



## Establishing Pollinator Habitat through CREP



The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) continues to be a resource for establishing pollinator habitat. Below are approved practices for the program and how they can be used to attract specific pollinators.

Specific vegetative species are not necessarily required. However, invasive species are not allowed. Tree planting practices are approved by registered foresters, and a list of site specific species is provided to the landowner. These individuals have the option to select which species best meet their goals and may suggest others to be used in the plan. For the purpose of CREP, tree planting practices can be managed and thinned as needed. Selective thinning opens the canopy to invite more diverse understory cover such as blackberry, honeysuckle and other plants.

### **FILTER STRIP:**

- Compatible with the NRCS Pollinator Habitat Enhancement Plan.
- Typically clover and native warm season grasses are established to act as a buffer for remaining cropland. In this practice, no woody vegetation can be allowed to establish.
- Adding herbaceous plant species, including native forbs, to the filter strip seeding mix that are beneficial to wildlife and pollinators is allowed. However, changing the seeding mix should not detract from the water quality purpose for which the filter strip was established.

### **RIPARIAN FORESTED BUFFER:**

- Deciduous trees/shrubs are planted as a buffer to upslope cropland or pasture.
- The buffer can be a mix of hard and softwood species.
- A filter strip can be used in conjunction with this practice as a third zone of habitat.
- Chickasaw plum, black cherry and goldenrod are species that have been used in CREP enrollments to attract pollinators such as butterflies and hummingbirds.

### **WETLAND RESTORATION**

- Wetland species are established through planting or allowing natural regeneration to occur. Preference is given to native wetland plants, however species are not specified.
- This practice is site specific because restoration of hydrology is required. This practice allows up to 30% of the area to be maintained as an open water area which may lend to some seasonal flowering aquatic or moist soil plants.
- Permanent natural grasses, legumes and shrubs can be used to improve wildlife habitat.

### **HARDWOOD TREE PLANTING**

- Hardwood trees and shrubs are an established cropland conversion practice. Typically, a mix of mast-bearing trees will be planted.
- Seeding for pollinator habitat development must be non-ornamental and must be approved by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).
- Some example of natural flowering species are dogwood, magnolia, sourwood and persimmon.

### **TREE PLANTING**

- For CREP, shortleaf pine is the only species currently available for planting.