Guide for Toolkit CPO's for CRP Continuous Conservation Practice CP40

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 657, Wetland Restoration:
CRP2 CP40 – Aquaculture Wetland Restoration: Wetland functions and values have been restored to areas previously used for commercial aquaculture. The area will be managed and maintained to provide valuable wetland and riparian habitat for wetland dependant wildlife. Hydrology restoration is limited to 20 percent of the total enrolled CRP acreage. Food plots are limited to 10 percent of the total enrolled CRP acreage. Aquaculture ponds are required to be out of production before the effective date of contract. At participant's expense, electrical infrastructure (poles, wires, transformers, etc.) must be removed unless required to support wells that are used to maintain hydrology as required by the CPO. No equipment, aerators, tractors, feed storage bins, junk, trash, containers, etc., may be placed on or adjacent to the contract acreage. All practices listed in the conservation plan will be implemented in order to achieve the desired restoration objectives.

CRP3 CP40 – Levee Breach: Existing aquaculture ponds not being restored to hydrology must have levees breached. Breaches will be 50' wide at the base with 6:1 side slopes. Material removed from the breach will be spread along the sides of the levee. Breaches will reconnect ponds with the floodplain restoring wetland functions and values and allow ponds to drain so that vegetation can be established. Breaches will be installed in the lowest pond area at the location(s) shown on the conservation plan map. Operation & Maintenance: Routinely examine conservation practice to ensure structure/practice is functioning properly. Perform necessary repairs as needed. Maintain practice for the life of the contract. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. (657-MS-LBAQ)

Practices to use as appropriate for vegetative cover/practices:

(Herbaceous vegetation covers/practices)

Practice Code 315, Herbaceous Weed Control:
CRP16 Site Preparation: Site prep will be based on site conditions. Treatments may include but are not limited to burning, bush hogging, herbicides, etc. Competition control during cover establishment is essential. Appropriate site preparation and pre-emergent (and sometimes post-emergent) weed control are required to successfully establish native vegetation. Convert Bermuda grass, fescue, Johnson grass, and/or other invasive non-native grasses (total kill) to native vegetation by using approved chemicals to prepare area for planting native grasses, legumes, forbs, shrubs and/or trees. 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. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. Refer to attached specification sheet MS-CRP-02(SS or SSE). (315-MS-GSPF)

Practice Code 327, Conservation Cover:
CRP15 CP40 – Aquaculture Wetland Restoration – Establish Grasses and/or Legumes:
Drained aquaculture pond areas and/or levees will be established to a mixture of grasses, legumes and/or forbs as shown on the attached specification sheet [MS-CRP-02 (SSE)]. Noxious weeds and other undesirable plants, insects, and pests shall be controlled during establishment. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. (327-MS-PGNS, 327-MS-PHN, 327-MS-PGNE, or 327-MS-IPL as appropriate)

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

(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:
1CR-CP31 CP31/CP40 - This field(s) and/or subfield(s) will be planted to a mixture of bottomland hardwood species suitable to the site. NRCS/MFC, as appropriate, will determine species mix, planting method, and number of seedlings per acre. A survival check will be conducted to determine if there is adequate stocking. Site preparation, as determined by NRCS, will be used to promote seedling establishment. See attached job/specification sheet(s) and reforestation map for details. This practice may be eligible for cost-share as determined needed and feasible. (612-MS-PTHW; 612-MS-PTHC; 612-MS-SHRUB)

(Herbaceous, Tree and/or Shrub related covers/practices)

Practice Code 657, Wetland Restoration:
CRP4 Wetland Restoration – Natural Regeneration: Existing native cover can be used as a substitute for the required establishment of mast producing hardwoods. Existing vegetation should be comprised of trees, shrubs, and/or grass species to provide adequate cover. During the first and second growing seasons, NRCS will conduct field checks to ensure that suitable plant species are present and growing well. Noxious weeds and other undesirable plants, insects, and pests shall be controlled during establishment. This practice is **NOT** eligible for cost-share.

Practices to include when restoring hydrology:

Practice Code 657, Wetland Restoration:
CRP6 CP40 – Levee Shaping - Existing aquaculture dikes will be shaped, smoothed, and/or graded to a 6:1 slope in areas where hydrology restoration is occurring. This practice will only be completed on dikes coming into direct contact with restored hydrology (water) and only on the water side of dikes. Installation will be completed at the location(s) shown on the conservation plan map to create restored wetland habitat. Newly worked dikes can be established to browntop millet or winter wheat to provide temporary cover to decrease soil erosion until permanent 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. (657-MS-LSAQ)

Practices to include when restoring hydrology (cont.):

Practice Code 587, Structure for Water Control:
CTA1 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 an average of 6 – 18 inches of water and should retain water 6 months or more 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. (587-MS-SWC1)

Practice Code 646, Shallow Water Development and Management:
CTA1 Wetland Management: Restored wetland hydrology areas will be managed to provide an average of 6 to 18 inches of water for the majority of the year (greater than 6 months). Board(s) will be placed in water control structure(s) prior to October 15 and left until at least April 15 to catch rainfall to create and manage wetland habitat. 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.

Optional practices (as needed):

Practice Code 314, Brush Management:
CRP18 Mid-Contract Management: Spot control of woody 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 Chinese privet and Chinese tallow tree. Clear-mowing will not be allowed as a management activity. However, mowing may be allowed as needed to prepare sites for necessary herbicide applications. Current recommended herbicides 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. (314-MS-GQVM)

CRP21 Mid-Contract Management: Grassland Quality Vegetative Management: Control of invasive or undesirable hardwood vegetation on grasslands by applying recommended herbicides to release and improve species diversity of highly desirable vegetation to benefit wildlife. 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. Refer to attached job sheet, MS-ECS-314-01(JS). 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. (314-MS-GQVM)

Optional practices (as needed) (cont.):

Practice Code 314, Brush Management (cont.):
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)

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)

Optional practices (as needed) (cont.):

Practice Code 315, Herbaceous Weed Control (cont.):
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 338, Prescribed Burning:
CRP1 Mid-Contract Management - Prescribed burn: Prescribed burning can be conducted either on the whole contract area or whole field level, or fields can be divided into subsections for burning in alternate years. Size of area to be burned should be based on site specific conditions and restoration goals. Refresh firebreak prior to each burn. Before scheduling or attempting to carry out a burn, a burning plan shall be developed by individuals that are certified and have the authority to plan and safely execute the burning for the desired rotation. The landowner or his designee (the certified prescribed burner) shall obtain a burning permit from the Mississippi Forestry Commission prior to burning. The landowner has been provided a copy of the Mississippi Prescribed Burning Act and has signed the attached landowner certification statement. Refer to attached job sheets, MS-ECS-338-02(JS) and MS-ECS-338-04(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. (338-MS-PBSV)

Practice Code 394 – Firebreak
CRP1 A firebreak(s) will be established as shown on the plan map. Clean-tilled firebreaks may be disked as needed to reduce vegetation prior to implementing a prescribed burn. (394-MS-FBN)

Practice Code 642, Water Well
CRP1 CP40 – Aquaculture Wetland Restoration – Well: Existing well may be used to enhance wetland hydrology. The landowner must have in his possession a valid well permit from DEQ/YMD. This practice is NOT eligible for cost-share.

Practice Code 645, Upland Wildlife Habitat Management:
CRP6 CP40 – Wildlife Food Plot: Areas shown on the conservation plan map may be planted in annual or perennial non-cost shared plantings. These areas will require annual or periodic maintenance for the life of the contract. Food plots must be managed according to the requirements of practice CP12. See job sheet MS-CRP-CP12-01 (JS/SS). This practice is NOT eligible for cost-share.

Optional practices (as needed) (cont.):

Practice Code 647, Early Successional Habitat Development/Management:
CRP20 Mid-Contract Management - Light strip disking: Lightly disk 1/3 of each grassland field each year continuing this three year rotation throughout the life of the contract. Follow NRCS job sheet MS-ECS-645-09 for methods; objectives; frequency; soil loss considerations, such as cover disturbance, strip placement, and strip width; and co-ordination with other management activities. 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. (647-MS-SD)

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)