

INTRODUCTION



*CP4D – Permanent Wildlife
Habitat*

Representatives of USDA's Farm Service Agency and the State of Louisiana, on April 22, 2005, signed an agreement authorizing the Louisiana Lower Ouachita River Basin "Macon Ridge" Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (LA CREP I).

The LA CREP I, a cooperative conservation effort between USDA Farm Service Agency, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Ducks

Unlimited, United States Business Council for Sustainable Development, Black Bear Conservation Committee, Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts, and other nongovernmental supporting partners, have and are continuing to work together for the advancement of this program to fulfill the goals and accomplishments set forth within the LA CREP I Agreement.

BACKGROUND

Two watersheds make up the LA CREP I, located in the Northeastern portion of the State of Louisiana. These are the Bouef River and Bayou Macon Watersheds, both located within the Lower Ouachita River Basin. Two Louisiana Parishes are located within the project area, Richland and West Carroll, with portions of acreage of seven additional Louisiana Parishes located within the project area. These are Caldwell, Catahoula, East Carroll, Franklin, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita and Richland. The area, as a whole, includes 1,663,881 acres. The goals of the project are to enroll 50,000 acres of marginal cropland into 14-15 year CRP contracts to assist in reducing non-point pollution into these two watersheds while helping to reduce some of the hypoxia issues within the Gulf of Mexico.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS – FY 2006

For most of the Fiscal Year 2006, a very strong sign up period continued, almost reaching the 50,000 acre enrollment cap for the LA CREP I project with numerous acres being placed under contract, with numerous offers being processed, i.e. eligibility determination and contract development activities.

FEDERAL AND STATE CONTRIBUTIONS DURING FISCAL YEAR 2006

During Fiscal Year 2006, the Sign-Up Period remained strong. While continuing to accept and process applications/offers and continuing to approved contracts, we spent a total of **\$10,912,230** in federal dollars on approved contracts for Signing Incentive Payments (SIP), Practice Incentive Payments (PIP), Cost-Share Payments, and Annual Rental Payments. The state contributions for preparations of contracts, outreach activities, trainings, demonstration and research project, and other program implementation needs totaled **\$3,786,178**. The State of Louisiana has now met **7% (\$5,909,372.62)** of their total obligations (Match) for the overall project of which **\$3,786,178** was earned in FY 2006. The total Federal dollars spent through FY 2006 are **\$11,038,185**.

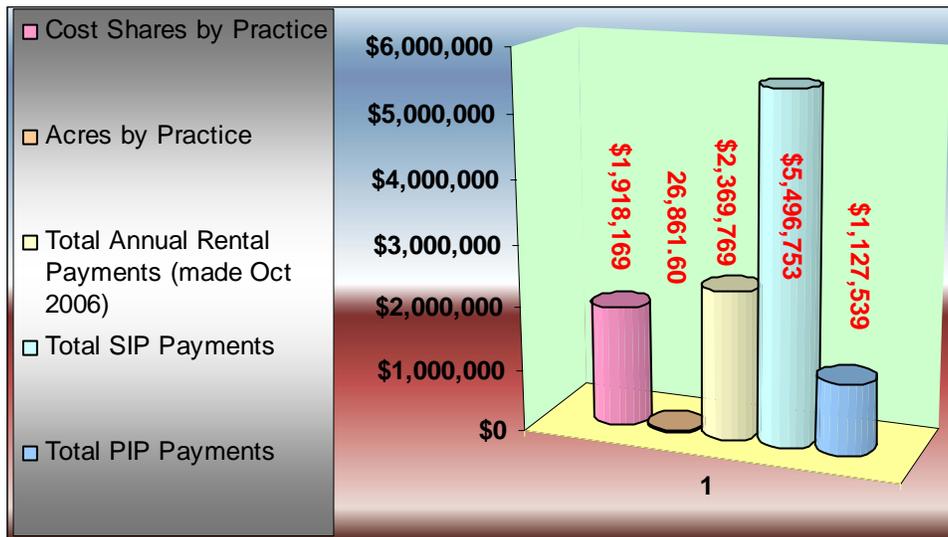
Federal Contributions

Organization/Agency	2005	2006	Cumulative
USDA/FSA			
Signing Incentive Payments	\$125,955.00	\$5,496,753.00	\$5,622,708.00
PIP Payments		\$1,127,539.00	\$1,127,539.00
Annual Rental Payments		\$2,369,769.00	\$2,369,769.00
Cost Share Payments		\$1,918,169.00	\$1,918,169.00
Totals	\$125,955.00	\$10,912,230.00	\$11,038,185.00

