



**Tennessee Job Sheet
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
CP29 - Marginal Pastureland
Wildlife Habitat Buffer**

Purpose

The **Marginal Pastureland Wildlife Habitat Buffer** practice is designed to remove pollutants from surface runoff and subsurface flow in order to improve the water quality while also providing or enhancing wildlife habitat.

General Provision

This practice is eligible in the Continuous CRP. Producers can enroll at any time if landowner and land eligibility requirements are met. Contract length is from 10 to 15 years, as determined by the participant. Payments for this practice include an annual rental payment based on a county average pasture rental rate, an annual rental incentive payment of 20% of the county average, a one-time signing incentive payment of \$10 per acre per year of contract not to exceed \$100 per acre, a practice incentive payment of 40% of the cost of the installation of the practice, 50% cost share for installation of the practice, and an annual maintenance payment of \$0, \$4, or \$5 per acre per year of the contract depending on the amount of additional treatments.

Facilitating practices to support livestock grazing outside the contract acres, such as fencing and alternative water supply, are eligible for cost share and the practice incentive payment (with some limitations) when livestock must be removed from the area.

Land Eligibility

To be eligible for this practice the land must be determined by NRCS to meet the definition of marginal pastureland, be adjacent and parallel to a perennial or intermittent stream, permanent water body such as a lake or pond where surface water would flow off the farm, or sinkhole, and a buffer of native vegetation will improve the water quality and provide wildlife habitat.

Marginal pastureland is defined as grassland currently or recently grazed, or suitable for grazing, and experiencing a significant environmental problem. Eligible areas include those areas predominantly (more than 50%) of land capability classes II, III or above, or in land capability classes I, IIe, or IIw with streambank erosion, scour erosion, deposition problems, or overgrazing.

Eligible Acres

The minimum required buffer along eligible streams, open sinkholes, closed sinkholes with an obvious depression, or waterbodies must be an average 20 feet in width up to a maximum average width of 120 feet. In certain cases the average width may be widened beyond 120 feet to treat a specific water quality problem when that problem is noted and documented.

Up to 5 acres per closed sinkhole consisting of a broad flat basin may be enrolled in that portion of the sinkhole determined to be the most likely area of surface water infiltration.

Eligible sinkhole areas for this practice are those areas shown as depressions in karst on U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps.

Specifications

1. The practice shall be performed primarily in accordance with NRCS technical standards 390 (Riparian Herbaceous Cover) and 612 (Tree/Shrub Establishment).
2. Eligible plant species must include a combination of native grasses, forbs, and shrubs. A list of approved grass/forb planting mixtures and approved shrub species is available at the local USDA Service Center.
3. Temporary cover may be required to provide erosion control outside of normal plating dates.
4. Native grass/forb plantings must be in a weed-free, firm seedbed. Weed control efforts should begin prior to planting. Herbicides or tillage must be used to eliminate competing vegetation or any temporary cover prior to planting. No-till establishment will be required on steeper slopes to control erosion.
5. A current soil test (within 24 months) is required to determine liming needs for the grass/forb planting. Only lime may be required to be applied.
6. The shrub component of the practice does not require fertilizer or lime. Weeds must be controlled prior to planting and may need to be controlled during the establishment period (usually the first growing season).
7. A minimum of 10%, up to 30% of the buffer must be established to at least 2 species of 1 year old shrub seedlings. Species must be adapted to site conditions.
8. The practice shrub component does not require a Mid-Management treatment. The grass/forb component requires a Mid-Management treatment of strip disking, strip herbiciding, prescribed burning or legume interseeding at least once during the contract period.

Establishment Criteria and Maintenance

An adequate stand must be considered established for the species planted, or re-establishment may be required. The established plant community must be maintained for the duration of the contract. Normal maintenance of the plant community outside of the primary nesting season (April 15-July 1) and maintenance of any additional supporting practices such as fencing will be scheduled in the contract and must be performed by the participant.