



# Permanent Wildlife Habitat Corridor Plan - CP4B Permanent Wildlife Habitat Plan - CP4D

Landowner: \_\_\_\_\_

Tract: \_\_\_\_\_

## INTRODUCTION

An ideal mosaic of woody cover plantings, cattail marshes, grain fields, and grasslands once existed across the agricultural landscape of Wisconsin. This habitat mixture produced a spectacular abundance of wildlife.

The CP4B will provide a permanent wildlife corridor between two existing wildlife habitat areas that are not connected. The CP4D practice provides an opportunity for you to recreate that mosaic of wildlife habitat on your property. This plan along with Wisconsin Job Sheet 134 or 135 will give you the guidance you need to plant and maintain your CP4B/CP4D planting.

Implementation of this practice leads to a minimum 1/3 of the planted area established to introduced or native grasses and 2/3 of the area established to a mix of trees and shrubs. The grass component may constitute up to 1/2 of the planting.

When planning this practice always look at the wildlife goals for the particular site. The grass or shrub or tree component may constitute up to half of the planting depending on what the local conditions dictate.

## PRIMARY NESTING SEASON

CRP rules do not allow disturbance of cover during the primary nesting season. The current primary nesting season in Wisconsin for new contracts is **May 15 through August 1**.

## GETTING STARTED

The first step in the establishment of good wildlife habitat is the determination of habitat needs for the targeted species and proper site location. Some factors to consider:

## Wildlife Considerations

Many grassland dependent species such as Eastern meadowlark, bobolink, Henslow's sparrow, and Upland sandpiper do not require woody vegetation as a habitat requirement.

Introduction of woody habitat into an open grassland can be detrimental to grassland birds by creating a corridor for predator movement. In this situation, woody tree cover would be minimized and grass maximized.



Species such as Bells vireo, catbirds, Northern Bobwhite Quail, Woodcock, and Whip-poor-wills require woody habitat for survival. The integration of woody habitat into wildlife plantings can provide food and shelter for a variety of wildlife. These plantings become even more valuable when they connect or expand existing woody habitat such as fence lines and woodlots.

## Relationships to Other Habitat Components

Cover plantings placed in any odd corner of a property will attract some form of wildlife. However, if the placement of these plantings is done with recognition given to existing travel lanes; good

undisturbed nesting cover; proximity to wetlands; or food and watering areas – the payoff in diverse and abundant wildlife use will be great. Design the habitat to provide easy access to food with a minimum exposure to predators and winter weather. Adjacent, undisturbed grassy cover will provide a food source and secure nesting.

**Exposure**

One of the primary benefits of a well-located cover planting is relief from periods of stress such as midwinter winds. In Wisconsin, severe north and west facing slopes should be designed with wind protection.

**Soils**

Most trees and shrubs require well-drained, loamy soils for best development and growth. Avoid very shallow soils, droughty or sandy soils with very low fertility, and excessively wet or poorly drained soils.

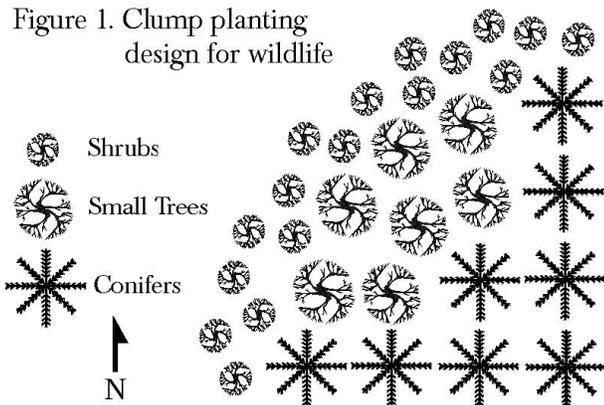
**Selecting the Species to Plant**

Choose tree species that are best adapted to handle Wisconsin's climate, insect pests, and disease problems (Table 1). Secondly, choose native shrubs that provide horizontal and vertical structure as well as sources of summer, fall, and winter foods (Table 2). Such diversity of structure and foods will contribute to the diversity of wildlife using your property.

