United States Department of Agriculture

CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

E340A

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Cover crop to reduce soil erosion

Conservation Practice 340: Cover Crop

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Crop (Annual & Mixed); Crop (Perennial)

RESOURCE CONCERN: Soil

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 1 Year

Enhancement Description

Cover crop added to current crop rotation to reduce soil erosion from water and wind to below soil tolerance (T) level. Cover crops grown during critical erosion period(s). Species are selected that will have physical characteristics to provide adequate erosion protection.

Criteria

- Plant species, seedbed preparation, seeding rates, seeding dates, seeding depths, fertility requirements, and planting methods will be consistent with applicable local criteria and soil/site conditions **(REFER TO STATE SPECIFIC LISTS)**. Determine method and timing of termination to meet grower's objective and current NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines.
- Select species that are compatible with other components of the cropping system.
- Ensure herbicides used with crops are compatible with cover crop selections.
- Cover crops may be established between successive production crops, or companion-planted or relay-planted into production crops. Select species and planting dates that will not compete with production crop yield or harvest.
- Do not burn cover crop residue.
- Do not harvest or graze cover crop.

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- If specific rhizobium bacteria for selected legumes are not present in the soil, treat seed with appropriate inoculum at time of planting.
- Time cover crop establishment in conjunction with other practices to adequately protect soil during critical erosion period(s).
- Select cover crops that will have the physical characteristics necessary to provide adequate erosion protection.
- Use NRCS erosion prediction technology to determine amount of surface and/or canopy cover needed from cover crop to achieve the erosion objective (average annual soil loss below T).
- Crops planted following the cover crop must be no-tilled.

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Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

- ☐ Prior to implementation, provide NRCS with the current planned crop rotation, cover crop information, and field operation(s) used for each crop.

Current Management Rotation Including Cover Crop

Field	Planned Crops/Cover Crop (in sequence)	Planting Date	Harvest/Termination Date

Current Field Operations for each crop

Field	Crop	Field Operation	Timing of Field Operation (month/year)

Planned Management Rotation Including Cover Crop

Field	Planned Crops/Cover Crop (in sequence)	Planting Date	Harvest/Termination Date

Planned Field Operations for each crop

Field	Crop	Field Operation	Timing of Field Operation (month/year)

Cover Crop Mix and Seeding Rate

Species	Variety	Seed Size	Typical Seeding Depth	Seeding Rate (PLS lbs/acre)	Percent of Mix (%)

Establishment and Management Considerations:

Task	Provide information and details
Seedbed Preparation	
Seeding Date	
Seeding Depth	
Seeding Method	
Fertilizer, as needed	
Weed Management, as needed	
Termination Date (window)	
Termination Method	

☐ Prior to implementation, read and follow current NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines.

☐ During implementation, cover crops must not be burned, grazed or harvested.

☐ During implementation, the crop following the cover crop must be no till seeded.

- ☐ During implementation, notify NRCS of any planned changes in crops, crop rotation, or unharvested areas to verify the planned system meets the enhancement criteria.
- ☐ After implementation, if changes to the cover crop and crop rotation were made, complete the tables above to document the applied Cover Crop for the contract period and provide to NRCS.

NRCS will:

- ☐ As needed, provide technical assistance in selecting cover crop mixes for the crop rotations or substitute species that would meet the criteria of the enhancement.
- ☐ As needed, provide additional assistance to the participant as requested.
- ☐ Prior to implementation, provide and explain the current NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines.
- ☐ Prior to implementation, use information provided from the participant to calculate the management sheet and rill erosion from water and wind erosion value for each field using current NRCS water erosion prediction technologies.

  Benchmark Management Soil Loss = _____ tons/acre/year

  Planned Management Soil Loss = _____ tons/acre/year
- ☐ During implementation, evaluate any planned changes to cover crop mix, timing in crop rotation, management, or field operations to verify the new system meets the enhancement criteria.
- ☐ After implementation, evaluate the applied cover crop in the crop rotation or management using information provided from the participant, if any variation to planned evaluation, then calculate erosion values to document that the applied rotation met the enhancement criteria.

  Applied Management Soil Loss = _____ tons/acre/year

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NRCS Documentation Review:

I have reviewed all required participant documentation and have determined the participant has implemented the enhancement and met all criteria and requirements.

Participant Name _____ Contract Number _____

Total Amount Applied _____ Fiscal Year Completed _____

_____ _____

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature Date

*Sign and certify in the Oregon-Acknowledgment & Certification supplement below.

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OREGON SUPPLEMENT TO

CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

ACTIVITY E340A

Additional Documentation for Oregon

- In addition to the documentation requirements specified in the National job sheet E340A the following additional documentation requirements apply in Oregon.
    - Utilize the Pacific Northwest Cover Crop Selection Tool to select approved cover crop species for water or wind erosion protection for the planning area.

Design Approvals & Acknowledgements:

Design Approval	Date	Job Approval Authority
Designed by:		
Approved by:		

Client's Acknowledgement Statement:

The client acknowledges:

- I have received a copy of the specification and understand the contents and requirements.
- It is my responsibility to obtain all necessary permits and/or rights and to comply with all ordinances and laws pertaining to the application of this practice.
- I will not begin installation of this practice until I have received appropriate approval to do so. I understand NRCS also has Federal and state laws to comply with that may take some time to address (e.g. cultural resources).

Client's Signature	Date

Certification Documentation:

☐	Field Evaluation: Post-treatment inventory, measurements, notes, as-built, and supporting documentation (document completion in conservation plan), as required.
☐	Map(s): Including field numbers, fields treated, and units treated (may document on conservation plan map), as required.
☐	Photos or other supporting documentation (e.g., seed tags, soil tests, receipts, invoices, spray records, fertilizer records, etc.)
Brief Description of Work Accomplished (types of equipment used, date of application, extents and quantities installed, etc.)	

Certification Statement:

The employee certifies the implementation of this conservation practice:

- Meets the purpose, general criteria, and any required additional criteria as documented in the conservation practice standard and/or enhancement sheet.
- Meets the specifications contained herein and is complete.
- Conforms to my existing Job Approval Authority controlling factors and levels.

Name	Date	Job Approval Authority

Field Level Certification – For multiple applications of this design.				
Land Unit/ Contract Item Number	Date	Unit(s)	Amount Installed	Certifier