

Animal Enhancement Activity –ANM19- Wildlife Corridors



Enhancement Description

Wildlife corridors are linear strips of vegetation that connect 2 or more patches of suitable wildlife habitat. Participants will establish vegetative corridors as described below.

Land Use Applicability: This enhancement is applicable to cropland, pastureland, rangeland and forest.

Benefits

Corridors connect habitats providing additional life requisites (e.g., feeding, nesting, roosting, escape cover, etc.) as well as interaction among local populations for reproduction or other social behaviors. Fragmentation of habitat with resultant loss of connectivity threatens the continued existence of fish and wildlife populations.

Criteria for Wildlife Corridors

Continuity –corridors must be uninterrupted strips (i.e., no roads, vegetative or physical barriers, etc.) connecting 2 or more patches of suitable habitat. Wildlife friendly fencing is not considered a barrier. Suitable habitat may consist of grasslands, rangelands, forests, wetlands, shrubby areas, or natural substrates suitable for use by wildlife species adapted to the landscape and site conditions and conforming to the composition and quality criteria below.

Composition - corridor vegetation must be suited to natural site conditions, consistent with the larger natural landscape context, and appropriate for the kinds of wildlife present, hence native vegetation is highly preferred. Vegetation in the “patches of suitable habitat” (above) must also meet these criteria.

Quality – invasive exotic vegetation must be controlled.

Dimension –the average width must be ≥ 30 feet with no section < 20 feet wide. Since context is so important no one size fits all conditions, however wider corridors are better and irregular boundaries (or borders) are preferred over straight.

Documentation Requirements for Wildlife Corridors

- Map showing location of wildlife corridors connecting suitable habitats with required dimensions.
- Brief descriptions of the habitats to be connected.
- Description of the vegetation composition.



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State Criteria

Habitat areas to be connected must be located on lands under the control of the cooperators and must meet minimum size criteria (0.1 acre or larger and not less than 30 feet wide). Only newly established wildlife corridors are eligible for this enhancement.

Wildlife corridors may be established to appropriate grassland, woodland, or wetland plant communities as outlined in the criteria below. The habitat areas being connected by wildlife corridors must also meet the criteria listed. (Refer to ANM08 for additional guidance on methods to improve vegetation in those areas.)

Grassland Wildlife Corridors:

A minimum of 5 species of grasses, forbs or legumes must be used in combination. A plant species must constitute 10% of the seed mixture to be considered toward the total diversity. Acceptable grass and legume species are located on the “wildlife friendly” plant list and appropriate native forbs are listed on the pollinator enhancement (PLT01). All seedings must contain forbs and/or legumes at a seeding rate of 25% of the total mixture.

Minimum seeding rate for reseeding is 10 PLS/ft² on non-erosive sites and may be increased up to 30 PLS/ft² total to address areas subject to erosion (i.e. concentrated flow, etc.). If the wildlife corridor will function as a specific conservation practice (i.e. filter strip), the species composition and seeding rates should meet the requirements of the associated standard.

Woodland Wildlife Corridors:

Woody species to be planted to maintain/improve diversity will only consist of native (based on Vegetative Zone) deciduous trees and shrubs which are adapted to the site conditions. One native shrub must be included in all woodland wildlife corridors. If the wildlife corridor will function as a specific conservation practice (i.e. riparian forest buffer), the species composition and planting rates should also meet the requirements of the associated standard. Coniferous species may be used if they are native and adapted to the site OR if they are used within a windbreak or shelter belt. Those species listed as medium or high wildlife value in the FOTG may be used and includes: Rocky Mountain juniper, Eastern red cedar, ponderosa pine, pinyon pine, white fir, Douglas fir, blue spruce, and Norway spruce.

Wetland Wildlife Corridors:

Areas that contain hydric soils may be allowed to naturally re-vegetate to wetland plants. If a herbaceous seeding or tree/shrub planting is conducted on wetland areas, follow the diversity requirements noted in the appropriate grassland or woodland criteria above.

Control of invasive exotic species:

All species listed as noxious by the state or county authority must be controlled according to state law. The following invasive species found on the Nebraska Department of Agriculture Watch List must also be removed/suppressed as a part of the maintenance and management of the wildlife corridor: Caucasian bluestem; crown vetch; Dalmatian toadflax; Dame’s rocket; garlic mustard; houndstongue; perennial pepperweed; St. John’s wort; sericea lespedeza; sulfur cinquefoil; whitetop; Amur honeysuckle; Autumn olive; Russian olive; European buckthorn; and multi-flora rose.



United States Department of Agriculture
 Natural Resources Conservation Service

NE-ANM19

The following activities are allowed for operation/maintenance:

No haying or grazing is allowed within any zone planted to trees and shrubs.

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 on herbaceous areas but are not required during the CSP contract period. These activities include prescribed burning, tillage and interseeding, and site-specific herbicide treatments to accommodate interseeding desired grasses, forbs, or legumes.

Documentation Requirements

- Grass Seeding Job Sheet (NE-CPA-8) providing documentation of site preparation, seeding method, and composition of species planted or inter-seeded to meet requirements (if applicable).
- Tree Planting Job Sheet (NE-CPA-15) providing documentation of site preparation, planting method, and composition of species planted to meet requirements (if applicable).
- Approved invasive species control maintenance/management plan to be conducted within the riparian forest buffer riparian zone (if applicable). This includes species being targeted, timing of activities, herbicides used, application method, environmental considerations (i.e. migratory birds), follow-up evaluation, etc.
- Map with existing habitat areas/planned wildlife corridor clearly identified (highlighted, outlined, etc.).

Tract	Field	Acres	Proposed Activity	Approximate Timeframe
100	2b	6.0	Prescribed Burning and Interseeding	March of 2013

I certify that the following information meets specifications and has been provided to NRCS:

1. Written documentation consisting of a completed NE-CPA-8 Grass Seeding Job Sheet, NE-CPA-15 Tree Planting Plan, or other appropriate job sheet, and associated seed tags, invoices, etc. as required.
2. Map with habitat areas to be connected AND proposed location of wildlife corridor clearly identified (highlighted, outlined, etc.).

Certified by: _____ **Date:** _____