

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Conservation Practices - General

EQIP is the principal program for delivering conservation technical and financial assistance to private landowners. EQIP supports the needs of agricultural operations by offering ideas, solutions, and guidance for a successful and sustainable conservation operation. Practices described, and others, can be selected and installed after developing a conservation plan designed to address your specific resource concerns. For cropland operations, the following list of conservation practices are the most commonly used.



Forest Stand Improvement (Conservation Practice Standard 666)

Forest Stand Improvement assists landowners in managing tree species, stand structure, and by cutting or killing selected trees and understory vegetation. This practice:

- Increases the quantity and quality of forest products, such as sawtimber, veneer, wood fiber, poles, maple syrup, and nuts and fruits
- Initiates forest stand regeneration
- Reduces potential of damage from wildfire, pests, and moisture stress
- Improves aesthetic, recreation, and open space values
- Improves wildlife habitat
- Achieves a desired level of crop tree stocking and density
- Increases carbon storage in selected crop trees



Grade Stabilization Structure (Conservation Practice Standard 410)

Grade Stabilization Structures are used to stabilize the grade and control erosion in natural streambanks or artificial channels. These structures help prevent formation of gullies, enhance environmental quality, and reduce pollution hazards. Conditions where this practice can be applied include areas where the concentration and flow velocity of water require structures to stabilize the grade in channels or to control gully erosion.



Grassed Waterway (Conservation Practice Standard 412)

A Grassed Waterway is a natural or constructed channel shaped or graded to required dimensions and established with suitable vegetation. This practice may be applied as part of a conservation system to support one or more of the following:

- Move water runoff from terraces, diversions, or other concentrated water flows without causing erosion or flooding
- Reduce or prevent gully erosion
- Protect and improve water quality



Residue Management - No Till (Conservation Practice Standards 329)

Residue Management -No Till is a practice that manages the amount, orientation, and distribution of crop and other plant residue on the soil surface year round while reducing soil disturbing activities. This practices may be applied as a part of a conservation system to accomplish one or more of the following objectives:

- Reduce wind, sheet and rill erosion
- Provide food and cover for wildlife
- Improve soil organic matter content and increase soil moisture



Streambank Shoreline Protection (Conservation Practice Standard 580)

Streambank and Shoreline Protection practices stabilize and protect banks of streams, lakes, reservoirs, or constructed channels for one or more of the following:

- Prevent, control, or minimize the loss of land or damage to land uses adjacent to the banks
- Maintain the flow capacity of the water body (streams or channels)
- Reduce sediment loads causing downstream damage and/or pollution
- Improve or enhance the stream and riparian corridor for fish and wildlife



Terrace (Conservation Practice Standard 600)

A Terrace is an earth embankment, or a combination ridge and channel, constructed across the field slope. These practices may be applied as part of a resource management system to reduce soil erosion. The practice applies where:

- Soil erosion by water is a problem
- Excess water runoff is a problem
- Soils and topography are such that terraces can be constructed and farmed with a reasonable effort
- A suitable water outlet can be provided



Tree/Shrub Establishment (Conservation Practice Standard 612)

A Tree/Shrub Establishment practice introduces woody plants to an area by planting seedlings or cuttings, or direct seeding. The practice may be applied as part of a conservation system to support one or more of the following:

- Establish woody plants for forest products
- Treat potential waste problems
- Provide wildlife habitat
- Reduction of air pollution
- Provide long-term erosion control
- Capture carbon emissions
- Improve water quality
- Enhance aesthetics



Field Border (Conservation Practice Standard 386)

A Field Border is a band or strip of perennial vegetation established on the edge of a cropland field. This border has the following benefits:

- Reduces sheet, rill and gully erosion at the edge of fields
- Protects water quality by trapping sediment, chemicals and other pollutants
- Provides a turning point for farm equipment
- Provides wildlife habitat

For more information on these and other practices
contact your local NRCS Service Center or
find us on the web at www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov