



National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Conservation Stewardship Program Conservation Enhancement and Practice Choices for 2013 and their Environmental Benefit Ranking Score

Terms

Conservation enhancements are available to all CSP participants who are willing to adopt the enhancement on their operation, or who are willing to improve an existing conservation activity so that it fully meets the requirements for the enhancement. Some enhancements apply to all four CSP land use categories -- cropland, pasture, rangeland, or forested land -- though most apply to one or two land use types specifically. For more information, see USDA/NRCS website for CSP at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1049075.pdf.

Regular conservation practices are available to CSP participants who, when they sign-up for the program, are not already meeting or exceeding the stewardship threshold for the three to five priority resource concerns for their state or region and who could use the practice to help meet additional stewardship thresholds.

Conservation baseline activities are also scored with similar environmental benefit point values for ranking and payment purposes. Those existing conservation activities are not listed below. More information on those activities can be found on the NRCS website listed above under the heading “Operations Baseline Data Questions” and more information on the point values can be found on the same website under “Conservation Measurement Tool Inventory Questions” and then “CMT Scoring Process”.

Point values are based on the overall level of expected environmental benefits from improvement or adoption of the enhancement or practice for soil conservation, soil quality, water conservation, water quality, air quality, energy conservation, wildlife habitat, and biodiversity, as determined by NRCS using their “conservation practice physical effects (CPPE)” system.

Please note: Conservation enhancements and practices eligible for selection in CSP may change over time, as may point values. We will keep this list updated as changes are made, though there may be a small delay time depending on how quickly we receive the changes from USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service.

2013 CSP Enhancements and Practices
Listed From Highest Scoring to Lowest Scoring

Note:

CSP Conservation Enhancements in Regular Typeface
Regular Conservation Practices in Italics

<u>Enhancements and Practices</u>	<u>Environmental Benefit Score</u>
Crop Management System where Crop Land Acres were Recently Converted from CRP Grass/Legume Cover or Similar Perennial Vegetation	153.3
Enhance Wildlife Habitat on Expired Tree Covered CRP Acres or Acres with Similar Woody Cover Managed as Forestland	94.93
Prescriptive Grazing Management System for Grazing Lands (includes expired CRP grass/legume or tree covered acres converted to a grazing lands)	88.2
Enhance Wildlife Habitat on Expired Grass/Legume Covered CRP Acres or Acres with Similar Perennial Vegetated Cover Managed as Hayland	87.4
High Residue Cover Crop or Mixtures of High Residue Cover Crops for Weed Suppression and Soil Health	84
Intensive No Till (Organic or Non-organic)	62
Conversion of Cropped Land to Grass-Based Agriculture	59
Cover Cropping in Orchards, Vineyards and Other Woody Perennial Horticultural Crops	55
Intensive Cover Cropping in Annual Crops	55
Extending Riparian Forest Buffers for Water Quality Protection and Wildlife Habitat	48
Forest Stand Improvement Pre-Treating Vegetation and Fuels Preceding a Prescribed Fire	47.25
Intensive Rotational Grazing	45
Decrease Irrigation Water Quantity or Conversion to Non-Irrigated Crop Production	44
Resource-Conserving Crop Rotation	44
<i>Cover Crop</i>	42
Plant a Cover Crop that will Scavenge Residual Nitrogen	42
<i>Riparian Forest Buffer</i>	42
Use of Cover Crop Mixes	42
Use Deep Rooted Crops to Breakup Soil Compaction	42
Use of Legume Cover Crops as a Nitrogen Source	42

Extend Existing Filter Strips or Riparian Herbaceous Cover for Water Quality Protection and Wildlife Habitat	41
Using Nitrogen Provided by Legumes, Animal Manure and Compost to Supply 90-100% of the Nitrogen Needs	41
Rotation of Supplement and Feeding Areas	40
<i>Tree or Shrub Establishment</i>	40
Prairie Restoration for Grazing and Wildlife Habitat	37
<i>Riparian Herbaceous Cover</i>	37
<i>Windbreak or Shelterbelt Establishment</i>	37
Irrigation System Automation	36
<i>Prescribed Grazing</i>	36
<i>Critical Area Planting</i>	35
Drainage Water Management	35
<i>Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till/ Strip Till/ Direct Seed</i>	35
<i>Forage and Biomass Planting</i>	33
Increasing On-Farm Food Production with Edible Woody Buffer Landscapes	33
<i>Irrigation Water Management</i>	33
Multi-Species Native Perennials for Biomass/Wildlife Habitat	33
Regional Weather Networks for Irrigation Scheduling	33
Remote Monitoring and Notification of Irrigation Pumping Plant Operation	33
<i>Alley Cropping</i>	32
<i>Conservation Crop Rotation</i>	31
High Level Integrated Pest Management to Reduce Pesticide Environmental Risk	31
Integrated Pest Management for Organic Farming	31
Monitor Key Grazing Areas to Improve Grazing Management	31
On-Farm Composting of Farm Organic Waste	31
Renovation of a Windbreak, Shelter Belt or Hedgerow for Wildlife Habitat	31
<i>Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitats</i>	31
<i>Windbreak or Shelterbelt Renovation</i>	31
<i>Range Planting</i>	30
<i>Filter Strip</i>	29
Extending Existing Field Borders for Water Quality Protection and Wildlife Habitat	28
<i>Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till</i>	28
Riparian Buffer, Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife Habitat	28

