

Accelerating Conservation Adoption in the River Raisin Contract

This contract is between the producer and the Lenawee Conservation District on behalf of the Institute of Water Research, Michigan State University. Practices implemented under this contract are for the year 2020.

I (the producer) certify that:

- The information I have provided is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.
- I have control of the land offered under the application through land ownership, lease or other legal agreement for the duration of the contract.
- I have not received funding from another conservation program to implement the selected practice(s) on the specified field(s).
- The land on which the selected BMP(s) will be implemented currently lack the selected BMPs.
- I will not use this funding for additional cost-share or to pay for technical assistance to plan, design, or install any conservation practice paid for in any part by Farm Bill programs administered by the Farm Service Agency or the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- I will procure, at my own expense, all raw materials and equipment necessary to construct and /or implement the eligible BMP, and understand that I will be reimbursed through the Lenawee Conservation District once the practice has been installed and verified as meeting the applicable NRCS standards.
- I will install/implement all of the selected BMPs identified in the accompanying Form A in a satisfactory and timely manner and maintain the practice for the life of the agreement.
- I will provide the applicable Conservation District (Lenawee, Washtenaw or Monroe) with reasonable access to the field(s) where the selected BMP(s) are implemented for the purpose of verifying the installation of the practice(s).
- I have received a copy of the "Next Steps" sheet and fully understand what is expected of me in order to complete the practice.
- I agree to complete a project survey.

This agreement will be considered fulfilled once the designated BMP has been successfully installed and is inspected by the conservation technician. The final payment will be determined after field verification and is dependent upon actual acres implemented. Possible reasons for payment and phosphorus/sediment reduction numbers to vary from the amounts listed in this contract may include, but are not limited to, a difference between planned and implemented acres or a difference between BMP standards and actual BMP parameters achieved. Payments will be released after a BMP has been verified by a conservation district employee. The producer may forfeit their right to receive payment if they fail to install/implement the specific conservation practices to the standards and specification detailed in the verification manual.

Upon approval and confirmation of practice installation from the applicable Conservation District (Lenawee, Monroe or Washtenaw), the Institute of Water Research will release reimbursements as identified in the terms of this contract to the Lenawee Conservation District to be dispersed to the producer.

Upon review, producers will may still receive compensation for agreed costs of practice implementation that could not be verified due to "acts of God". For example, cover crops planted per practice standard are then washed away during extreme weather events and therefore do not grow. In instances where cover crops are implemented through this program, seed tags with pure live seed analysis are required to guarantee payment if the practice is unable to be verified due to "acts of God".

By signing below you agree to and fully understand all of terms outlined in this agreement.

Producer Name: _____ Date: _____

Technician Name: _____ Date: _____

IWR Staff Name: _____ Date: _____

Next steps

You will receive notification about your application within 15 business days of the application deadline (last Friday of the month). If you are approved for funding:

1. Schedule a meeting with a technician to design the practices you will implement.
2. Implement the practice per design standards. If applicable, keep any receipts or documentation related to the practice.
3. Attend one Farmer-led Watershed Conservation group event and one field event (if applicable). Consult the technician you worked with for eligible events.
4. Once your practice is implemented, schedule a meeting with a technician to verify your practice.
5. Complete the project survey that will be provided to you. You may choose to complete a paper version of the survey or take it online.
6. Upon verification of the practice, the Lenawee Conservation District will disperse funds to you.

Special Notes for Cover Crops

- Verification for cover crops is typically done in spring before tillage or burndown. This program may verify implemented cover crops early for well-established cover crops.
- Keep all seed tags and associated receipts as these are needed for seeding rate verification. Seed tags must include pure live seed analysis. We encourage you to purchase seed where the pure live seed analysis can be provided to expedite the verification process. If seed tags are not available, a post-emergence count will be used to verify the practice (this may delay verification approval). Note that we cannot guarantee payment in situations where "acts of god" prevented verification of the practice and no seed tags with pure live seed analysis are provided.
- Be sure to follow the seeding rate recommendations from the seeding calculator. Seeding rates that are below the recommended rate cannot be approved and the farmer may forfeit payment.

- A set of photos is needed of initial planting. The photos should be dated and include associated field identifiers. At least one picture should be a close-up showing the soil surface with planter marks and/or seed on the soil surface. Use an item in the close-up picture to show scale (a coin, ruler, etc.). At least one picture will be a wide view of the field. Be sure to include a tree, piece of topography, or other feature (building, fence line, ditch, lane, etc.) that makes the location identifiable.
- A second set of dated photos is needed of the growing cover crop, with associated field identifiers, taken on or after December 10 but before spring tillage/burndown of the cover crop. Pre-burndown photos should show a well-established cover crop. If establishment is sparse in December, the practice may be ineligible for early verification; photos should be taken at a later date when more growth is visible. If the technician is unable to get both sets of pictures, a date stamped picture from the producer is required. At least one close up photo is needed (with ruler included for scale) and at least one wide view photo as described for initial planting pictures.
- Any establishment failures should be well documented as to the cause. In cases where the practice is unable to be verified due to “acts of God” (e.g., cold weather that limits growth, torrential rains after planting, a wildfire that burned the field, etc.), the farmer may still receive compensation for agreed costs of practice implementation when pure live seed analysis is also provided. Documentation required for establishment failures includes pictures as described above as well as a description of the "act of God" (e.g., x inches of rain over a y hour period, fire on date z, temperature records). Establishment failure caused by the farmer (such as planting too late, planting too deep, purchasing low-quality seed, etc.) will not qualify for payment.