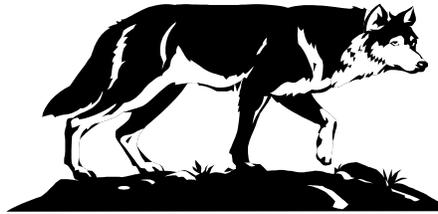


## Kansas Wildlife Habitat Assessment Guide



**Definition of Wildlife Habitat:** For the purpose of this assessment, wildlife habitat includes game habitat, non-game habitat, and aquatic habitat.

**Background:** This Kansas Wildlife Habitat Assessment Guide (KWHAG) was developed by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks with the concurrence of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for use as a tool to identify conservation practice management options that have the potential to improve habitat.

**Criteria:** Minimum assessment values are identified in the KWHAG for the Resource Management System (RMS) level of treatment. The values are approximately 50 percent of the potential practice values for a field. The following values represent the minimum for each NRCS area: areas 1 and 2, 18; area 3, 21; areas 4 and 5, 24.

**Training:** A minimum of one hour of classroom and seven hours of field experience is suggested before a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employee is considered trained. For a list of qualified trainers contact the NRCS State Biologist.

**Other Assessments:** The Stream Visual Assessment Protocol (Technical Note 99-1) and the Water Quality Indicators Guide (SCS-TP-161) are separate and compatible with the KWHAG. Conservation practices that are implemented to benefit upland wildlife can also improve aquatic habitat conditions.

**Electronic documentation sheets (pages 3 and 4 of this assessment):**

1. Enter practices values, modifiers values, and interspersions for each field on the Benchmark Summary Sheet and Planned Treatment Sheet. Values are automatically calculated.
2. Compare values to quality criteria and enter the result manually.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR MANUAL FILLING OF KWHAG:**

1. Enter practices values, modifiers values, and interspersions on the Benchmark Summary Sheet and Planned Treatment Sheet. Total each column.
2. Calculate the following: Present value X acres = benchmark value. Planned value X acres = planned value.
3. Divide value X acres, sum, by acres in assessment area, sum, to determine assessment average (combined weighted average).
4. Compare combined weighted average to the quality criteria and document results.

Conservation Practice Values and Modifiers							
PRACTICE	HABITAT LAND USE						
	Crop	Grazed Range	Grazed Forest	**Other	Pasture	Hay	Wild
Brush Management 314		5	1	5	1	1	1
Cons Crop Rotation 328 <sup>1</sup>							
Constructed Wetland 656	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Contour Buffer Strip 332	5						
Contour Stripcropping 585	5						
Critical Area Planting 342	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Cross Wind Trap Strip 589C	2						
Early Suc Hab Dev/Man 647	9		9	9			9
Field Border 386	9						
Filter Strip 393	5		5	5			
Stream Habitat Imp. & Man. 395				9			
Fishpond Management 399				10			
Forage Harvest Management 511					2	2	2
Forest Stand Improvement 666 <sup>10</sup>		1	10	10			10
Grass Waterway 412	5			1	1	1	
Hedgerow Planting 422				9			9
Herb Wind Barriers 603	5						
Irr Sys Tailwater Rec 447	1			1			
Land Recon. Ab. Mine 543				5		5	
Use Exclusion 472	5	9	5	9	5		9
Pasture & Hay Planting 512 <sup>11</sup>	2			2	2	2	2
Pest Management 595	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Pond 378		5	5	5	5	5	5
Prescribed Burning 338		9	9	9	5	5	9
Prescribed Grazing 528 <sup>8</sup>		8	1		8		
Range Planting 550		9		9			9
Rec Area Improvement 562		5	5	5	5	5	
Rec Grading & Shaping 566				1			
Rec Trail & Walkway 568				1			
Res Mgt No & Strip Till 329A <sup>2</sup>							
Res Mgt Mulch Till 329B <sup>2</sup>							
Res Mgt Ridge Till 329C <sup>2</sup>							
Res Mgt Seasonal 344 <sup>2</sup>							
Res Man Declining Hab 643		9	9	9			9
Riparian Forest Buffer 391			9		9		9
ShallowWatMgt/Wild 646	5	9	9	9	5	5	9
Spring Development 574 <sup>12</sup>		1			1		
Tree & Shrub Est 612			9	9			9
Up Wildlife Habitat Mgt 645	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Waste Utilization 633 <sup>4</sup>	5						
Watering Facility 614		1	1				
Wetland Creation 658	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Wetland Enhancement 659	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Wetland Restoration 657	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
WetlandWildlifeHabMgt 644	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Wildlife Watering Fac 648	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Windbreak Shelterbelt Est 380				5			5
<b>Modifiers</b>							
Interspersion <sup>3</sup>							
Native Species in Plantings/seed <sup>5</sup>		2	2	2	2		2
Canopy Cover 25 to 50 percent <sup>6</sup>			2	2			2
One Den Tree/snag/acre <sup>7</sup>		5	5	5			5
Human Impact does not degrade <sup>9</sup>			4	4			

\*CTU-Conservation Treatment Unit

\*\*Other=All land use designations not listed in the habitat land use section

**Additional Practice Values**

<b>Footnote 1 - 328 Conservation Crop Sequence</b>	
<i>Rotation Values (fallow = crop year)</i>	
<b>Crop Rotation</b>	Value
Continous Cropping	1
Two Crop Rotation	5
Three Crop Rotation	9

<b>Footnote 2 - (344, 329 A, B, C)</b>			
Post Harvest		Tillage or	Value
Tillage	Chemical	Planting	
none	none	1/1 - 5/1	6
none	1	1/1 - 5/1	5
none	more than 1	1/1 - 5/1	4
1	none	1/1 - 5/1	3
1	1	1/1 - 5/1	2
1or more	1 or more	After 5/1	1
<i>Note: Spring tillage/planting dates reduce negative nesting impacts</i>			

<b>Footnote 3 - Interspersion</b>	
<i>Count different, adjacent habitats from the assessed field or *CTU</i>	
No different habitat	0
One habitat	4
Two habitats	6
Three habitats	8
Four habitats	9

**Footnote:**

<sup>4</sup> Count only when manure is properly applied as fertilizer.

<sup>5</sup> Add 2 points where plantings or seedings are composed entirely of native ecotypes.

<sup>6</sup> Count when canopy cover is 25 - 50 percent.

<sup>7</sup> On forest land or other land count when one or more den trees or snags are present on each acre. Count when den trees or snags are present on rangeland.

<sup>8</sup> Prescribed Grazing (528) must be applied in order to reach the RMS designation.

<sup>9</sup> Add 4 points when human impact does not degrade habitat or recreational experience.

<sup>10</sup> Forest Stand Imp. (666) must be applied to reach the RMS destination.

<sup>11</sup> Wildlife must be a primary or secondary landowner objective with 100 percent native species.

<sup>12</sup> Add 5 points where this spring development is an alternative water source for a pond.

**Worksheets for the Kansas Wildlife Habitat Assessment Guide (KWHAG) are contained in a separate file. Values for the worksheet are automatically calculated within the Microsoft Excel program. Please access this file for the completion of the KWHAG.**