AG. WATER QUALITY ACT

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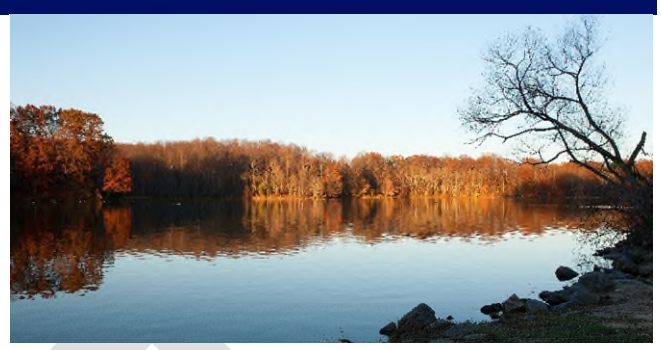

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	FUNDING ASSISTANCE	IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

CRITICAL AREA PLANTING & TREATMENT

CROPS BMP #11

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Description: Establish vegetation on severely eroded, sediment producing areas that often require special planting and management techniques to overcome unfavorable soil site conditions.

AWQA Minimum Requirements:
Establish vegetation on severely eroded, sediment-producing areas. Vegetative cover should be adequate to reduce the amount of sediment running off farmland.

Recommendations:
Select plants (grasses, legumes, shrubs, vines or trees) that are adapted to the site condition and that can tolerate the limitations of slope, subsoil, soil acidity, or other adverse site conditions. Use special care in seedbed and site preparation and in the control of surface runoff. Use higher rates of fertilizer and seed. Use mulch and also consider irrigation, if feasible. If pasture or hay grasses and legumes are unsuitable, select erosion control plants with wildlife or aesthetic value.

A dense stand of tall fescue is excellent at holding soil in place, especially on steeper slopes and is highly effective at filtering nutrients and agrochemicals from fields before the runoff enters surface waters. Since fescue grows quickly in the spring and many field activities are done in the spring, fescue will help filter potential runoff very well. A dense stand of tall fescue is not a good habitat for most nesting birds or other wildlife. Follow guidelines for establishing and maintaining tall fescue. Mow as needed to control undesirable growth and minimize weed competition, but not less than 4 inches in plant height.

An established stand of native warm season grass can produce root biomass that will help hold soils together and can tolerate intermittent submersion in water. Native warm season grasses typically require about two to three years of herbicide use to control weeds and allow the native warm season grasses to become fully established. Once established, a native warm season grass will help filter runoff waters. Native warm season grasses make excellent habitat for some bird species. Mowing normally occurs once a year on native warm season grasses to minimize weed competition and control undesirable growth. Mowing should not be less than 8 inches and should occur after bird nesting is complete.

Technical References

University Publications
- AGR-1 Lime and Nutrient Recommendations
- AGR-18 Grain and Forage Crop Guide for Kentucky
- Native Warm Season Grass Roles in Soil and Water Conservation

USDA/NRCS Publications
- Practice Code 342 Critical Area Planting

Funding Assistance Options

State Cost Share
- See your local Conservation District to apply.

Kentucky Ag. Development Fund (KADB/KAFC)
- Select from available program options here.

NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Select from available program options here.

Important Considerations

Water Quality Benefit (💧-💧💧💧💧): 💧💧

Wildlife Benefits:
- Contact the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife's Habitat Improvement Program how to improve wildlife habitat with select BMPs (1-800-858-1549).