



U.S. Department of Agriculture Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program CP5A – Field Windbreak (Version 1.1 April 2022)

WHAT IS A FIELD WINDBREAK?

Field windbreaks are linear plantings of multiple rows of trees and/or shrubs established for environmental purposes such as reducing wind erosion, protecting growing plants, managing snow, enhancing wildlife habitat, and improving aesthetics.

Field windbreaks intercept undesirable winds from eroding soils and damaging plants, and they slow the velocity of wind, allowing the settling out of suspended snow and soil particles. Field windbreaks also provide travel corridors, nesting sites, food, and escape cover for many wildlife species.

CREP POLICY

Field windbreaks will be installed according to NRCS Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380) in the local Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG).

For the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, the maximum width of field windbreaks and the spacing between windbreaks will be the minimum needed to achieve 40% density (the level needed to reduce wind erosion), according to CPS Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380), regardless of the purpose of the windbreak.

The windbreak will be oriented perpendicular to the troublesome winds. The interval between new and existing windbreaks, and the spacing between and within the rows will be determined based on the design and mature height of the species.

For CREP, field windbreaks will contain a minimum of 1 row of trees and 2 rows of shrubs, and a maximum of 2 rows of trees and 3 rows of shrubs. Species are limited to those in the FOTG.

Tree and shrub species selected for the windbreak will be adapted to the site conditions and meet the standards in the local FOTG. Only viable, high quality planting stock will be used. Refer to Conservation Tree/Shrub Suitability Groups in Sec II of the FOTG.

INSTALLATION

It is very important to plant trees into a weed-free, firm seedbed. If the field is currently in cropland, weed control efforts should begin prior to planting. Use herbicide or tillage to eliminate competing vegetation. If necessary, for erosion control, seed a temporary cover. Eliminate the temporary cover at planting time with tillage or herbicides.

If the field is currently in sod, begin weed control efforts using broad-spectrum herbicides in the fall. Apply herbicides again after the spring green-up prior to planting (if possible, a prescribed burn prior to spring green up to remove the dead litter from the fall treatment will provide best results). Pre-planting weed control must comply with CPS Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490) the FOTG.

Plant trees according to the attached design sheet. Plantings using bare-rooted stock and non-rooted cuttings should be completed in the spring after the ground thaws, but no later than June 1; or planted in the fall after October 1 until the ground freezes when soil moisture is adequate. Containerized and balled and burlap stock may be planted between October 1 and June 1 as local soil moisture and weather conditions permit. Direct seeding will be completed from October 1 through April 30 as local soil moisture and weather conditions permit.

Weed Control is also important to ensure survival and maximum growth of the trees after they are planted. Cost-share is authorized for one weed control application within 24 months after the trees are planted. Until the practice is established, a 9 ft² area around each tree should remain weed-free to maximize tree growth. Mowing is not allowed for weed control for trees. Post-planting weed control must comply with CPS Herbaceous Weed Treatment (315).

Replacement of dead trees may be needed until the planting is established. The landowner is responsible for replacement costs. Re-planting will be required when less than 80% of all plants are living, or they are not evenly distributed over the planting.

For additional information on herbicide controls, contact your local Michigan State University (MSU) extension agent. Always apply herbicides according to labeled directions.

For additional information on establishment and maintenance, implementation requirements (available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/> in Section IV).

Following is a list of trees and shrubs that are considered Good to Excellent for both Wildlife & Windbreak Suitability. Consult the local FOTG for more information and other species that may be used.

Tree Species	Mature Height (ft)	Windbreak Suitability	Wildlife Suitability
Cedar, Eastern Red*	48	E	G
Cedar, Northern White*	48	E	G
Crab, 'Roselow' Sargent	20	G	E
Cranberry, Highbush*	13	G	E
Dogwood, Gray*	13	G	G
Dogwood Red-Osier*	9	G	G
Hawthorn*	20	G	E
Hazelnut, American*	12	G	E
Plum, American*	8	G	E
Spruce, Norway	81	E	G
Spruce, White*	80	E	G
Sumac, Smooth*	20	G	G
Viburnum, Maple leaf*	7	G	G

E-Excellent, G-Good; *Denotes Species Native to Michigan

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Undesirable plants, insects, and pests shall be controlled, including such maintenance as necessary to avoid detrimental effects to the surrounding land. Some of the most common pests that need controlled on CRP acreage include autumn olive, multi-flora rose, spotted knapweed, quackgrass, etc.

After practice establishment, maintain the planting according to your CRP conservation plan. Maintenance activities are allowed only on a spot basis and only if necessary, to maintain stand health, maintain stand diversity, or control pests that will damage the CRP cover or adjacent lands. Maintenance activities are only allowed between August 1 – May 1 (i.e. - outside of the Primary Nesting and Brood-Rearing season). If maintenance activities are needed at times other than these, the FSA County Committee must approve the maintenance activity prior to the activity occurring.

Damaging pests need to be monitored and controlled. Repellents, poisons, tubing, netting and cages of various kinds may be needed to control rodents, deer, and other pests.

Tree plantings should be inspected on a seasonal basis and following major storm and runoff events. Any damages or sediment accumulation that would adversely impair the function of the planting must be corrected immediately, at the landowner's expense.

Trees and shrubs will be protected from fire, insects, disease, and animals until established.

Supplemental watering may be desirable to ensure adequate survival.

Refer to CPS Tree/Shrub Establishment (612) for further operation and maintenance details.

Pruning may be required to remove damaged, diseased or unwanted limbs to improve health and quality. Refer to CPS Tree/Shrub Pruning (660) for further details.

Field Windbreak Specification Sheet CP5A

Landowner:	County:	Date:
Farm:	Tract:	Field(s): Acres:
Windbreak: Design Considerations: Windbreak Suitability Groups		
Predominant Soil Type(s): = CTSG Group: 20 – year height of the windbreak (H): 0 ft. (= 10*H) 0.00 ft.		
Species	Total #	Spacing
Row 1:		Within row Between Row
Row 2:		Within row Between Row
Row 3:		Within row Between Row
Row 4:		Within row Between Row
Site Prep in Year:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Herbicide	Date:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Herbicide	Date:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tillage	Date:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Temporary cover	Date:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Date:	
Planting Method in Year:		
Planting method:	Date:	
Maintenance		
Maintain a 9 ft ² weed & grass-free area around each shrub for up to 3 years for optimal growth		
NOTE: After practice establishment, mowing will be conducted between August 1 & 20, and weeds will be treated on a “spot” basis only, with prior approval granted by the FSA County Committee		
Management		
<input type="checkbox"/> Tree pruning/thinning	Date:	
NOTE: After practice establishment, other management activities will be conducted between August 1 & May 1, and weeds will be treated on a “spot” basis only, with prior approval granted by the FSA County Committee.		

Additional Information:

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