State Contributions

Organization/Agency	2005	2006	Cumulative
United States Business Council for Sustainable Development	\$9,529.62	\$5,000.00	\$14,529.62
Black Bear Conservation Committee	\$2,500.00	\$6,000.00	\$8,500.00
Louisiana Ducks Unlimited		\$94,778.00	\$94,778.00
Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Office of Forestry	\$146,416.00	\$351,400.00	\$497,816.00
Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Office of Soil and Water Conservation	\$392,500.00	\$942,000.00	\$1,334,500.00
Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Office of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences	\$1,551,416.00	\$2,337,000.00	\$3,888,416.00
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries	\$20,833.00	\$50,000.00	\$70,833.00
Total State Contributions	\$2,123,194.62	\$3,786,178.00	\$5,909,372.62

The following charts and graphs show approved contracts and acreage entered into the LA CREP I project for Fiscal Year 2006.



Expenditures by Practice

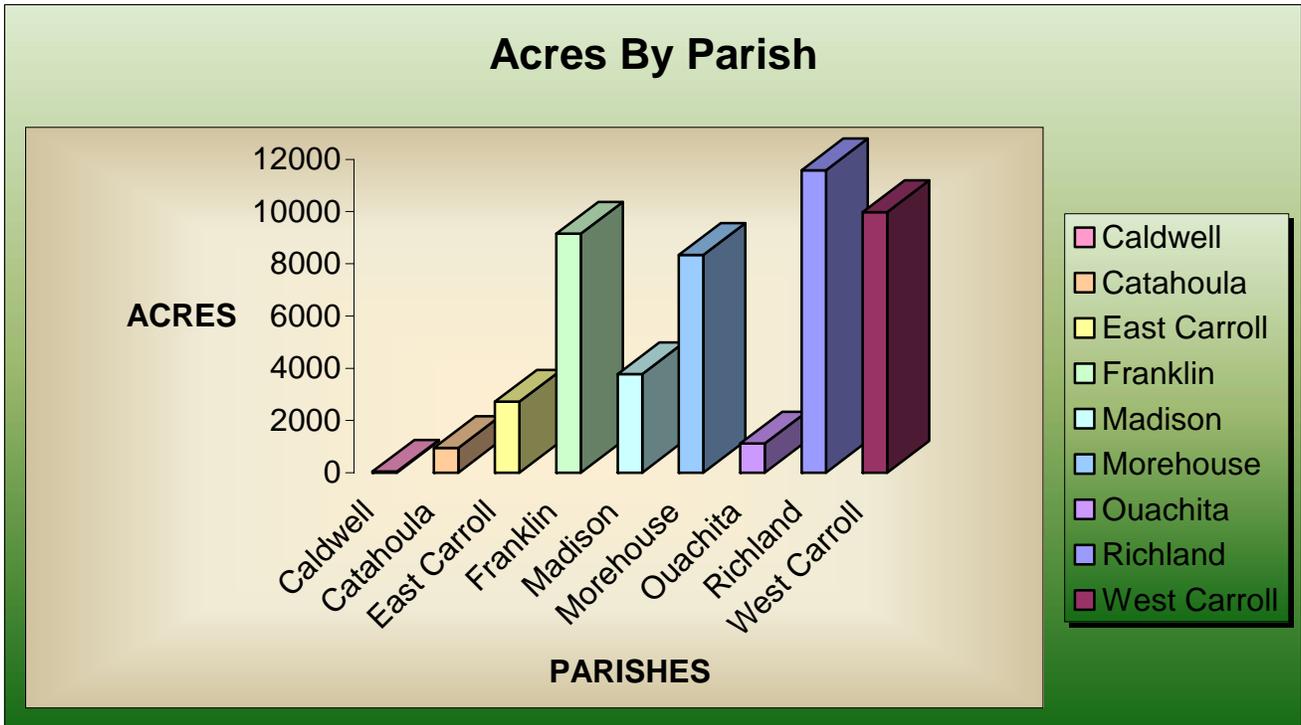
Practice	Cost Shares by Practice	Acres by Practice	Total Annual Rental Payments (made Oct 2006)	Total SIP Payments	Total PIP Payments
CP2	\$41,224	485.6			
CP3	\$46,474	769.1			
CP3A	\$151,445	2032.3			
CP4D	\$1,047,285	16545.2			
CP9	\$34,226	84.1			
CP22	\$32,153	201.4			
CP31	\$565,362	6743.9			
Totals:	\$1,918,169	26,861.6	\$2,369,769	\$5,496,753	\$1,127,539