**THE PLANTING PLAN**

The arrangement of trees, shrubs, grasses and forbs in a planting can greatly affect its attractiveness to wildlife. Square plantings are preferable to a long, thin planting. The blocky shape catches snow on the north and west sides of the planting with the inner rows providing shelter from weather and predators (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. Clump planting design for wildlife

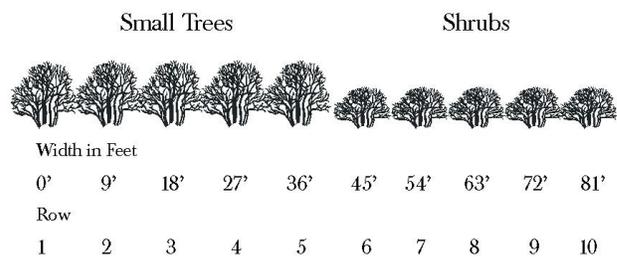


For this practice plant 200 trees per acre and 400 shrubs per acre. Suggested spacing for shrubs is 9 x 9 feet. See WI NRCS Conservation Practice Standard 612, Tree and Shrub Planting for information on tree spacing.

Plant species in groups so that no one species will predominate and out compete the others. Generally, tree and shrub plantings should be located along the edges of grassland fields to minimize the fragmentation of grasslands.

Plantings may include only shrubs for the woody component when the field is located near woodlands. A minimum of 600 shrubs/acre, which is made up of two or more species, is recommended in this situation. A spacing of 9 x 8 will provide 600 shrubs per acre (Fig. 2). A row planting at this spacing, with 60 shrubs/row, would cover approximately one acre (80 x 540 feet).

Figure 2. Cross-section of 10-row shrub planting

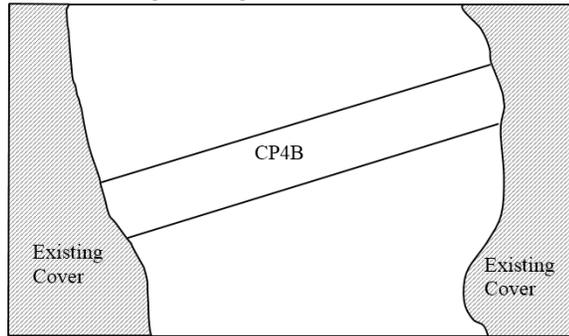


Refer to the specific job sketch sheet for your tree/shrub design and Job Sheet 134 or 135 for the required grass component.

**Remember:** Plantings that do not follow the job sheet instructions and specifications may result in loss of CRP program benefits.

The CP4B practice is designed to provide a safe corridor for wildlife to travel between two existing habitats. Corridor plantings should be suitably located between two existing wildlife habitat areas to provide the best adaptation of permanent wildlife habitat. Example in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Eligible Wildlife Corridor



Width: minimum 66 feet, maximum 200 feet.

## SITE PREPARATION

The single most important part of establishing good woody cover is protecting the small bare-root seedlings from drying out and from competitive vegetation once planted. Lack of site preparation prior to planting is the primary cause of planting failures due to heavy competition from weeds, grasses, and existing woody cover.

To aid in maintenance of planted trees, always identify the rows with posts and/or flagging. Leave room between the rows to allow for mowing.

### Mechanical Site Preparation

A planting site with a heavy sod can be fall-plowed and/or disked to set back the grass competition. Unfortunately, plowing will introduce air into the soil and this can lead to drying of the roots of newly planted stock. Disturbed soil is also prone to water erosion and weed seed invasion.

### Chemical Site Preparation

Weedy or grassy competition is best controlled with selective herbicide use. Effective control depends on three factors:

1. Herbicide selected
2. Application rate
3. Weather conditions

If your site is grass only or has broadleaves (such as alfalfa): Mow the entire site in September. (NOTE: CRP fields may not be harvested in conjunction with this activity.) After a few weeks, spray the site in 3-foot wide strips where the trees or shrubs will be planted. For the herbicide to be effective after mowing, be sure there are a few inches of newly sprouted growth before spraying and always follow all label directions.

## OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Your plantings require nurturing and maintenance in the early years.

Within one week after planting, spot spray (4 feet in diameter) or band spray (3 to 4 feet wide) with a pre-emergent herbicide over the newly planted trees and shrubs. Be sure furrows have closed around trees before spraying. Read and follow all label directions.

Control annual weeds and other competition the year of establishment with early and timely clipping before seed heads appear, or timely application of herbicides.

Mowing between the rows of trees and shrubs is highly recommended to reduce habitat for mice and voles which chew at the base of seedlings. Mow in June and August the year of planting and the two years after planting.

