

**The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)** is a voluntary program that encourages development of high quality wildlife habitats that support wildlife populations of National, State, Tribal, and local significance. NRCS works with the participant to develop a wildlife habitat development plan for their land to:

- Promote the restoration of declining or important native wildlife habitats.
- Protect, restore, develop or enhance wildlife habitat of at-risk species.
- Reduce the impacts of invasive species on wildlife habitats.
- Protect, restore, develop or enhance declining or important aquatic wildlife species' habitats.

**Conservation Cover or Pasture & Hayland Planting**



- Any native grass planting.
- Cropland conversion to native species.
- Fescue conversion to native species.
- Conservation Cover – 3 (three) native grasses and 4 (four) native forbs.
- Pasture & Hayland Planting – 3 native grasses and one legume.

Cost share rate 75%.

**Wildlife Upland Habitat Mgmt**

- Strip Disking cost share is \$10/acre/year for the entire field for three years.
- Strip mowing cost share is \$5/acre/year for the entire field for three years.

After establishment, alternate mowing or disking on thirds of the field annually.

**Prairie/Old Field Regeneration**

- Prairies are areas that still contain herbaceous species characteristic of Kentucky's native prairies, barrens, glades, and savannas.
- These areas can typically be restored through management techniques such as herbicide treatments and mowing.

Cost share rate 75%.

**Wildlife Watering Holes**

- Includes one Wildlife Watering Hole and at least one ephemeral pool.
- Must be at least 1,500' from existing ponds.
- May not be used for livestock water.

Cost share: \$500 flat rate.

**Tree and Shrub Planting**

- Tree plantings include at least 3 (three) hard mast species with 1 (one) from the white oak family and 1 (one) from the red oak family.
- Shrub plantings require at least 2 (two) native shrub species.

Cost share rate 75%.

**Shallow Water Area**

- Not authorized in wetlands were trees are present.
- The majority of the area should be composed of somewhat poorly drained to poorly drained soils that have moderate to slow permeability.
- 25% of the pool area may be used for annual food plots.



Cost share rate 75%.

**Field Border – Planted or Natural Regeneration**

- Field Borders will only be planned when the primary land use is cropland, hayland, or pastureland.



- Planted border will be established to native grass and forbs.
- Border width shall be between 20' and 120'.
- Livestock, when present, shall be excluded with a fence according to the fencing standard.

Cost share rate 75%.

**Fence**

- Livestock must be present.
- Available along creeks, streams, woodlands, wetlands, karst basins.
- Property line fence & cross-fencing not eligible.

Cost share rate is 75% for fence with a 20' setback.

**Forest Stand Improvement**

- Wildlife will be the primary objective and timber harvest is the secondary concern.
- At least 2 (two) to 4 (four) cavity trees per acre are to be maintained if present.
- As many hard mast species as possible are to be maintained during thinning operations.
- White oaks and red oaks should be maintained in a good balance.



Cost share rate is by the sq. ft. of Basal Area removed.

## Successional Habitat

The conversion of fescue in pasture land, hay land, and wildlife land to a native grass and forb plant community is an important practice used to restore Kentucky's early successional habitats. Native shrub establishment also provides cover, nesting areas and food sources to early successional wildlife. Management practices include mowing and grazing outside of the nesting season, prescribed grazing, and strip mowing or disking to encourage different successional stages of vegetation within fields.

## Wetland Habitat

Bottomland hardwood plantings, creation of greentree reservoirs, moist soil units, and shallow water areas are practices being utilized to increase habitat for migratory and non-migratory waterfowl, amphibians, and other wildlife that utilize wetland habitats.



## Wildlife Buffers

The selection of native grasses, shrubs, and trees for these buffer practices ensures water quality improvement, reduced erosion and enhanced early successional and riparian habitats. Specific buffer practices eligible for cost share under Kentucky's WHIP include field borders, filter strips, riparian areas, and contour buffers.

These buffer practices with proper mowing management are emphasized practices in crop fields, pasture land, and hay land. These practices also improve aquatic

## Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)

Through WHIP the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides both technical assistance and up to 75 percent cost-share assistance to establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat. WHIP is a program of the Federal Farm Bill.

Participants enter into a contract with the USDA to voluntarily limit future use of the land for a period of time. They do retain private ownership and are not required to give the public access to land developed or protected under WHIP. These agreements are usually 5 to 10 years in duration, depending upon the practices to be installed. Eligible lands include privately owned land and federal, state and local government land on a limited basis. At least 10 (ten) acres of land must be involved under the WHIP contract.

This brochure contains a general outline of some of the practices funded through WHIP. You should consult your Natural Resources Conservation Service for applicability of these practices on your land.

***For more information, contact:***

**Natural Resources  
Conservation Service (NRCS)  
6028 Camp Ernst Road  
Burlington, KY 41005  
Phone: 859-586-7903**

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Technical and cost share  
assistance for  
improving wildlife habitat

**Applications accepted now  
for next ranking period.**

