

Conservation Security Program

Habitat Management Enhancements



Natural Resources Conservation Service
United States Department of Agriculture

Minnesota, 2006

Improve habitat for wildlife, including native pollinators, by leaving a hayfield strip $\geq 100'$ uncut (minimum of 10% of each field and limited to 10 acres).

Definition

This enhancement includes not harvesting strips of a hayfield for wildlife escape, roosting, nesting or winter cover and food.

Purpose

The purpose of this enhancement is to secure nesting cover that is often limited where crop and hay production is the primary land use. Un-harvested tame hay land provides undisturbed wildlife escape, roosting, nesting or winter cover and food. Un-harvested grass/forb cover blocks provide nesting cover while haying and crop management activities are occurring on adjacent fields. Herbaceous cover plots also provide roosting and thermal cover allowing a variety of wildlife species to access cropland food supplies during winter. Pollinator insects also benefit from undisturbed cover.

Where Used

This enhancement can be used for portions of fields of permanent hay or hay in rotation. Minimum strips of hay not harvested must be at least 10% of each field, with a minimum width of 100'. The same area of hay not harvested can be used for a maximum of 3 consecutive years.

Conditions for Use

Areas eligible for this enhancement are limited to the following locations and conditions:

- The designated fields and soil types must be capable of being harvested prior to July 1 in a normal year;
- The designated fields must be within the established USDA acreage of existing cropland fields;
- The designated fields must have established hay vegetation. Newly seeded hay stands that would not normally be harvested until after July 1 are not eligible.
- In order to use this enhancement, hay must be listed as part of the rotations submitted in the benchmark inventory during the application process or you must currently have permanent hayland;
- Participants can choose to enroll entire fields or portions of fields but a minimum width of 100 feet must be maintained;
- The designated fields must be designed to maximize wildlife benefits. Priority locations include areas greater than 300' away from tall trees, and areas adjacent and parallel to existing water courses, lakes, ponds and wetlands;
- All designated locations must be agreed to and scheduled by NRCS prior to implementing this enhancement;

Operation and Maintenance

Hay cannot be used for aftermath grazing during the growing season left un-harvested. Un-harvested hay fields must be in a block nearing as square a configuration as possible.

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Documentation Required

Year	Field Number	Acres	Acres Un-harvested	Type of Hay	Target Wildlife Species

Payment Rate

The annual per acre payment rates for un-harvested forage are as follows:

- Legume and mixed grass/legume hay including hay in rotation - \$135 per acre
- Grass hay including permanent hayland - \$100 per acre

Payment is limited to 10 acres.

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the above information is correct and that, if requested, I will provide additional documentation to support the above information.

Signature _____ **Date** _____