



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Water Quality and Wildlife Enhancement Activity –ANM04- Extend Existing Filter Strips for Water Quality Protection and Wildlife Habitat



Extend existing filter strips

Where existing filter strips are utilized, extend them to gain more efficiency in intercepting overland flow and reducing the transport of nutrients, pesticides and agro-chemicals.

Land Use Applicability

This enhancement is applicable on cropland and pasture land.

Benefits

Widening existing conservation filter strips that currently meet NRCS conservation practice standard criteria can provide food and cover for native and game species as well as enhancing aquatic habitat. Additionally, these extended filter strips offer more surface area to filter out sediments and agro-chemicals.

Riparian habitats are important transition zones between terrestrial landscapes and aquatic zones. Wildlife species utilize these transition zones because they provide a unique combination of cover, access to water and often provide important travel corridors. Often times filter strips are adjacent to these riparian areas or are important for contributing clean water, and habitat areas near by. Extending existing filter strips not only enhances wildlife habitat but it increases the effectiveness of water quality protection they provide to the streams.

Criteria for Extending Existing Filter Strips

Existing filter strips must meet minimum state requirements for width. Extend the existing filter strip for a total of 60 feet or more to enhance habitat and water quality functions.

The extended filter strip must be composed of at least 5 species of non-noxious, wildlife friendly grasses and/or perennial forbs best suited to site conditions. Include species that provide pollinator food and habitat where possible.

- All site preparation and plant establishment shall be accomplished according to the appropriate NRCS conservation practice standard criteria and specifications.
- Any use of the filter strip must not compromise its intended purpose.
- To the extent possible the filter strip areas and extended filter strip areas will be vegetated to increase overland flow interception and increase water quality values of the stream or water body.



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Operation and Maintenance:

- Once established, filter strips must not be mowed, disked, grazed, or otherwise disturbed, until after the primary wildlife ground nesting period has ended.
- Filter strips will be regularly maintained for its intended purpose through the life of the contract. This includes any removal of vegetation, including grazing.
- Grazing is allowed if a grazing management plan is used that will maintain the integrity and diversity of vegetation and the filtering function of the vegetation.
- Filter strips will have a wildlife management plan to maintain established plant communities through the life of the contract. The wildlife plan will maintain the plant community and its structural diversity and provide habitat for intended species.

Documentation Requirements

1. A map showing the location and size of enhanced filter strips.
2. Documentation of the type and rates of vegetation planted in the new filter strip areas.



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NH State Supplement
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Criteria

Filter Strips must already meet the NH state standard of 20 feet in width.

No Grazing or Mowing may occur between April 1 and August 15th.

Filter strips will be planted with at least 5 species of wildlife friendly perennial grasses and forbes. Do not plant Reed Canary Grass. The following mixes are acceptable mix for this enhancement. Other mixes including warm season grasses and perennial flowering plants for pollinators are acceptable. Note: some plantings for pollinators can be toxic to livestock, for more information refer to the Northeast Pollinator Technical Note or the USDA Plants Database.

For moderately well and well drained sites recommended species include:

<u>Species</u>	<u>lbs/ac of seed</u>
Orchardgrass	10
Smooth Bromegrass	5
Medium Red Clover	5
Timothy	5
Redtop	5

For somewhat and poorly drained sites recommended species include:

<u>Species</u>	<u>lbs/ac of seed</u>
Orchardgrass	7
Redtop	5
Red Clover	5
Kentucky Bluegrass	7
Perennial ryegrass	5
Ladino clover	1

For sandy excessively-well drained sites recommended species include:

<u>Species</u>	<u>lbs/ac of seed</u>
Big Blue Stem	3
Little Blue Stem	5
Sand Love Grass	4
Creeping Red Fescue	5
Virginia Wild Rye	5
Red Top	5

