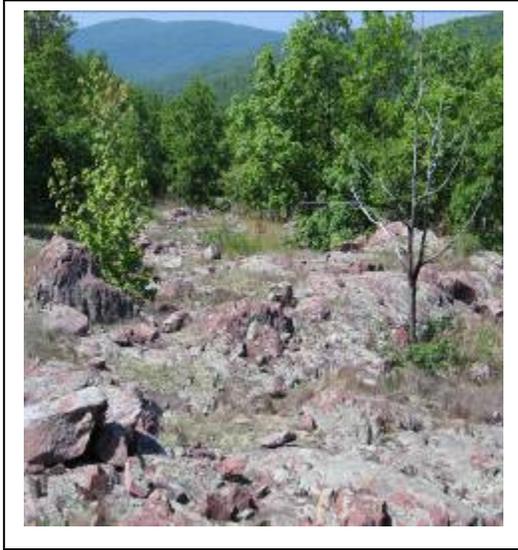


Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM 22 – *Restoration and Management of Rare or Declining Habitats*



Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitats

This enhancement consists of restoring habitats recognized by NRCS State Offices as rare or declining.

Land Use Applicability

This enhancement is applicable to cropland, pastureland, forest, and rangeland that can be restored to native vegetation. Must correspond to identified vegetative state or plant community phase of the Ecological Site Description where available.

Benefits

Restoring rare and declining habitats will provide food, cover, and nesting habitat for native adapted fish and wildlife species, especially grassland nesting

birds.

Criteria for Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitats

- ◆ NRCS State Offices will identify the kinds of habitats applicable as well as the criteria needed (e.g., plant species needed, water depth, etc) to achieve the desired outcome(s). For example, how many acres of undesirable herbaceous species and brush control are needed as well as the frequency of prescribed burning to achieve the desired condition.
- ◆ Acceptance of this enhancement requires that the client must comply with the requirements of Conservation Practice Standard, Restoration and Management of Rare or Declining Habitats (643).
- ◆ A pre-treatment habitat assessment of the affected area will be documented to provide a baseline for comparison with post-treatment conditions.
- ◆ A management plan covering the length of the contract will be developed for this enhancement activity.
- ◆ During the establishment period, periodic mowing can be used outside of the primary nesting and fawning seasons to help achieve the desired ecological outcome. Grazing may be permitted after establishment if grazing was a historical component of the ecological site. Other agricultural activities such as haying or cropping shall not be done on the site during the contract period.



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- ◆ All plant functional groups (species that respond in a similar way to environmental perturbations) native to a site must be restored.

Documentation Requirements for Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitats

Following implementation of this activity, the landowner must document the restoration of rare and declining habitat by providing a brief written description of the actions taken; size of the area (acres); providing receipts and seeding dates; and delineating on a map or aerial photograph the location of the restored habitat.



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Criteria

Due to the complexity of this enhancement, all projects will need to be reviewed by NRCS staff on a case-by-case basis.

The New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan outlines several habitats which are in decline. A copy of the report can be found online at:

http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/Wildlife/wildlife_plan.htm

The New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau (NHNHB) also has some data on rare ecosystems and can be a useful starting place. NHNHB maintains this database and acknowledges that it is not comprehensive, so the presence/absence of rare habitats/ecosystems on your property still needs to be reviewed by NRCS and other statewide partners. You may request a NHNHB report for your property at:

https://www2.des.state.nh.us/nhb_datacheck/

Often times these ecosystems/habitats do not require restoration or management. In this case this enhancement is not appropriate.