



CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY
E328D (WITH MONTANA SUPPLEMENT)

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Leave standing grain crops unharvested to benefit wildlife

Conservation Practice 328: Conservation Crop Rotation

APPLICABLE LAND USE: Crop (Annual & Mixed)

RESOURCE CONCERN: ANIMALS

ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 1 Year

Enhancement Description

Implement a crop rotation which allows a portion of grain crops to be left in fields unharvested to provide food and cover for wildlife during winter months.

Criteria

- Crops must be grown in a planned sequence as outlined in the plan. The crop rotation shall include a minimum of three different crops. For this purpose, a cover crop is considered a different crop.
- Where applicable, plan suitable crop substitutions when the planned crop cannot be planted due to weather, soil conditions, or other local situations.
- Select the crops and crop management activities that provide food, cover, and shelter for the targeted wildlife species using an approved habitat evaluation procedure.
- Leave a minimum ½ acre of unharvested, standing grain crops for each 40 acres of cropland. Unharvested plots shall be located in a single location on the 40 acre unit and additional plots shall be located on different 40 acres. *This enhancement is to be planned, contracted, and implemented on an entire field, not just the unharvested acres.*



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- Locate the unharvested plots adjacent to permanent cover such as brushy fence rows, field borders, forest land, or wetlands (this does not include newly established vegetation).
- Leave unharvested crops standing over winter until it is time to prepare the soil for planting the next crop.
- **MT: Grain crops include crops with a mature seed head, such as small grains, corn, soybeans, sorghum, millet, peas, lentils, canola, safflower, sunflower, and more. A cover crop can meet the criteria if a minimum 30% of the seed mix contains one or more grain crops and a mature seed head exists on these crops prior to winter. Contact area or state agronomist for further guidance.**



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Documentation and Implementation Requirements

Participant will:

Prior to implementation, provide NRCS with the planned crop rotation.

| Field | Acres | Planned Crops (in sequence) | Length of Crop Rotation (years) |
|-------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
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- Prior to implementation, develop a map showing planned location(s), crop type(s), and acreage of crops to be left unharvested.
- During implementation, notify NRCS of any planned changes in crops, crop rotation, or unharvested areas to verify the planned system meets the enhancement criteria.
- During implementation, take photos of all unharvested plots. Photos must indicate field location and date.
- After implementation, if changes to the rotation were made, complete the tables above to document the applied Conservation Crop Rotation for the contract period and provide to NRCS.
- After implementation, make a map showing implemented location(s), crop type(s), and acreage of crops that were left unharvested each year available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement.
- After implementation, make photos of the unharvested plots available for review by NRCS to verify implementation of the enhancement.

NRCS will:

- As needed, provide technical assistance in selecting crop rotations or substitute crops that would meet the criteria of the enhancement.
- As needed, provide technical assistance in selecting crops for food, cover, and shelter according to the approved habitat evaluation procedure.
- As needed, provide additional assistance to the participant as requested.



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- During implementation, evaluate planned crop changes, crop rotation, or unharvested areas to verify the planned system meets the enhancement criteria.
- After implementation, review the map(s) showing implemented location(s), crop type(s), and acreage of crops that were left unharvested each year, to verify implementation of the enhancement.
- After implementation, review photos of unharvested plots to verify implementation of the enhancement.
- **MT: Use Biology Tech Note MT-19 [Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guides for Montana](#) for species of concern.**

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