

CONSERVATION COVER



A conservation cover (USDA NRCS CPS 327) is a one-time practice that converts idle or cultivated land into permanent cover using native or adapted species. It can be implemented on parts of a field.

Part of California Farm Bureau's Healthy Soils Block Grant Program, learn more online at: cbf.com/HSP

This practice aims to:

- Minimize erosion and sedimentation.
- Protect water quality from nutrient and sediment pollution.
- Reduce particulate matter, its precursors, and greenhouse gases.
- Improve habitats for wildlife, pollinators, and beneficial organisms.
- Enhance soil health.

Criteria:

- This practice cannot overlap with cover cropping, mulching, filter strip, and residue & tillage management practices.
- Choose species that are well-suited to the local soil, ecological, and climate conditions, ensuring they align with the intended purpose and site conditions.
- Eligible plants are mixture of native perennial grass, legumes & forbs including native milkweeds for wildlife habitat and pollinators.

Implementation Guidelines:

- At least 4 % native milkweeds (*Asclepias spp.*) and less than 50% grasses.
- Seeding rate at 21-40 pure live seeds per square feet.
- Plant protection from animal damage and growth maintenance.
- Inculcate legumes at planting time if legume species is used.
- Maintain permanent vegetation.

Appendix A: Standard Payments

Convert Idle land near orchard to permanent unfertilized grass or grass/legume cover:

- Monarch Species- mix species \$1,404.68 per acre.
- Monarch species- mix species with foregone income \$1,443.92 per acre.
- Pollinator species \$1,138.96 per acre.
- Pollinator species with foregone income \$1,134.30 per acre.

Plant Permanent Grass or Grass/legume cover in orchard alleys:

- Orchard alleyways \$271.80 per acre.

Verification Requirements:

- 3-5 geotagged photographs of fields showing established plants (> 60% plant cover).
- Receipts of seeds purchased including species name.
- Good plant growth during project term.