Expenditures by Parish

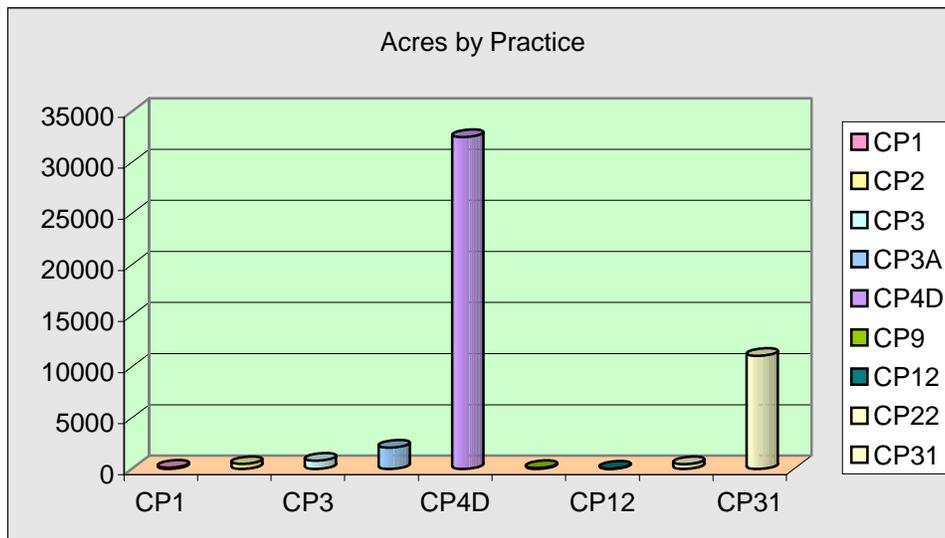
PARISH OFFICE	2006 SIP PAYMENTS	2006 PIP PAYMENTS	ANNUAL RENTAL PAYMENTS (OCT 2006)	COST-SHARE PAYMENTS	PRACTICE	ACRES
Caldwell	\$4,625	\$9,970	\$3,960	\$14,240	CP22	38.5
Catahoula	\$113,205	\$1,391	\$1,837	\$728	CP22	10.8
				\$1,011	CP31	13.0
East Carroll	\$321,525	\$23,215	\$201,414	\$4,362	CP3A	36.2
				\$85,106	CP31	957.5
				\$43,887	CP4D	595.7
Franklin	\$955,035	\$173,962	\$437,308	\$356	CP2	12.5
				\$6,791	CP22	78.9
				\$135,229	CP3A	1806.1
				\$89,260	CP31	958.2
				\$133,266	CP4D	2424.4
				\$31,141	CP9	63.1
Madison	\$524,945	\$157,487	\$201,357	\$127,623	CP31	1362.8
				\$69,112	CP4D	1138.4
Morehouse	\$585,216	\$104,104	\$265,100	\$8,733	CP3	178.8
				\$-0-	CP3A	-0-
				\$20,183	CP31	240.4
				\$56,822	CP4D	784.4
				\$3,085	CP9	21.0
Ouachita	\$102,615	\$26,009	\$43,541	\$2,349	CP4D	37.4
				\$30,792	CP31	433.1
Richland	\$1,423,119	\$313,377	\$532,561	\$864	CP22	14.4
				\$37,741	CP3	590.3
				\$11,854	CP3A	190.0
				\$171,611	CP31	2159.4
				\$295,360	CP4D	3964.4
West Carroll	\$1,466,468	\$318,024	\$682,691	\$40,868	CP2	473.1
				\$9,530	CP22	58.8
				\$39,776	CP31	619.5
				\$446,489	CP4D	7,600.5
Totals:	\$5,496,753	\$1,127,539	\$2,369,769	\$1,918,169		26,861.6

Note: Previous report reflects 26,861.6 acres under contract; however this figure is based on contract acreage where payments have been made. Actual number of contracts and acreage under contract as of 10/10/2006 was 660 contracts at 47,670.9 acres.

