

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
PRACTICE DOCUMENTATION GUIDE
FORAGE AND BIOMASS PLANTING**

512

512 – STEP 1. INITIAL EVALUATIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to determine the landowner's desire for Forage and Biomass Planting in a predetermined location for the intended purpose(s). (See Natural Resources Conservation Service, Practice Standard and Specification 512).

The landowner must be interviewed to determine the purpose and needs for Forage and Biomass planting. Considerations will include the landowner goals and objectives, existing conditions and effects of this practice on existing soil, water, air, plant, animal and human resources. A discussion of NRCS Forage and biomass planting standards and specifications should also take place. The role of the landowner and the person assisting with Forage and Biomass planting should also be discussed. Additional pertinent questions should be asked on a site specific basis.

512 – STEP 2. INVESTIGATIONS, SURVEYS, AND INVENTORIES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to identify the mandatory preliminary resource inventory and operations that are required before forage and biomass planting can be planned and implemented.

Resource inventories will include all data and information needed to make informed decisions in the planning and implementation of forage and/or biomass planting and any follow-up management needs. Appropriate resource inventories could include soils, forage and or biomass crops, types of forage, climate, existing plant community, fertility, pests, disease, water resources, harvesting resources, forage storage methods, and all physical features such as fencing, water wells, ditches and irrigation

systems etc that might have an influence on planning of Forage and Biomass Planting. Adjacent land uses and resources that would be affected by Forage and Biomass Planting must also be considered.

Resource inventories required for Prescribed Grazing (528) and/or Forage Harvest Management (511) should be included if forage and/or biomass are to be harvested by grazing and/or mechanical means. See Practice Standard and Specifications for Prescribed Grazing 528. and/or Forage Harvest Management (511). Identify map resources needed such as the appropriate USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle sheet, soils, and road maps as well as aerial imagery. Also include identifying all needed utility clearances, archeological clearances. Also see Natural Resources Conservation Service, Conservation Practice Job Sheet(s) 512, CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation Worksheet.

512 – STEP 3. PRACTICE DESIGN

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to develop a forage and/or biomass planting design.

This practice will be designed in accordance with all federal, state and local laws and ordinances.

Resource inventories, local conditions and the intended use will need to be assessed for the proposed forage and/or biomass planting design. See Prescribed Grazing Standards and Specifications 528 and/or Forage Harvest Management 511 for Forage and/or Biomass Plantings to be harvested by grazing and/or mechanical means.

A Forage and/or biomass planting design will be developed with the client that meets the intended goals and objectives. All appropriate job sheets, maps and reports must be developed with landowners input, review and concurrence. See Practice Standard and Specification 512 & Job Sheets 512.

II. SITING

The purpose of this step is to insure that the client fully understands which fields are involved in the forage and/or biomass planting. Care should be given to make sure the forage and/or biomass planting fields are known by all involved. Access locations for equipment, livestock and vehicles should also be known by all involved in implementing the plan.

III. MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT

The purpose of this item is to insure an understanding of the materials/equipment used for Forage and Biomass Planting. Further knowledge would include adapted plant material varieties, seed site preparation equipment, seeding equipment, nutrient and pest management equipment and materials and irrigation systems.

Appropriate standards, job sheets and expectations that includes the types and number of each type of materials/equipment and/or system will need to be provided to the landowner and all those involved in the planning and implementation of Forage and/or biomass planting.

512 – STEP 4. PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to document and describe each component of the Forage and/or biomass planting plan, which includes step by step instructions to be used while preparing and planting Forage and/or biomass.

This will include the documentation of all components described in Forage and Biomass Planting Job Sheet 512. Additional reference material should include as needed and appropriate.

The landowner must be provided with a complete forage and/or biomass planting design and plan in the form of a Conservation Plan, Plan Map and NRCS Forage and Biomass Planting Job Sheet 512 in order to document the planting design and location.

Any items not described in Job Sheet 512 that are essential for location and planting of the Forage and/or biomass will be added to the Job sheet.

512 - STEP 5. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION, MAINTENANCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to assure the proper management and maintenance is completed before, during and after forage and/or biomass planting. (See Natural Resources Conservation Service, Practice Standard and Specification 512.

This requires a familiarity with soils, forages, agronomy, pests, fertility, harvest equipment, irrigation systems, grazing animals, monitoring and grazing management in order to assure that the planting continues to meet goals and objects and the plantings are maintained and/or improve over time.

A monitoring program that assesses forages and/or biomass, fertility and irrigation water management should be implemented as per the NRCS National Agronomy Manual. These measures should be discussed with and understood by the landowner.

512 – STEP 6. COMPLIANCE OR SPOT CHECKING

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to determine that all work has been completed to the standards required by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

All completed NRCS forms should be collected from the landowner and submitted to the appropriate persons. (See Natural Resources Conservation Service Practice Standard and Specification 512, 511, and 528 and Job Sheet 512, 511 and 528, and NM-CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation Worksheet.

II. DOCUMENTS

Copies of all completed job sheets and associated work sheets should be submitted to the Natural Resources Conservation Service representative within 10 working days of completion of the planting. This includes the Forage and Biomass Planting Practice Requirements as outlined in Job Sheet for 512 and any other job sheets that may be needed for this practice to meet the intended goals and objectives.