

Grass Already Established Program Fact Sheet



Photo: Glenn Shea/USDA NRCS

Purpose: To manage existing grass, grass/forb, or grass/forb/shrub cover, to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and create or enhance wildlife habitat.

Where Practice Applies: On fields that meet eligibility requirements for the Conservation Reserve program (CRP) as determined by the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Operation and Maintenance: The plantings should be maintained according to your CRP conservation plan. Maintenance activities are allowed only if necessary to maintain stand health or diversity, or to control pests that may damage the CRP cover or adjacent lands. Noxious weeds, such as musk thistle, Russian knapweed, and Dyer's woad, must be controlled. Additional information can be found in the 2008 Idaho's Noxious Weed guide [www.idahoweedawareness.net] or visit the Idaho State Department of Agriculture's website: <http://www.agri.state.id.us/Categories/PlantsInsects/NoxiousWeeds/indexnoxweedmain.php>

CRP Practice CP10

Maintenance activities are not allowed from **April 1 through August 1**, to protect ground-nesting wildlife during the primary nesting and brood-rearing season. If maintenance activities are needed at times other than these, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee **must** approve the maintenance activity **prior to** the activity occurring. Maintenance activities will be conducted on a **“spot” basis only**.

1. Mowing is only allowed when used for Mid-contract Management practices such as preparation for prescribed burning or strip disking.
2. Mowing for generic weed control or for cosmetic purposes is strictly prohibited.
3. All acres should be excluded from haying and grazing year round, unless authorized. Fences may need to be constructed and maintained to exclude livestock throughout the entire year. (See also the section on Managed Haying and Grazing).
4. The contract area may not be used for field roads or other uses that will damage or destroy the cover.

Mid-contract Management: All new CRP contracts must include scheduled mid-term contract management activities 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), strip disking, strip spraying, and inter-seeding of legumes. All management activities must be performed according to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Standards and Specifications as found in the electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG) and CRP policy and recorded on ID-CRP, JS 20.

If spraying herbicide, work with a local agricultural consultant or University of Idaho Extension Educator to determine the best herbicide combinations, application timing and application rates. Follow the manufacturer's label instructions when applying herbicides.

Managed Haying and Grazing: These plantings may be used for **managed** haying or grazing. These activities must be performed according to NRCS Standards and Specifications as found in the FOTG and CRP policy. The same acreage may not be hayed or grazed more than once every three (3), five (5) or ten (10) years depending on contract year. Annual CRP rental payments will be reduced based on the value of the forage removed. All managed haying and grazing activities must be conducted outside of the **primary nesting season (April 1 to August 1)** and must be approved by FSA and included in the conservation plan prior to harvesting the forage.