After the planting is established, control all noxious weeds as identified by state and local laws by:  
a) treating with chemicals per label directions, or  
b) spot mowing before seed heads form. No disturbance activities shall occur during the primary nesting season of **May 15 through August 1** without prior approval from FSA.

Protect the acres from haying and grazing at all times unless authorized by FSA and included in an approved NRCS haying or grazing plan.

Replace dead trees and shrubs as necessary, and control undesired vegetative competition to promote a fully functional tree/shrub planting. Control weed and grass competition around trees and shrubs for a minimum of 2-4 feet using herbicides, cultivation, mowing, mulch, or hand weeding.



*Ten years down the road, a well-planned woody cover planting will provide valuable food and cover for wildlife.*

**Table 1: Approved Trees**

Common Name	Genus and species
<b>Hardwoods (Deciduous)</b>	
American Basswood*	Tilia americana
American Beech	Fagus granifolia
Bigtooth Aspen	Populus grandidentata
Black Ash	Fraxinus nigra
Black Cherry	Prunus serotina
Black Oak	Quercus velutina
Black Walnut	Juglans nigra
Black Willow*	Salix nigra
Bur Oak	Quercus macrocarpa
Butternut	Juglans cinerea
Eastern Cottonwood	Populus deltoides
Green Ash	Fraxinus pennsylvanica
Hackberry	Celtis occidentalis
Northern Red Oak	Quercus rubra
Paper Birch	Betula papyrifera
Quaking Aspen	Populus tremuloides
Red Maple	Acer rubrum
River Birch	Betula nigra
Silver Maple	Acer saccharinum
Shagbark Hickory	Carya ovata
Sugar Maple	Acer saccharum
Swamp White Oak	Quercus bicolor
Tag Alder	Alnus incana subsp rugosa
White Oak	Quercus alba
White Ash	Fraxinus americana
<b>Softwoods (Conifer)</b>	
Balsam Fir	Abies balsamea
Black Spruce	Picea mariana
Eastern White Pine	Pinus strobus
Jack Pine	Pinus banksiana
Northern White Cedar	Thuja occidentalis
Red Pine	Pinus resinosa
Tamarack	Larix laricina
White Spruce	Picea glauca

\*Beneficial species for Pollinators

**Table 2: Approved Shrubs**

Common Name	Genus and species
Alternate-leaved Dogwood	<i>Cornus alternifolia</i>
American Crabapple	<i>Malus coronaria</i>
Black Huckleberry	<i>Gaylussacia baccata</i>
Chokecherry*	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>
Downy Arrow-wood	<i>Viburnum rafinesquianum</i>
Elderberry*	<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>
Gray Dogwood* - Potential Invasive	<i>Cornus racemosa</i>
Hawthorns*	<i>Crataegus</i> spp.
Hazelnut	<i>Corylus americana</i>
Highbush Cranberry*	<i>Viburnum opulus</i> L. subsp. <i>trilobum</i>
Juneberry*	<i>Amelanchier arborea</i> , <i>A. bartramiana</i> , <i>A. interior</i>
Lead-plant*	<i>Amporpha canescens</i>
Mapleleaf Viburnum	<i>Viburnum acerifolium</i>
Nannyberry*	<i>Viburnum lentago</i>
New Jersey Tea*	<i>Ceanothus americanus</i>
Ninebark*	<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>
Northern Bush-Honeysuckle	<i>Diervilla lonicera</i>
Pin Cherry*	<i>Prunus pensylvanica</i>
Prairie Crabapple*	<i>Malus ioensis</i>
Prairie Willow*	<i>Salix humilis</i>
Red Osier Dogwood - Potential Invasive	<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>
Round-leaved Dogwood	<i>Cornus rugosa</i>
Sand Cherry	<i>Prunus pumila</i>
Sandbar Willow	<i>Salix interior</i> Rowlee
Serviceberry*	<i>Amelanchier laevis</i> , <i>A. sanguinea</i> , <i>A. spicata</i>
Silky Dogwood*	<i>Cornus amomum</i>
Staghorn Sumac	<i>Rhus hirta</i>
Tag Alder	<i>Alnus incana</i> subsp. <i>rugosa</i>
Wild Plum*	<i>Prunus americana</i>
Winterberry	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>

\*Beneficial species for Pollinators