Use Drift Reducing Nozzles, Low Pressures, Lower Boom Height, and Adjuvants to Reduce Pesticide Drift	28
Improving Energy Feedstock Production Using Alley Cropping Systems with Short Rotation Woody Crops	27
<i>Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till</i>	27
Drainage Water Management for Nutrient, Pathogen, or Pesticide Reduction	26
Reduce the Concentration of Nutrients Imported on Farm	26
GPS, Targeted Spray Application (SmartSprayer), or Other Chemical Application Electronic Control Technology	25
Herbicide Resistant Weed Management	25
<i>Mulching</i>	25
Split Applications of Nitrogen based on a PSNT	25
Transition to Organic Cropping Systems	25
<i>Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management</i>	25
Controlled Traffic System	24
Establish Pollinator and/or Beneficial Insect Habitat	24
Intercropping to Improve Soil Quality and Increase Biodiversity	24
Use of Non-Chemical Methods to Kill Cover Crops	24
Leave Standing Grain Crops Un-Harvested to Benefit Wildlife	23
Precision Application Technology to Apply Nutrients	23
<i>Upland Wildlife Habitat Management</i>	23
<i>Watering Facility</i>	23
<i>Field Border</i>	22
Land Application of Treated Manure	22
<i>Road/ Trail/ Landing Closure and Treatment</i>	22
<i>Stream Habitat Improvement and Management</i>	22
<i>Forest Stand Improvement</i>	21
Stockpiling Forages to Extend the Grazing Season	21
On-Farm Pilot Projects	20.7
On-Farm Research and Demonstrations	20.7
Apply Enhanced Efficiency Fertilizer	20
Biological Suppression and Other Non-Chemical Techniques to Manage Brush, Weeds and Invasive Species	20
Patch-Burning to Enhance Wildlife Habitat	20
Transition to Organic Grazing Systems	20
<i>Early Successional Habitat Development/ Management</i>	19

Fuel Use Reduction for Field Operations	19
Plant Tissue Tests and Analysis to Improve Nitrogen Management	19
Shallow Water Habitat	19
Split Nitrogen Applications 50% After the Crops/Pasture Emerge/Green Up	19
Grazing Management to Improve Wildlife Habitat	18
<i>Forest Trails & Landings</i>	17
Incorporate Native Grasses and/or Legumes into 15% or more of Herbage Dry Matter Productivity	17
Non-Chemical Pest Management for Livestock	17
<i>Prescribed Burning</i>	17
Irrigation Pumping Plant Evaluation	16
On-Farm Forage Based Grazing System	16
<i>Brush Management</i>	14
<i>Forage Harvest Management</i>	13
Harvest Hay in a Manner that Allows Wildlife to Flush and Escape	13
Monitoring Nutritional Status of Livestock Using the NUTBAL PRO System	13
Retrofit Watering Facility for Wildlife Escape and Enhanced Access for Bats and Bird Species	12
Apply Nutrients no more than 30 Days prior to Planned Planting Date	11
Multi-Story Cropping, Sustainable Management of Non-Timber Forest Plants	10
Nitrogen Stabilizers for Air Emissions Control	10
<i>Residue Management, Seasonal</i>	10
Apply Phosphorus Fertilizer below Soil Surface	9
Managing Calving to Coincide with Forage Availability	9
Wildlife Friendly Fencing	9
Replace Burning of Prunings, Removals and Other Crop Residues with Non-burning Alternatives	8
<i>Woody Residue Treatment</i>	8
Variable Frequency Drive Electric Motors	7
<i>Firebreak</i>	6
<i>Fuelbreak</i>	6
<i>Tree/Shrub Pruning</i>	6
Create Forest Openings to Improve Hardwood Stands	5
<i>Fence</i>	4