

Water Quality and Wildlife Enhancement Activity –ANM04- Extend Existing Filter Strips for Water Quality Protection and Wildlife Habitat



Extend existing filter strips

Where existing filter strips are utilized, extend them to gain more efficiency in intercepting overland flow and reducing the transport of nutrients, pesticides and agro-chemicals.

Land Use Applicability

This enhancement is applicable on cropland and pasture land.

Benefits

Widening existing conservation filter strips that currently meet NRCS conservation practice standard criteria can provide food and cover for native and game species as well as enhancing aquatic habitat. Additionally, these extended filter strips offer more surface area to filter out sediments and agro-chemicals.

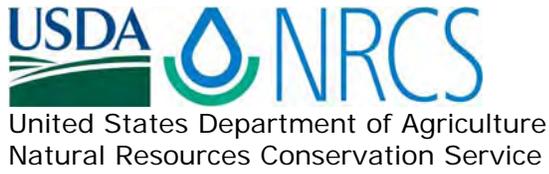
Riparian habitats are important transition zones between terrestrial landscapes and aquatic zones. Wildlife species utilize these transition zones because they provide a unique combination of cover, access to water and often provide important travel corridors. Often times filter strips are adjacent to these riparian areas or are important for contributing clean water, and habitat areas near by. Extending existing filter strips not only enhances wildlife habitat but it increases the effectiveness of water quality protection they provide to the streams.

Criteria for Extending Existing Filter Strips

Existing filter strips must meet minimum state requirements for width. Extend the existing filter strip for a total of 60 feet or more to enhance habitat and water quality functions.

The extended filter strip must be composed of at least 5 species of non-noxious, wildlife friendly grasses and/or perennial forbs best suited to site conditions. Include species that provide pollinator food and habitat where possible.

- All site preparation and plant establishment shall be accomplished according to the appropriate NRCS conservation practice standard criteria and specifications.
- Any use of the filter strip must not compromise its intended purpose.
- To the extent possible the filter strip areas and extended filter strip areas will be vegetated to increase overland flow interception and increase water quality values of the stream or water body.

**Operation and Maintenance:**

- Once established, filter strips must not be mowed, disked, grazed, or otherwise disturbed, until after the primary wildlife ground nesting period has ended.
- Filter strips will be regularly maintained for its intended purpose through the life of the contract. This includes any removal of vegetation, including grazing.
- Grazing is allowed if a grazing management plan is used that will maintain the integrity and diversity of vegetation and the filtering function of the vegetation.
- Filter strips will have a wildlife management plan to maintain established plant communities through the life of the contract. The wildlife plan will maintain the plant community and its structural diversity and provide habitat for intended species.

Documentation Requirements

1. A map showing the location and size of enhanced filter strips.
2. Documentation of the type and rates of vegetation planted in the new filter strip areas.



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State Criteria

Existing filter strip to be extended must be 20 feet wide measured outward and perpendicular to the stream from a point at the top of the bank adjacent to the stream. It is not necessary that the entire stream segment under the control of the cooperators be buffered by an existing 20 foot wide buffer. However, only that segment with the existing 20 foot buffer in place is eligible for this enhancement. The existing filter strip must be extended so that the total buffer is 60 feet or more wide.

Mixture planted to extend the filter strip must contain the following:

A minimum of 5 species of grasses and forbs or legumes used in combination to meet the (393) Filter Strip standard. This requires a minimum seeding rate of 40 PLS/ft² for grasses and 60% of the grass mixture shall consist of sod-forming, stiff-stemmed species. Acceptable grass species are located on the “wildlife friendly” plant list (List A) on the Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT).

All seedings must contain forbs and/or legumes at a seeding rate of 10% to 25% of the grass mixture (4 PLS/ft² to 10 PLS/ft²). Acceptable species are located on the “wildlife friendly” plant list (List A on CMT) OR the list of native forbs to be used with the pollinator enhancement (PLT01).

Document recommended site preparation, planting method, seed mixture, seeding rates and other pertinent information on the Grass Seeding Job Sheet (NE-CPA-8).

The following activities are allowed for operation/maintenance and management:

Haying is permitted up to once per three year period (following establishment) provided it is conducted after July 15th and prior to September 1st.

Grazing is permitted up to once per three year period (following establishment) provided it is conducted after July 15th and does not exceed a 30 day period during the growing season OR a 60 day period during the dormant season.

Specific management practices approved by NRCS and intended to improve plant diversity and vigor are allowed but are not required during the CSP contract period. These activities include prescribed burning, tillage and interseeding (on areas outside of 20’ zone closest to the stream), and/or site-specific herbicide treatments to accommodate interseeding desired grasses, forbs, or legumes.



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Document approved operation/maintenance and management in the table below.

To be completed by NRCS and Producer during planning					To be completed by Producer during certification (if different than planned)	
Tract	Field	Acres	Approved Activity	Allowed Dates	Implemented Activity	Applied Dates
<i>100</i>	<i>2b</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>Haying</i>	<i>July 15-Sept 1 2013</i>	<i>Grazing</i>	<i>November 2013</i>

I certify that the extended filter strip meets these specifications including the following documentation as applicable:

1. Documentation of the O&M or management activity performed – completed table above (if applicable).
2. Completed NE-CPA-8 Grass Seeding Job Sheet and associated seed tags, and bills as required.
3. Map with extended filter strip clearly identified (highlighted, outlined, etc.).

Certified by: _____ **Date:** _____