

Native Seed Mix Recommendations for Residential Areas with Well Drained Soils Lucas County, Ohio

This guidance is meant to be referenced by contractors and landowners working with the Lucas County Engineer's Office to vegetate riparian (streamside) buffer strips along waterways under county maintenance.

Planting riparian buffers with appropriate native seed (forbs and grasses) can, in many cases, provide **more benefit** to the property owner's interests and area wildlife compared to turf grass and related species. See below for a summary of expected benefits of native vegetation and planting options to consider.

Benefits of Using Native Seed Mixes in Residential Buffer Strips

- Reductions in Soil Erosion
 - Many native plants have longer root systems compared to turf grasses; these longer roots help to keep soil in place during wet weather events
 - The figure to the lower right compares root system length of Kentucky Blue Grass (traditional turf - far left) with those of some native species. *Note: Not all of the plants in this graphic are recommended for use across Ohio; this is shown for illustrative purposes only.*
- Improvement in Water Quality
 - Native plants can reduce the amount pollutants (e.g., nutrients - nitrogen and phosphorus) in surface water by filtering runoff and absorbing nutrients before they enter a waterway
- Reductions in Long-term Maintenance of Buffer Strip
 - Little to no watering or fertilizer needed
 - Minimal mowing needed in an established area
- Attraction of Native Wildlife
 - Native wildlife has evolved together with native plants so they are well-suited to provide for each other's needs (e.g., food, protection, pollination, etc.)
- Promotion of Regional Native Biodiversity
 - The absence of native vegetation cover is a major factor in the decline of many animal and insect species in Northwest Ohio
- Beautiful Flowers
 - If designed for a specific region, native seed mixes contain a wide variety of flowering plants that provide that blooms throughout the growing season
 - Continuous and diverse blooms create a beautiful buffer area, whether it borders an active agricultural field or suburban backyard.



See back page for recommended maintenance, suggested seed mix, and area resources.

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Recommended Maintenance

- Seeding: Fall through early spring (i.e., dormant seasons)
- First Year Management: Periodic mowing and/or selective removal of targeted undesirable plants
- Long-term Management: Mow once in spring and then leave tall throughout fall, winter, and early spring
 - Native wildlife will lay eggs and/or hibernate in dormant vegetation

Suggested Seed Mix for Residential Buffer Areas with Well Drained (Dry) Soils

Ohio Prairie Nursery (OPN) Item #031820-3*

- Expected Height Range: 3ft to 4ft
 - Does well in areas of sun/partial shade
 - Attracts butterflies, pollinators, and songbirds
- Seeding Rate:
Hydro seeded / Broadcast /
Drilled - 7 pounds per acre

Species Name	Common Name	%
<i>Elymus canadensis</i>	Nodding Wild Rye	31.25%
<i>Elymus virginicus</i>	Virginia Wild Rye	26.56%
<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>	Partridge Pea	18.13%
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	Black-eyed Susan	7.81%
<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	Ox Eye Sunflower	4.69%
<i>Lupinus perennis</i>	Perennial Lupine	3.12%
<i>Agrostis perennans</i>	Autumn Bentgrass	1.56%
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild Bergamot	1.25%
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Butterfly Weed	1.25%
<i>Rudbeckia triloba</i>	Brown-eyed Susan	0.94%
<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	Foxglove Beardtongue	0.63%
<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>	Yellow Coneflower/Grey-Headed C	0.63%
<i>Liatris spicata</i>	Dense Blazingstar	0.63%
<i>Zizia aurea</i>	Golden Alexanders	0.63%
<i>Aster laevis</i>	Smooth Aster	0.31%
<i>Aster azureus</i>	Sky Blue Aster	0.31%
<i>Solidago nemoralis</i>	Dwarf Goldenrod	0.31%

Disclaimer: OPN designed this seed mix

specifically for Lucas County and the Northwest Ohio region. This mix is provided here as option/example and is available for purchase through OPN.

Contractors and property owners are encouraged to consider this mix when making their selection.

Comparable seed mixes may be available from other vendors but

it is suggested that landowners consult with

Lucas Soil & Water Conservation District to evaluate mix suitability for local conditions.



Photo Credit: Ohio Prairie Nursery

Area Resources

- Lucas Soil & Water Conservation District: lucasswcd.org
- Ohio Prairie Nursery: opnseed.com
- Greater Toledo Lake Erie Clear Choices Clean Water: toledolakeerie.clearchoicescleanwater.org

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