Approved Contracts through the end of FY 2006 by Parish by Acres



Approved Contracts through the end of FY 2006 by Practice



OUTREACH - FISCAL YEAR 2006

Listed below are examples of pamphlets and brochures used by applicable FSA Service Center Offices to inform CREP I area producers of the available CREP.

GOALS

Specifically, the Lower Ouachita River Basin CREP will focus on enrolling up to 50,000 acres of land into riparian buffers, bottomland hardwood, and wetland restoration practices to reduce non-point source pollution delivery to surface waters from agricultural lands. This focus is consistent with "no net-loss" of wetland goals and bottomland hardwood initiatives. Further, the State seeks to improve the quality of surface and ground water and establish, preserve or enhance wildlife habitat leading to an increase in the population and diversity of wildlife.

Reduce nutrient and sediment contribution to streams, bayous, and lakes in the project area by assisting with the installation of conservation measures that reduce erosion rates and reduce off-field transportation rates of herbicides, pesticides, and nutrients.

Provide increased protection of sub-surface water sources.

Establish additional critical habitat for fish and wildlife resources by assisting landowners and operators in developing wildlife wetland habitats and riparian areas.

LOUISIANA CREP CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS

- United States Business Council for Sustainable Development
- Black Bear Conservation Committee
- Ducks Unlimited
- LA Dept. of Agriculture & Forestry
- LA Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries
- USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Farm Service Agency

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

Protecting local waterways...
Creating habitat for wildlife

LOUISIANA—CREP "LOWER OUCHITA RIVER BASIN"

Background

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is an initiative established as part of the highly successful Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), and is the Federal Government's single largest environmental improvement program. CREP expands CRP's effectiveness by allowing USDA to work in partnership with States and local interests to meet specific conservation objectives. Like CRP, National CREP contracts require a 10–15 year commitment to keep land out of agricultural production, ensuring lasting benefits. CREP is a community-based program, centered around local participation and leadership, with financial incentives and technical assistance provided by the USDA. It is site-specific and addresses high priority conservation issues of State and National significance.

CREP is not just a cost-effective way to address environmental problems and meet regulatory requirements. Participation can increase farm income as well.

Louisiana CREP

The Lower Ouachita River Basin CREP will seek to enroll certain environmentally sensitive acreage within two designated Louisiana watersheds into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), requiring 14–15 year long term contracts. The Louisiana Parishes involved are Caldwell, Catahoula, East Carroll, Franklin, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, and West Carroll, and the two watersheds are the Bayou Macon Watershed and the Bowf River Watershed. The State, through the LA Department of Agriculture and Forestry, LA Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, and private organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, Black Bear Conservation Committee, and United States Business Council for Sustainable Development will offer incentives to participants for the installation of needed conservation practices, such as filter strips and riparian buffers, among other practices. CREP will consist of a Federal continuous sign-up CRP component and State of Louisiana in-kind assistance and services. To encourage producers to join, the program offers financial incentives in addition to those available with the regular CRP.

Partnerships

An interagency work group comprised of federal, state, and local government entities, and landowners and/or stakeholders from all nine parishes have met and discussed the resource concerns in the project area. Within the project area are sixteen cities and towns that will benefit from this project by the improvement of water quality and the development of the enhancing of wildlife habitat.

Further Information

To learn more about the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, contact any USDA Service Center, or any one of the listed CREP partners. Information may also be found on the FSA website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/darty/crep/crpinfo.htm.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
CREP

Lower Ouachita River Basin Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

"Helping landowners and residents protect natural resources"

Highlights

- Promotes voluntary, incentive-based stewardship by Louisiana farmers and landowners
- Establishes 50,000 acres of long-term conservation practices on environmentally sensitive lands
- Leverages significant federal funds from USDA for every state/local dollar invested
- Reduces Louisiana's nutrient and sediment contribution
- Enhances surface and ground water quality within the project and surrounding communities
- Provides and enhances wildlife habitat for waterfowl and upland game species
- Establishes critical bottomland hardwood habitat for declining and endangered species
- Sequesters carbon through Best Management Practice (BMP) establishment
- Promotes stewardship through educational workshops and on-site demonstration projects

**LOWER OUCHITA RIVER BASIN
CREP Priority Area**

Farm Service Agency

Project Value — \$121,429,878

Project Acres—50,000
Program Participants—650
Average Contract Acreage—80.0
Average Annual Payment—\$6,000
Average Acre Cost-Share—\$200
Average Contract Life Cost—\$90,000

*estimated based on current cost analysis

A PROGRAM OF THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY, USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY AND NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE, SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, AND OTHER PRIVATE AND PUBLIC PARTNERS.

