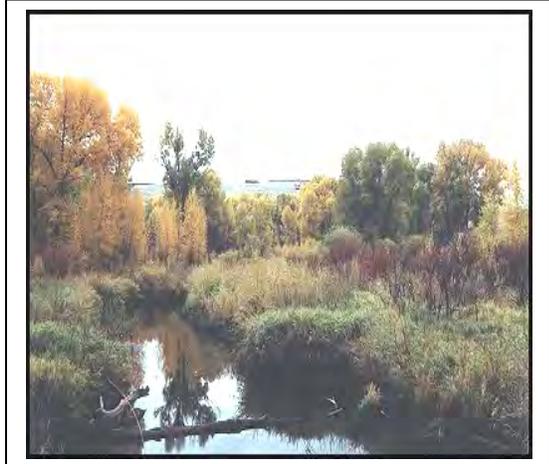


**Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM13- Non-forested Riparian Zone
 Enhancement for Fish and Wildlife**



Enhancement Description

Utilizing select conservation measures such as re-locating equipment operations, trails, or livestock; establishing diverse native vegetation and controlling invasive species; fencing; and extending the width of the riparian zone to enhance wildlife habitat adjacent to riparian zones of streams, ponds, lakes, or wetlands.

Land Use Applicability

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

Benefits

Intact riparian zones with a natural and diverse mix of herbaceous and /or woody vegetation of different ages are important landscape features for sustaining fish and wildlife populations. Maintaining vigorous native or natural riparian vegetation of diverse age classes and species will benefit riparian and aquatic fauna by providing: (a) thermal, nesting/fawning, and hiding cover in riparian zones, stream banks, and shorelines; (b) diverse food sources; (c) a steady source of leaves, brush, small woody material for aquatic food webs at and downstream of the site; (d) root systems to enhance bank stability, and (e) vegetative filters for surface water run-off.

Criteria for Non-forested Riparian Zone Enhancement for Fish and Wildlife

1. For streams, rivers, or floodplains adjacent to pastures, cropland, hayland, or rangeland, enhance and maintain a well-vegetated riparian zone that is 2.5 times the width of the stream channel or 35 feet, whichever is greater. Improve the diversity of native or natural woody and/or herbaceous plant species suitable for the site and appropriate for the riparian and aquatic species that inhabit the area by planting appropriate species. In addition, implement at least one of the management actions from the list below.

2. For ponds, floodplain wetlands, or lakes adjacent to pastures, cropland, hayland or rangeland, enhance and maintain a well-vegetated riparian zone that is 35 feet wide or greater. Improve the diversity of native or natural woody and/or herbaceous plant species suitable for the site and appropriate for the riparian and aquatic species that inhabit the area by planting appropriate species. In addition, implement at least one of the management actions from the list below.

Additional management actions for enhancing non-wooded riparian zones:

1. Control invasive species thru a grazing management plan or suitable pest management techniques.



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2. Limit livestock use of riparian zone thru a prescribed grazing management plan
3. Control access of people, machinery, and livestock to the riparian zone with fencing.
4. Provide off-site watering source(s) for livestock.

Documentation Requirements

- Provide written documentation, including a map, of all riparian zone activities implemented to meet the requirements of this enhancement.
- List of maintenance activities carried out on riparian acres as prescribed under the practice used, and its specific fish and wildlife considerations.

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State Criteria

No trees can be added to the riparian zone under this enhancement but the addition of thickets using native shrub species is permitted. See Enhancement ANM14 “Riparian Forest Buffer, Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife Habitat” for sites where use of tree species is desired.

Eligible riparian zones include:

Seasonal or Intermittent Streams – must have a defined bed and bank with <2% slope and 30 cumulative days of flow per year causing hydrophytic vegetation in the stream bed OR a scoured, non-vegetated channel.

Perennial Streams/Rivers – must have flow throughout the year in most years.

Ponds, Lakes, or Wetlands – provided that they are either semi-permanently flooded (surface water present throughout the growing season in most years) or wetter.

Buffers enrolled into Nebraska Buffer Strip are eligible for this enhancement. Lands enrolled into the Conservation Reserve Program are not eligible for enrollment into the Conservation Stewardship Program.

Mixture planted to improve the diversity of native or natural vegetation must contain the following:

A minimum of 5 species of grasses and forbs or legumes used in combination to meet the (393) Filter Strip or (390) Riparian Herbaceous Cover standards. 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.

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 OR the list of native forbs to be used with the pollinator enhancement (PLT01).

Projects that require interseeding into existing vegetation will need specifications developed to suppress growth during the period of establishment for seeded species including techniques such as tillage, herbicides, prescribed burning, etc. Site preparation must be documented on the NE-CPA-8 Grass Seeding Job Sheet. Seeding rates can be lowered to accommodate existing vegetation that is desired and will be maintained.

Select from one of the following to meet the requirements of this enhancement:

1. Control invasive plant species within the riparian zone from the following list: saltcedar, Russian olive, Eastern red cedar, phragmites, purple loosestrife, hybrid cattail, and reed canarygrass. Attach specifications for adequate control. This will often require multiple treatments used in combination (i.e. mowing followed by spraying, etc.).
2. Limit livestock use of the riparian zone through a prescribed grazing management plan (following establishment of seeded species). Examples include:
 - a. Targeting the suppression of invading cool-season grass (Kentucky bluegrass) by conducting “heavy grazing” pressure within the riparian zone for a short period of time (14 days or less) between April 1st and May 1st of each year and again between September 1st and October 1st of each year. The riparian area would be deferred from grazing the remainder of the year.
 - b. Permitting grazing 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.



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3. Control access of people, machinery, and livestock to the riparian zone with fencing. This requires that no vehicle trails or storage areas for machinery/building materials/hay/etc. exist within the riparian zone and that haying occur not more often than once every three years (following establishment of seeded species) with cutting done after July 15th and prior to September 1st. No livestock grazing (other than using “water gaps”) is allowed under this management action.
4. Provide off-site watering source(s) for livestock to remove reliance on the stream, pond, lake or wetland for watering livestock. This will require that a new water source using a tank be developed a minimum of 300 feet from the stream, pond, etc. AND that livestock access to the stream, pond, etc. be limited by fencing (such as in #3 above) or rotational grazing strategies (such as those used in #2 above) to exclude livestock.

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.
- Approved maintenance/management activities to be conducted within the enhanced riparian zone as noted in table below. This includes invasive species control, grazing management plan, etc.
- Site-specific maintenance/management plan which includes:
 - o Invasive Species Control – species being targeted, timing of activities, herbicides used, application method, environmental considerations (i.e. migratory birds), follow-up evaluation, etc.
 - o Grazing Management Plan – number and class of livestock, timing and duration of grazing events, rotations used, infrastructure needed (i.e. fence and tanks), monitoring parameters, etc.
- Map with enhanced riparian zone and other pertinent features (i.e. fence or off-site water - where applicable) clearly identified (highlighted, outlined, etc.).

Tract	Field	Acres	Proposed Activity	Approximate Timeframe
100	2b	3.0	Control phragmites using mow, spray method. (See attached plan.)	Mow – April, 2013 Spray – August, 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 and associated seed tags, copies of dated receipts, as required.
2. Site-specific maintenance/management plan for Invasive Species Control or Grazing Management Plan (attached to this document).
3. Written documentation consisting of a completed job sheets and associated receipts for infrastructure consisting of fence or tanks, (if applicable).
4. Map with enhanced riparian zone and pertinent infrastructure, such as fence or off-site water facilities, clearly identified (highlighted, outlined, etc.).

Certified by: _____ **Date:** _____