] and located as shown on the conservation plan map. Required acres will be planted in preferred soft mast trees and/or preferred woody shrubs/vines at recommended spacings as prescribed on the attached specification sheet. Soft mast and/or shrub seedlings should be planted in clusters at least a ¼ acre in size. These clusters will be concentrated near the enrolled property center and contiguous if possible. This will provide concentrated, easy to locate, preferred forage opportunities for black bear and other wildlife. Site preparation will be used to promote seedling establishment. Noxious weeds and other undesirable plants, insects, and pests shall be controlled during establishment. Firebreaks will be established around shrub and soft mast plantings if prescribed burning will be used as a management technique. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. (612-MS-PTHW, 612-MS-SHRUB)

Optional practices (as needed):

Practice Code 314, Brush Management:

CTA1MSM Mid-Contract Management: Chemical Herbicide - Existing vegetation shall be disturbed by applying appropriate chemical herbicides to set back woody vegetative succession for mudflats within moist soil areas, as located on the conservation plan map. All chemicals must be applied according to label requirements and recommendations. Herbicide treatment will occur prior to flooding. Bushhogging (mowing) will be allowed as needed to prepare sites for necessary herbicide applications or disking to set back vegetative succession for mudflats within moist soil areas, as located on the conservation plan map. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. However, all mid-contract management practices are subject to contract lifetime maximums. (314-MS-GQVM)

Practice Code 315, Herbaceous Weed Control:

CRP1 Mid-Contract Management: Kudzu has been identified in this field. Spot control this exotic invasive species that poses a threat to the planned cover established on the area enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program as indicated on the conservation map. This species may also adversely impact other landowners in the area. Current recommended herbicides and methods will be applied to achieve control of undesirable species. Follow all label directions and restrictions relating to rates, timing and setbacks to insure control while reducing the possibilities of the pesticides polluting surface and ground waters. Follow all MCES and MAFES pesticide application guides, identify pests properly, select proper methods, calibrate application equipment and store and dispose of containers in a safe manner. Chemicals used must be federally, state, and locally registered. Refer to attached job sheet, MS-ECS-315-02(JS/SS). Management activities will not be done during the primary nesting season of April 1 through August 15. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. However, all mid-contract management practices are subject to contract lifetime maximums. (315-MS-CIS)

Optional practices (as needed) (cont.):

Practice Code 315, Herbaceous Weed Control (cont.):

CRP2 Mid-Contract Management: Cogon grass has been identified in this field. Spot control this exotic invasive species that poses a threat to the planned cover established on the area enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program as indicated on the conservation map. This species may also adversely impact other landowners in the area. Current recommended herbicides and methods will be applied to achieve control of undesirable species. Follow all label directions and restrictions relating to rates, timing and setbacks to insure control while reducing the possibilities of the pesticides polluting surface and ground waters. Follow all MCES and MAFES pesticide application guides, identify pests properly, select proper methods, calibrate application equipment and store and dispose of containers in a safe manner. Chemicals used must be federally, state, and locally registered. Management activities will not be done during the primary nesting season of April 1 through August 15. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. However, all mid-contract management practices are subject to contract lifetime maximums. (315-MS-CIS)

CRP3 Mid-Contract Management: An invasive herbaceous plant species has been identified in this field. Spot control this exotic invasive species that poses a threat to the planned cover established on the area enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program as indicated on the conservation map. This species may also adversely impact other landowners in the area. Current recommended herbicides and methods will be applied to achieve control of undesirable species. Follow all label directions and restrictions relating to rates, timing and setbacks to insure control while reducing the possibilities of the pesticides polluting surface and ground waters. Follow all MCES and MAFES pesticide application guides, identify pests properly, select proper methods, calibrate application equipment and store and dispose of containers in a safe manner. Chemicals used must be federally, state, and locally registered. Management activities will not be done during the primary nesting season of April 1 through August 15. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. However, all mid-contract management practices are subject to contract lifetime maximums. (315-MS-CIS)

Practice Code 647, Early Successional Habitat Development/Management:

CTA1MSM2 Mid-Contract Management: Moist-Soil Disking - Existing vegetation shall be disturbed by light disking to set back vegetative succession for mudflats within moist soil areas. Disking shall take place prior to flooding. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. However, all mid-contract management practices are subject to contract lifetime maximums. (647-MS-SD)