



New Jersey Conservation Programs 2008 WHIP Guidance

Agricultural producers, eligible land owners and land managers may apply for conservation practices that:

- are included in an approved Conservation Plan; and
- will achieve a positive environmental benefit; and
- are listed in this document.

If an application is approved based on available funding, NRCS will develop a draft contract listing the payments to be made upon successful practice completion. Applicants will have ample opportunity to review the proposed payments prior to contract signature.

No practices can be installed until the final contract is approved by NRCS, unless a waiver is granted by the State Conservationist.

Although based on the average cost to implement typical conservation practices in NJ, practice payments are made regardless of actual cost to the contract holder.

Each installed practice must meet the minimum design requirements in the applicable NRCS Conservation Practice Standard in order to receive the contract payment. The payment will be based on the extent (amount) of the conservation practice actually performed, not the cost.

To apply, applicants must complete a program application and the "*Conservation Planning Worksheet*" available on our website. Applicants must also meet all applicable Highly Erodible Land and Adjusted Gross Income provisions, and establish or update all farm and persons records before NRCS will process their application. Details can be found in the "*Applying for Federal Farm Conservation Programs*" available on our website.

Current payment rates are found in the *Schedule of Program Payments* on the NJ Conservation Programs web page (www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/index.html).

More information about conservation programs can be found on the NJ Conservation Programs web page: (www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/index.html). Information about conservation practices can be found in the electronic Field Office Technical Guide (www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/efotg) or on practice job sheets available through your local NRCS office/USDA Service Center.

Eligible applications will be ranked based on a system developed by the State Technical Committee, with the highest ranked applications in each pool selected for contract development. **Program payments** are made according to the practice schedule in the Conservation Contract and are based on the extent of the practice performed.

Practices must restore, enhance or create habitat under one of the following six areas. Minimum site criteria and eligible practices are listed under each category. To be ranked as a wildlife project, the primary purpose of the project must be for wildlife conservation.

Wetland Areas: Drained hydric soils or degraded wetland areas with restoration or enhancement potential, greater than 1 acre but less than 50 acres in size, and associated adjacent transition areas. Eligible practices are:

Brush Management
Filter Strip
Fish Passage
Riparian Forest Buffer
Riparian Herbaceous Cover
Shallow Water for Wildlife

Stream Channel Stabilization
Stream Habitat Improvement
Streambank Protection
Structure for Water Control
Tree and Shrub Establishment

Underground Outlet
Wetland Enhancement
Wetland Restoration
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management
Wildlife Watering Facility

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Disturbance Dependant Habitat: Minimum 10 acre areas capable of supporting Atlantic white cedar forests, scrub/shrub habitats or fire dependent plant communities where natural or human-induced disturbance is required to create conditions suitable for regeneration or maintenance of the habitat. An approved Forest Management Plan is required for any applicant area in the Pinelands. Eligible practices are:

Brush Management	Land Clearing	Tree and Shrub Establishment
Early Succession Habitat Development	Prescribed Burning	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
Forest Site Preparation	Restoration of Declining Habitats	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management
Forest Stand Improvement		

Community-Supported Wildlife: Minimum 3 acre isolated habitat areas not typically associated with cropland where partnerships have been established to plan, implement and maintain natural landscapes using native species to provide significant wildlife habitat opportunities. Eligible practices are:

Brush Management	Shallow Water for Wildlife	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
Early Succession Habitat Development	Stream Channel Stabilization	Wetland Enhancement
Fish Passage	Stream Habitat Improvement	Wetland Restoration
Restoration of Declining Habitats	Streambank Protection	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management
Riparian Forest Buffer	Tree and Shrub Establishment	Wildlife Watering Facility
Riparian Herbaceous Cover		

Bog Turtle: Current or abandoned pasture areas, with hydric soils, a stream or ditch adjacent or through the site, and a known bog turtle population on or immediately adjacent to the site. Eligible practices are:

Brush Management	Shallow Water for Wildlife	Wetland Restoration
Fence	Use Exclusion	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management
Pasture & Hayland Planting	Wetland Enhancement	

Early Successional Habitat: Minimum 20 acres of contiguous grassland habitat or potential habitat under the control of the applicant. Eligible practices are:

Brush Management	Hedgerow Planting	Prescribed Grazing
Early Succession Habitat Development	Land Clearing	Restoration of Declining Habitats
Field Border	Pasture and Hay Planting	Shallow Water for Wildlife
Filter Strip	Prescribed Burning	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management

Delaware Bay Region: Project sites within Salem, Cumberland, or Cape May counties that address a declining species habitat and are at least 3 acres in size. Eligible practices are:

Brush Management	Riparian Herbaceous Habitats	Streambank Protection
Early Succession Habitat Development	Restoration of Declining Habitats	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
Filter Strip	Shallow Water for Wildlife	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management
Obstruction Removal	Stream Habitat Improvement	Wildlife Watering Facility
Riparian Forest Buffer		

Practice Descriptions:

Brush Management

Remove non-native, invasive or exotic plants to restore native herbaceous cover and enhance wildlife habitat.