Demonstration Projects for CREP Landowners

Alternative Planting Techniques for the Establishment of mixtures of Native Grass, Legume, or Forb plant species using Liquid Fertilizer Suspensions

Introduction

One of the options available to Louisiana landowners through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program for retirement of farmland usage is Conservation Practice (CP2), Establishment of Permanent Native Grasses/Forbs/Legumes Cover for Wildlife Enhancement. These native plant species were growing here at the time of European immigration to the United States of America. It is in this selected objective that directed the development of a feasible, viable alternative for planting and establishment of these Native Plant Species.

Purpose/Objective

The **Conservation Practice (CP-2)** option for the planting and successful establishment of a combined native grass, legume, or forb mixture in one **single** field operation is a **paramount** task. Light weighted, fluffy-seed native grass species such as Little Bluestem *Schizachyrium scoparium*, Big Bluestem *Androgon gerardii*, and Indian grass *Sorghastrum nutans* with their prominent seed awn create problems when mixed and seeded with heavier, non-awned seed species. Traditionally, the planting of blends of three to four species of native grasses plus two to three species of native legume or forbs simultaneously required the use of a very expensive, overly complicated triple box seeding drill. With this in mind and due to the unavailability of this type of seeding drill in our area, we decided to investigate and develop other feasible planting alternatives. Our goals and objectives were to develop a planting technique that was 1) technically sound, 2) agronomically feasible, and 3) easily accessible to our NRCS conservation clients.

Plan of Action



Actual Application – Liquid Fertilizer - Welch CREP

Our chosen planting alternative was born as a *spin-off* from a very successful planting method used to establish common Bermuda Grass for forage production in our area. This method entails the use of liquid fertilizer as a suspension carrier for the chosen native plant seeding mixture. The clay-based liquid fertilizer slurry (4-4-4) suspension serves as a type of hydro mulch media that sticks to the awned native grass seed and dispenses the

planting mixture correctly and uniformly. With this liquid fertilizer slurry suspension seed planting technique, the establishment of this mixed grass, legume, or forb mixture is successfully facilitated and accomplished.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Louisiana developed a Conservation Plan of Operation (CPO) and plan of field operations for landowner/cooperator (Mr. Simmie Welch, Winnsboro, LA) to accomplish this objective and task.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in cooperation with USDA's Farm Service

Agency (FSA), the Northeast Delta Soil & Water Conservation District, the Louisiana Department of



Welch CREP Farm – (L) Bret Burns, FSA CED and (R) Simmie Ray Welch, Landowner and CREP Participant – Franklin Parish, Louisiana

Agriculture & Forestry and two private agricultural supply companies, Ouachita Fertilizer Company and Turner Native Seed Company, initiated a native grass seeding and establishment demonstration project in northeastern Louisiana to determine the feasibility of this alternative.

In the spring of 2006 12.7 acres of Me-Memphis silt loam soil, 5-8 percent slope, was retired from row-crop land usage, enrolled in **CRP-CREP** and converted to perennial Native species vegetation through this alternative planting method.



Actual Application – Liquid Fertilizer - Welch CREP Farm

The 6-Native plant species seeding mixture was planned and planted at the following rates **Pure Live Seed** per acre:

1. Switchgrass *Panicum virgatum*-'Alamo' variety-3.0 lbs Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre Monoculture at a Desired Percentage Mix (DPM)-10.0%
2. Indiangrass *Sorghastrum nutans*-'Cheyenne' variety-5.0 lbs Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre Monoculture at a Desired Percentage Mix (DPM)-20.0%
3. Big Bluestem *Androgon gerardii*-'Kaw' variety-6.0 lbs Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre Monoculture at a Desired Percentage Mix (DPM)-20.0%
4. Illinois Bundleflower *Desmanthus illinoensis* -'Sabine' variety-13.5 lbs Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre Monoculture at a Desired Percentage Mix (DPM)-20.0%
5. Partridge Pea *Cassia fasciculata*-'Commanche' variety-10.0 lbs Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre Monoculture at a Desired Percentage Mix (DPM)-10.0%
6. Maximillian Sunflower *Hehanthus maximilliani*-'Aztec' variety-1.0 lbs Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre Monoculture at a Desired Percentage Mix (DPM)-20.0%

