

Accelerating Outcome-Based Ag Conservation in Saginaw Bay

Field Verification Manual

The following manual will be used by the field technician to certify the contracted Best Management Practice (BMP). The manual will fully explain what is needed in order to have successfully completed installing the chosen BMP. Job Sheets will be included depending on what BMP the producers has chosen.

The following practices are all accepted BMPs that can be installed under the guideline of this project

1. Conservation Cover
2. No-Till
3. Reduced Tillage
4. Cover Crops
5. Riparian Herbaceous Cover
6. Filter Strip
7. Forage and Biomass Planting

Each practice will have specific requirements that need to be met in order to be certified.

1. **Conservation Cover** - Job sheet needs to be thoroughly discussed and completed with the participant, seeding choices, dates and times all need to be planned accordingly. There is a seeding calculator that corresponds with jobs sheets for this practice, which will help determine mixes and rates needed. Once planting is completed a seed tag or invoice needs to be collected as well as photo documentation to show it has been installed within the proper seeding dates. See job sheets attached.
2. **No-Till** - This practice should be clearly defined in the Job Standard and the job sheet. In order to meet the no-till or reduced tillage requirements photo documentation will be needed. The line transect tool will also be required along with photo documentation. See job sheets attached
3. **Reduced Tillage** - This practice should be clearly defined in the Job Standard and the job sheet. In order to meet the no-till or reduced tillage requirements photo documentation will be needed. The line transect tool will also be required along with photo documentation. See job sheets attached
 - a. Depending on the amount of residue accounted for after using the line transect tool, payment rates can be decided. These payment rates can either be increased or decreased depending on actual residue after the technician has measured it.
 - b. This practice will require the technician knowing the previous 3 years' rotation to give an accurate starting value.

4. **Cover Crops** - Job sheet should be thoroughly discussed. Cover crop variety and planting dates will be very critical. The use of different seeding calculators such as; Midwest Cover Crop Council and the NRCS calculator will be discussed as options. Planting dates can have some adjustment depending on weather conditions. MSU Enviro Weather can be used to determine if a larger planting window will be feasible. See Job Sheets attached.
 - a. Pictures of initial planting and spring before burn down will be needed. If the technician is not able to get both pictures, a date stamped picture from the producer will be needed. Seed Tags or invoices will be needed to verify seeding rates.

5. **Riparian Herbaceous Cover** – Planting guidelines will follow Conservation cover. The planting mix will be discussed along with seeding rates and dates. Pictures and seed tags/invoices will be required. See attached job sheets.

6. **Filter Strips** - This practice has a very lengthy tech guide information sheet; as well job sheet that is very detailed. These will provide a good resource when working to help the producers install the practices as well as certification. Certification will include photo documentation, measurements of the installed area, and seed tags. See attached job sheets.
 - a. Depending on the size of the filter strip payment rates may vary. Actual sediment reduction rates will be determined after the filter strip is installed and measurements have been taken.