



## U.S. Department of Agriculture Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program CP23/23A – Wetland Restoration (Version 1.1 April 2022)

### WHAT IS A WETLAND RESTORATION?

Wetland restorations are applicable in areas that used to be wetlands but have been converted to agricultural uses. Wetlands in Michigan include open water, marsh, meadow, shrub and forested habitats. An important component of wetland restorations is to also restore the upland areas surrounding the wetland to provide a “buffer”. Restoring wetlands and the adjacent upland buffers provides soil erosion protection and water quality enhancement, as well as habitat for a variety of wildlife, especially waterfowl, upland game birds and songbirds.

### CREP POLICY

For CREP, the level of hydrology restoration allowed will be determined by the participant in consultation with NRCS and based on the best available evidence of what the original hydrology of the site was like prior to alteration. Documentation to justify the level of hydrology restoration must be documented in the attachment of this program sheet. Vegetation in the wetland area will either be established or allowed to re-vegetate naturally. Neither Wetland Enhancements nor Wetland Creations are eligible under CREP CP23 and CP23A.

An upland buffer up to 3 times the wetland acres (or 4 times for CP23A) may also be enrolled and planted to native grasses and wildflowers, non-native wildlife friendly grasses and legumes (timothy, redtop, orchard grass, clover, &/or alfalfa), &/or native shrubs and/or trees (mast-producing hardwoods). If needed for winter cover, up to 20% of the buffer area may be planted to switchgrass. Plus, up to 20 ft. of the perimeter of the buffer may be planted to a CREP-eligible non-native grass/legume mix to serve as a firebreak.

CREP Wetland Restorations will be established according to the Wetland Restoration (657) standard in the local Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG). All construction and seeding must be completed within 12 months of contract effective date of CREP-1 to remain in compliance. If circumstances beyond the landowner’s control prohibit completion within the first 12 months, the local FSA County Committee may approve an extension to the next construction and planting season.

If the landowner agrees to hydrology restoration any surface or sub-surface drainage must be “plugged” according to the Wetland Restoration (657) standard in the FOTG. Digging, dredging, dug-outs, dikes, etc. are not authorized unless it is documented that the wetland was altered by grading or filling and these activities are needed to restore the original hydrology.

Hydrology restoration of the site it should be completed prior to establishing the vegetation.

### CONSTRUCTION

Construction will be authorized only after a design is approved by NRCS.

**Permits:** Federal, State, or Local regulations may apply to private landowners conducting construction in wetland areas. All necessary permits shall be acquired by the landowner before construction begins.

### INSTALLATION

It is very important to plant grasses, trees & shrubs 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 vegetation 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).

Herbicides labeled for warm season grass establishment may also be used alone or mixed with broad-spectrum herbicides to provide residual weed control, which may result in faster establishment of the native grasses. Contact your local Michigan State University (MSU) extension agent for specific herbicide recommendations. Apply all herbicides according to the label.

Plant grasses and trees/shrubs according to the attached plan/design sheet and apply lime and fertilizer according to needs determined by a soil test and MSU recommendations for the grasses. Fertilizer requirements shall be

based on the intended crop of conservation cover. The amount of lime to be used shall be based on a buffer pH (lime requirement) test. The soil test for commercial fertilizer shall be from an approved laboratory accredited with The North American Proficiency Testing Program when a MSU laboratory is not used.

Use a specialized no-till drill that is able to handle the grass seeds. Plant the seeds no deeper than 1/8 inch.

If a no-till grass drill is not available, the seed may be broadcast or aerial seeded. In either case, the seedbed must be worked up and firmed with a cultipacker or similar equipment. A carrier such as potash may also be needed in order to spread the seed evenly. After seeding, the site must be rolled or cultipacked to ensure proper seed to soil contact. Plant the seeds no deeper than 1/8 inch.

For grasses, mow, burn, or apply herbicides as needed to control unwanted vegetation until the practice is established. Mow when competing weeds are taller than the planted vegetation, and at a height above the planted vegetation. Native grasses will not be mowed lower than 12", and non-native grasses lower than 4"- 6" to ensure plant health.

For trees/shrubs, until the practice is established, 9 ft<sup>2</sup> around each tree/shrub should remain weed-free to maximize tree growth. Mowing is not allowed for weed control for trees/shrubs.

For Trees/shrubs, replacement of dead trees/shrubs will occur to ensure at least 80% of the trees/shrubs are living. The landowner is responsible for replacement costs.

For additional information on establishment and maintenance, see the following NRCS – Michigan Conservation Sheets (available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/> in Section IV): “

### **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 CREP acreage include autumn olive, multi-flora rose, spotted knapweed, quackgrass, etc.

After practice establishment, maintain the planting according to your CREP 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 CREP cover or adjacent lands. Mowing is only authorized between Aug 1<sup>st</sup> and Aug 20<sup>th</sup> to protect ground-nesting wildlife and to allow re-growth for winter cover. Other maintenance activities (herbicides, burning, etc.) 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.

Mowing for generic weed control or for cosmetic purposes is prohibited.

### **MANAGEMENT**

CREP contracts must have management activities scheduled that are site specific and will ensure plant diversity, wildlife habitat, and protection of soil and water resources. Management activities that will ensure these benefits include prescribed burning (according to an approved burn plan), disking, grass specific herbicide (strip spraying) and inter-seeding of wildflowers or legumes. All management activities must be performed according to NRCS Standards and Specifications as found in the FOTG, and CREP policy.

## Wetland Restoration Specification Sheet CP23/23A

Landowner:	County:	Date:
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Farm:	Tract:	Field(s):	Acres:
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### Hydrology Restoration Acres

<input type="checkbox"/> Plug _____ feet of subsurface drain tile
<input type="checkbox"/> Plug _____ feet of surface drain
<input type="checkbox"/> Structure for water control
<input type="checkbox"/> Remove _____ cubic yards of fill
<input type="checkbox"/> Construct _____ linear feet of dike
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

### Wetland Seeding Acres

<input type="checkbox"/> The wetland will be allowed to re-vegetate by natural succession or seeded accordingly,		
Species	Rate PLS	Total (rate x acres)
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
Wildflowers	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs

### Design Considerations: Section II Forestry Interpretations

Predominant Soil Type(s): \_\_\_\_\_ = CTSG Group:

Required Spacing

Spacing within the rows = \_\_\_\_\_ ft. Spacing between the rows \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

#### Recommended Trees/Shrubs

#### Number Needed

Recommended Trees/Shrubs	Number Needed

### Wetland Buffer Seeding (if needed) Acres

	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs
Wildflowers	lbs/ac	0.0 lbs

### 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"/> Lime and fertilizer	Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	Date:

### Planting Method in Year:

Grass planting method:	Date:
Tree planting method:	Date:

### Maintenance

Mowing: Before practice establishment = mow when weeds are taller than the planted grasses.

Mowing: After practice establishment = minimum height 12" for native grass, 4-6" for introduced grass.

Maintain a 9 ft<sup>2</sup> 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"/> Prescribed burn	Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Disking	Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Strip spraying (grass specific herbicide)	Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Inter-seeding (legumes or wildflowers)	Date:
<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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