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CROPLAND

HABITAT EVALUATION WORKSHEET

Client _____ County _____

Tract No. _____ Field No. _____ Section No. _____ Township _____ Range _____

Evaluator Date

Enter the score for the conditions described that most closely resemble the present condition or planned condition of the site being evaluated. To meet the quality criteria requirements for wildlife habitat (food, water, cover, etc.) in Section III of the FOTG, the planned system must provide a total rating of 0.5 or higher for the conservation treatment unit. The highest possible rating is 1.0, the lowest possible is 0.0.

Note: Cropland fields which adjoin and are owned/operated by the same cooperator could be ranked collectively along with inclusions or adjacent lands which are not used for agricultural production (cropland or grazing land).

Crop Rotation

High Wildlife Value Crops – Small grains (winter and spring wheat, oats, barley, rye, etc.) and alfalfa in rotation (**only if** first cutting occurs after July 15th during years planted to alfalfa).

Note: Fallow operations (e.g. chemical fallow) that allow stubble from small grain to persist through a majority of the growing season would be considered a High Wildlife Value Crop during the fallow year.

Medium Wildlife Value Crops – Corn, Milo, Forage Sorghum, Hay and Grain Millets, Sunflower, or "Undercut" Small Grain Fallow in the fallow year and alfalfa in rotation (**only if** first cutting occurs between June 16th and July 15th **and** either a flushing bar is used or mowing is conducted from the inside of the field outward).

Low Wildlife Value Crops – Soybeans, Dry Edible Beans, Sugarbeets, Potatoes, or Clean-tilled Fallow (in fallow year) and alfalfa in rotation (**only if** first cutting occurs between May 1st and June 15th).

Prior/Next Three Crop Years – Number of Crop Years by Wildlife Value Category

High Value	3	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Medium Value	0	1	0	2	1	0	3	2	1	0
Low Value	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	1	2	3
Give a rating of:	**.2**	**.2**	**.2**	**.1**	**.1**	**.1**	**.0**	**.0**	**.0**	**-.1**

Note: If multiple fields are evaluated with similar crop rotations resulting in a different rating, use the higher rating. For example, if Field 1 is wheat – milo – wheat (.2) and Field 2 is milo – wheat – milo (.1), the overall rating is .2.

	CROP	*YEAR*		*CROP*	*YEAR*
PRESENT (Prior 3 Years)			*PLANNED (Next 3 Years)*		

* Add **.1 if** there are/will be three or more different crops present/planned **or** if three or more different crops were/will be used in rotation (for each field being evaluated) during the previous/next three year period. **OR if** alfalfa (managed only as a high or medium value crop) was included in a long-term rotation with annual crops (e.g. must document at least three years of the previous 10 year period) but was not counted in the three year period (present/planned). Note: Credit for grass cannot be taken if the land was "sodbusted" by FSA standards.

** Deduct **.1 if** only one crop is present/planned or used in rotation during the previous/next three year period. (Exception – do not deduct if the crop is alfalfa or other perennial grass/legume during the three year period.)

A. Rating for Crop Rotation * Present _____ * Planned _____

Field Size (or Average Field Size) – multiple crops planted in one field (e.g. stripcropping) can be used.

Give a rating of:

.1 For field size ≤ 40 Acres.

.0 For field size 41 to 80 Acres.

-.1 For field size > 80 Acres.

B. Rating for Field Size Present _____ Planned _____

Disturbance – (between harvest date and March 31st of following year)

Give a rating of:

.1	No post-harvest tillage or shredding is used and residue/stubble of High or Medium Wildlife Value Crop remains through winter **OR** cover crop is established post-harvest and allowed to persist through winter.
.0	No post-harvest tillage is used but residue/stubble is insignificant (e.g. small grain or millet shorter than 6 inches; or does not persist as with soybeans/dry edible beans; or corn/sorghum/millet cut for hay or chopped for silage).
-.1	If one post-harvest tillage operation is implemented (residue partially incorporated or flattened) on a High or Medium Wildlife Value Crop.
-.2	If more than one post-harvest tillage operation is implemented on a High or Medium Wildlife Value Crop (majority of residue is incorporated); **OR** one post-harvest tillage operation is implemented on a low residue crop (e.g. soybeans/dry edible beans); **OR** crop is not conducive to providing residue (e.g. sugar beets/potatoes).

Note: If multiple fields are evaluated with similar tillage operations resulting in a different rating, use the higher rating. For example, if Field 1 is corn – no fall tillage (.1) and Field 2 is soybeans – no fall tillage (.0), the overall rating is .1.

* Add **.1** to the above score **if** a continuous "no-till" or "certified organic" cropping system is used.

** Deduct **.1** from the above score **if** stubble is grazed by livestock **and/or if** insecticides are used.

C. Rating for Disturbance * Present _____ * Planned _____

Field Borders/Buffers/Odd Areas – (minimum of 20' width)

Buffers such as field borders, grassed waterways, contour grass strips, cross-wind trap strips, field windbreaks, etc., and odd areas of perennial vegetation within or adjacent to cropland fields including pivot corners, abandoned farmsteads, woody and grassed draws, wetlands, etc. which are not hayed, grazed, tilled, or burned annually. These areas need to occur on land under control of the cooperator being assisted to be taken into consideration.

Give a rating of:

.3	If field borders or buffers are present on 9.0% or more of the total acreage of the tract/area being evaluated.
.2	If field borders or buffers are present on 6.0% up to 8.9% of the total acreage of the tract/area being evaluated.
.1	If field borders or buffers are present on 3.0% up to 5.9% of the total acreage of the tract/area being evaluated.
.0	If field borders or buffers do not meet above criteria **or** are manipulated by haying, grazing, tillage, or burning.
-.1	If no field borders or buffers or odd areas are present within the tract/area being evaluated.

* Add **.1 if** borders or buffers are actively managed to maintain habitat quality (e.g. disking / interseeding). (≥1%)

** Add **.1 if** all natural water sources (e.g. wetlands, streams, ponds, etc.) are protected by an adequate buffer.

D. Rating for Field Borders/Buffers/Odd Areas * Present _____ * Planned _____

Interspersion of Habitats – (minimum of ½ acre and 20' width)

Give a rating of:

.1	If more than 66% of the cropland field(s) is within 660 feet of a habitat with perennial undisturbed vegetation.
.0	If 33% to 66% of the cropland field(s) is within 660 feet of a habitat with perennial undisturbed vegetation.
-.1	If less than 33% of the cropland field(s) is within 660 feet of a habitat with perennial undisturbed vegetation.

E. Rating for Interspersion of Habitats Present _____ Planned _____

COMPOSITE RATING (A+B+C+D+E) **Present** _____ **Planned** _____

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