Field Operations

A combination of early season mechanical seedbed preparation combined with on-site, as needed pre-plant herbicide application for weed competition control and suppression were applied to the area. Particular attention to firm soil seedbed condition at time of seeding was of utmost importance.

The 6-species native plant species planting mixture was then blended in a mixing vat with Triple 4 (4-4-4) suspension clay-based liquid fertilizer and precisely dispensed through a Miller Spreader Truck applicator with a 90-foot width spray boom at the rate of 40 gallons (400 lbs.) per acre.

After the planting procedure was complete, the 12.7 acre area was then smoothed and sealed with a cultipacker to obtain adequate seed/soil contact while conserving moisture for the germinating and emerging seed. Native seed emergence and growth were periodically monitored to assess native plant development and overall balance of the entire seeding mixture.

Conclusion

This demonstration of liquid fertilizer suspension planting technique blending mixtures of **native grasses, legumes, and forbs** in a single field operation is a viable, feasible alternative available to farm producers and land users. This seeding alternative will adequately meet the needs and requirements for successful native plant species planting and establishment.

This poster was made and this process was on display at the National Grazing Lands Conference in St. Louis, MO this past December. The following is the poster that was shown at the Conference.

Alternative Planting Techniques for the Establishment of Mixtures of Native Grass, Legume, or Forb plant species using Liquid Fertilizer
 David Vinson - USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Monroe, Louisiana

Abstract
 The planting and subsequent establishment of a diverse native grass, legume, or forb mixture in one single field operation is a significant field operation. This poster demonstrates a viable alternative to the traditional broadcast seeding technique by blending liquid fertilizer and native plant seedlings into a single liquid suspension. This technique allows for the simultaneous application of liquid fertilizer and native plant seedlings in a single field operation. The resulting mixture is then planted in a single field operation. This technique allows for the simultaneous application of liquid fertilizer and native plant seedlings in a single field operation. The resulting mixture is then planted in a single field operation.

Materials and Methods
 The liquid fertilizer suspension planting method is a viable alternative to the traditional broadcast seeding method. This method allows for the simultaneous application of liquid fertilizer and native plant seedlings in a single field operation. The resulting mixture is then planted in a single field operation.

Treatment Name	Seeds/acre	Fertilizer	Rate (lb per acre)	Cost/acre
Control	0	0	0	0.00
Native Grass	100,000	0	0	0.00
Native Legume	100,000	0	0	0.00
Native Forb	100,000	0	0	0.00
Native Grass + Liquid Fertilizer	100,000	100	100	100.00
Native Legume + Liquid Fertilizer	100,000	100	100	100.00
Native Forb + Liquid Fertilizer	100,000	100	100	100.00

Field Operations
 The liquid fertilizer suspension planting method is a viable alternative to the traditional broadcast seeding method. This method allows for the simultaneous application of liquid fertilizer and native plant seedlings in a single field operation. The resulting mixture is then planted in a single field operation.

Conclusions
 The liquid fertilizer suspension planting method is a viable alternative to the traditional broadcast seeding method. This method allows for the simultaneous application of liquid fertilizer and native plant seedlings in a single field operation. The resulting mixture is then planted in a single field operation.

Acknowledgments/Cooperators
 Simmie Ray Welch, Winnsboro, Louisiana-Landowner/CRP participant
 Northeast Delta Soil & Water Conservation District-Chairman-Butch Butler
 Ouachita Fertilizer Company, Monroe, Louisiana-Darryl Gregory, Agent
 Turner Seed Company, Breckinridge, Texas-Darcy Turner, Owner/Operator
 Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry-Bob Odom, Commissioner
 USDA/Louisiana Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
 USDA/Farm Service Agency (FSA)

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- *Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry-Bob Odom, Commissioner*
- *USDA/Louisiana Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)*
- *USDA/Farm Service Agency (FSA)*

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