

PASTURELAND

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 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. For sites that are presently cropland but will be planted or otherwise converted to pastureland, score the site as 0.0 (present).

Note: Key Wildlife Areas must meet a .1 or better under grazing intensity in order to meet the quality criteria requirements for wildlife habitat. Key Wildlife Areas include riparian areas, wetland range sites, marshes, natural springs, native woodlands (especially woody draws), and upland pastures managed for wildlife as a primary objective.

Species Composition – (The Pasture Condition Score Sheet (NE-ESC-13) may be used to rate this category by adding the points from indicators 1) Percent Desirable Plants; 4) Percent Legume; and 5) Plant Diversity and dividing by three and rounding to the nearest whole number. With this composite of those three indicators, a score of 5 would equal a 0.3 and a score of 1 would equal a -0.1 with the other increments in between: 4 = 0.2; 3 = 0.1; and 2 = 0.0).

- .3 Mixture contains a minimum of five species (native grasses, forbs, and/or legumes) with at least one forb/legume present at a significant level (e.g. the forb/legume must constitute a minimum of 10% of the stand).
- .2 Mixture consists of two or more grasses **and** at least one forb or legume is present at a significant level.
- .1 Mixture consists of only two species **and/or** lacks significant forb or legume component.
- .0 Only single species is present (grasses/forbs/legumes).
- .1 Stand is dominated by Kentucky bluegrass or annual grasses and forbs (>50%).

A. Rating for Species Composition Present _____ Planned _____

Grazing Intensity (measured at Key Wildlife Areas throughout the area being evaluated)

- .2 If grazing pressure is light (< 40% utilization of current year's growth) or absent.
- .1 If grazing pressure is moderate (40% to 60% utilization of current year's growth).
- .1 If grazing pressure is heavy (>60% utilization of current year's growth).

B. Rating for Grazing Intensity Present _____ Planned _____

Management Activities

- .2 Rotational grazing used with rest periods ≥ 45 days between grazing events during the growing season.
- .1 Rotational grazing used with rest periods during growing season that meet Prescribed Grazing standard (528).
- .0 If the area is grazed continuously throughout the growing season.
- .2 If the area is grazed continuously throughout the entire year.

Add .1 if Key Wildlife Areas are deferred (entire growing season) at least one of three years or $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ is deferred each year **OR** receive year-long rest (12 months) at least one of five years or $1/5^{\text{th}}$ is rested each year.

NOTE: Do not use if Key Wildlife Area is a livestock water source receiving credit under Primary Water Supply!

Add .1 if prescribed burning is used as a management tool at least once in a 10 year period.

Add .1 if only "spot treatment" herbicide use is employed **and** invasive tree species are removed/controlled.

Deduct .1 from the score if grazing is not used as a management tool (e.g. no grazing for 5 years or more).

C. Rating for Grazing Management * Present _____ * Planned _____

Primary Water Supply

- If a natural water source (perennial stream, permanent wetland, spring, etc.) is present **and** livestock access is managed to protect the riparian area (e.g. mid-summer rest, off-site water source, water gaps, exclusion, etc.)
- .1 OR if a natural water source is not present but all watering facilities (e.g. tanks) are accessible to wildlife.
- .0 If a natural water source is not present and all watering facilities are not accessible to wildlife.
- .1 If a natural water source is present **and** livestock access to the stream is not managed to protect riparian areas.

D. Rating for Water Supply Present _____ Planned _____

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