Early Successional Habitat Development

Establish a minimum of 20 contiguous acres of permanent native herbaceous species to provide habitat for ground nesting birds.

Fence

Install permanent fencing to facilitate livestock grazing in bog turtle habitat areas.

Field Border

Establish a strip of permanent vegetation at the edge or around the perimeter of a field to provide wildlife food and cover.

Filter Strip

Establish herbaceous vegetation in a strip between cropland and sensitive areas to create herbaceous habitat for beneficial insects.

Fish Passage

Enhance the ability of native fish to navigate upstream and downstream past barriers through the modification or removal of man-made obstructions in the stream.

Forest Site Preparation

Treat areas to improve site conditions for establishing trees and/or shrubs to encourage natural regeneration of desirable woody plants.

Forest Stand Improvement

Manipulate species composition, stand structure, and stocking density by cutting or killing selected trees and understory vegetation to improve wildlife habitat.

Hedgerow Planting

Establish dense vegetation in a linear design to provide food, cover and corridors for terrestrial wildlife.

Land Clearing

Remove trees, stumps and other vegetation in order to benefit certain wildlife species, such as removing hedges for management of area-sensitive grassland birds.

Obstruction Removal (beach habitats only)

Remove and dispose of structures, vegetation, or other landscape features necessary to facilitate threatened and endangered species access to beach nesting sites.

Pasture and Hay Planting

Plant adapted forage species to allow livestock grazing in areas inhabited by bog turtles. Payment is for one planting per pasture area during the life of the contract.

Prescribed Burning

Apply a controlled fire to a predetermined area in order to control undesirable vegetation, prepare sites for seeding, improve wildlife habitat, enhance seed and seedling production, or restore and maintain ecological sites.

Restoration of Declining Habitats

Restore or enhance habitat for targeted rare or declining species on sites that previously or currently support the rare or declining habitat.

Riparian Forest Buffer

Establish an area of trees and/or shrubs adjacent to water bodies to lower water temperatures, improve habitat for aquatic organisms, and provide a source of detritus and large woody debris for aquatic organisms.

Riparian Herbaceous Cover

Establish grasses and forbs tolerant of intermittent flooding or saturated soils in riparian areas to provide food and shelter for wildlife, to reduce the amount of sediment and other pollutants, or to help stabilize stream bank and shorelines.

Shallow Water Management for Wildlife

Create depressions in areas with a suitable hydrologic regime to provide habitat for wildlife such as shorebirds, waterfowl, wading birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and other species that require shallow water for at least a part of their life cycle.

Stream Channel Stabilization

Stabilize stream banks to maintain the flow capacity of streams, reduce the offsite or downstream effects of sediment resulting from bank erosion, and improve or enhance the stream corridor for fish and wildlife habitat.

Stream Habitat Improvement

Maintain, improve, or restore physical, chemical, and biological functions of a stream to improve habitat for desired aquatic species and diverse aquatic communities.

Streambank Protection

Install structural or bio-engineered treatments to stabilize banks of streams or to improve the stream corridor for fish and wildlife habitat.

Structure for Water Control

Install a structure as part of a wetland enhancement, restoration, or creation project to control the direction or rate of flow or maintain a desired water surface elevation.

Tree/Shrub Establishment

Establish woody plants by planting seedlings or cuttings, direct seeding, or natural regeneration to enhance wildlife habitat.

Underground Outlet

Install an underground conduit to allow water level control in wetland restoration/creation/enhancement projects.

Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (MGT)

Manage upland habitats that enable movement, or provide shelter, cover, or food in proper amounts, locations and times to sustain target species that inhabit uplands during a portion of their life cycle. Mowing, harvesting, or other disturbances of grasslands are prevented between April 15 and July 15 each year.

Watering Facility

Permanently install a watertight tank, trough, or container to provide wildlife access to water.

Wetland Enhancement

Modify an existing degraded wetland to provide specific wetland conditions and functions for targeted species by either hydrologic enhancement or vegetative enhancement.

Wetland Restoration

Rehabilitate or reestablish a degraded wetland so that the soils, hydrology, vegetative community, and habitat are a close approximation of the original natural condition that existed prior to modification.

Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (MGT)

Maintain, develop, or improve wetland habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, fur-bearers, or other wetland dependent or associated flora and fauna.