

Sustainable Farms and Fields

Example Practices that Sequester Carbon through Agroforestry

SB 5947 was introduced during the 2019 legislative session. The legislative intent of the bill is, "...to provide financial assistance to farmers and ranchers who voluntarily adopt practices that reduce fossil-fuel energy usage on farms and ranches and increase the quantity of carbon stored on their land."¹

This document illustrates agroforestry practices that could be funded by the proposed Sustainable Farms and Fields grant program.

Silvopastures

Agroforestry practices provide opportunities to sequester carbon while also adding new crop diversity to farms.

With technical assistance and a grant from his local conservation district, Nick Pate, a Snohomish County farmer, was able to establish three new agroforestry projects his farm.² These projects complemented the existing riparian restoration work he already implemented with Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program assistance.

One agroforestry practices that Pate adopted was to incorporate alder, willow, walnut, and locust trees into grazing space, creating a silvopasture. The silvopasture provides shade for his cattle, additional sources of forage, and new nut crops. The trees also prevent erosion, filter pollutants, improve infiltration, and sequester carbon.³



Read more about Nick Pate's agroforestry projects here: <https://tinyurl.com/sightlineagroforestry>

¹ Second Substitute Senate Bill 5947

² Morales, M. (2019). *Agroforestry Could Help Cascadia Farmers and Dwindling Salmon Populations*. Retrieved from <https://www.sightline.org/2019/08/15/agroforestry-could-help-cascadias-farmers-and-dwindling-salmon-populations/>

³ USDA National Agroforestry Center. (2001). *Working Trees for Livestock*. Retrieved from https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1044244.pdf.

Establishing silvopastures is a practice that could be funded through a Sustainable Farms and Fields Grant Program

Example SF&F project proposals: Purchase seedlings needed to establish silvopasture

Estimated atmospheric carbon reduction: sequestered 3,000 lb CO₂ equivalent per year per acre⁴

Estimated cost: \$2,500⁵

Other conservation benefits: Water quality, salmon protection, erosion control, pollution filtration, improved water infiltration

This document was prepared by Carbon Washington. For more information, contact Noa Kay at noa@carbonwa.org.

Photo credit: USDA National Agroforestry Center, Working Trees for Livestock

⁴ COMET Planner. Retrieved from <http://comet-planner.com/> using the Conservation Practice Standard "Silvopasture" on 5 acres in Snohomish County, WA on 11/15/2019.

⁵ The cost will depend on tree species and maturity.