

Plants Enhancement Activity –PLT01–Establish Pollinator Habitat



Enhancement Description

Seed nectar and pollen producing plants in non-cropped areas such as field borders, vegetative barriers, contour buffer strips, waterways, shelterbelts, windbreaks, conservation cover, and riparian forest and herbaceous buffers.

Land Use Applicability

This enhancement is applicable on cropland, pasture land, rangeland and forest land.

Benefits

Increased habitat for pollinators will improve fruit set, size and quality, productivity per acre, biodiversity, beneficial insect populations, and the food base for

many wildlife species. The increased plant diversity of pollinator habitat will enhance wildlife habitat and may increase populations of other beneficial insects, reducing the need for pesticides.

Criteria for Establishing Pollinator Habitat

Pollinator habitat areas will be at least ½ acre in size for each 40 acres of cropland, pastureland, rangeland or forest land and include a minimum of nine (9) flowering plant species including forbs, legumes, vines, shrubs, and/or trees.

- ◆ Lists of plants suitable for pollinator habitat will be developed by NRCS at the state level. The lists must emphasize as many native species as practical.
- ◆ The habitat planting will include (as a minimum) three early, three mid, and three late flowering species from the NRCS state list. Plants that produce toxic nectar will not be planted.
- ◆ Site preparation and plant establishment shall be accomplished according to the appropriate NRCS conservation practice and specifications. Management and/or maintenance activities such as mowing, haying, burning, or grazing must be conducted outside of the growing season or bloom period. Maintenance should be done on less than 1/3 of the acreage during any given year.
- ◆ Insecticides and herbicides should not be used in the habitat planting area. Even natural herbicides and botanical insecticides can harm bees and other pollinators. If adjacent crop areas are treated use one or more of the following actions to limit insecticides in the pollinator habitat area:



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- Create insecticide free buffers in the first 25 feet of crop area,
- Use application methods that minimizing drift to the adjacent habitat,
- Apply active ingredients in the evening when most insect pollinators are not active.
- ◆ The planted habitat areas must be regularly inspected for invasive and/or noxious plants or other plants that may compromise the purpose of this enhancement. Undesirable species should be controlled using the least damaging method.
- ◆ Any use of the pollinator habitat area must not compromise its intended purpose.

Documentation Requirements for *Pollinator Habitat Establishment*

- ◆ A map showing the location and dimension of the pollinator habitat areas.
- ◆ A list of pollinator species planted.
- ◆ List of maintenance activities carried out to manage the pollinator habitat areas.

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State Criteria

Implementation of this enhancement requires the use of the flowering plant species noted below. Substitute species may be approved by NRCS provided they are native and adapted to site conditions. New seedings must incorporate the required nine or more flowering species at 50% of the seeding rate or more (based on seeds per square foot). Total seeding rates (grasses plus forbs) should be a minimum of 10 PLS/ft² and should not exceed 30 PLS/ft² unless required on small areas to control soil erosion resulting from concentrated flow.

Existing habitat areas must contain the required nine or more flowering species at 50% or more by canopy cover. It may be necessary to upgrade or enhance existing habitat areas by suppression of established plants using prescribed burning, tillage, or herbicide application followed by interseeding of the necessary flowering plant species. The minimum seeding rate of 10 PLS/ft² should be used for interseeded forbs.

Vegetation will not be disturbed between April 15 and October 15 unless approved by NRCS as part of a management plan intended to maintain and enhance plant diversity and vigor.

Native Forbs

Early

- Blanketflower
- Canada milkvetch
- Illinois bundleflower
- Leadplant
- Purple coneflower
- Purple prairieclover
- Roundhead lespedeza
- Scarlet globemallow
- Western yarrow
- White prairieclover

Middle

- Blackeyed Susan*
- Blanketflower
- Canada goldenrod
- Canada milkvetch
- Dotted gayfeather
- False sunflower
- False boneset
- Illinois bundleflower
- Leadplant
- Missouri goldenrod
- Plains coreopsis*
- Prairie sunflower
- Purple coneflower
- Purple prairieclover
- Roundhead lespedeza
- Scarlet globemallow
- Showy partridgepea
- Stiff goldenrod
- Stiff sunflower
- Upright coneflower
- Western yarrow
- White aster
- White prairieclover
- Wild bergamot*

Late

- Canada goldenrod
- Dotted gayfeather
- False sunflower
- False boneset
- Maximilian sunflower*
- Missouri goldenrod
- Prairie sunflower
- Showy partridgepea
- Stiff goldenrod
- Stiff sunflower
- Upright coneflower
- White aster

* = only appear in one season (no native forbs appear in all three seasons)



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Native Shrubs (all are considered early season)

American plum	Buffaloberry	Chokecherry
Elderberry	Golden currant	Gray dogwood
Red-osier dogwood	Skunkbush sumac	Woods Rose

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.
- Map with pollinator habitat area clearly identified (highlighted, outlined, etc.).
- Approved maintenance/management activities noted in table below intended to improve plant diversity and vigor. (Only up to 1/3 of area can be treated in any one year.)

Tract	Field	Acres	Proposed Activity	Approximate Timeframe
100	2b	6.0 (total)	Prescribed Burning (2.0 Acre patches)	March of 2012, 2013, 2014

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 and associated seed tags, as required.
2. Map with pollinator habitat area clearly identified (highlighted, outlined, etc.).

Certified by: _____ **Date:** _____