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Helping People Help the Land...

RHODE ISLAND BULLETIN No: 300-7-4

DATE: December 21, 2006

SUBJECT: LTP – Protracts Ranking Tool – Resource Concerns, and Practices used for Ranking Tool Cost Efficiency Calculations, National Priorities and State Priorities

Purpose: To provide guidance on Resource Concerns that will be applicable for projects funded through the Rhode Island Farm Bill FY2007 WHIP program and to provide guidance on the practices to be used in calculating the Cost Efficiency for the Ranking Tool

Expiration Date: September 30, 2007

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) has been using the Protracts Conservation Contracting Program to develop, approved, and manage conservation contracts since FY 2004. Beginning in FY 2007 all potential applicants will have their projects ranked via the online Protracts Ranking Tool. The goal of the Ranking Tool is to provide a consistent framework to implement the application ranking process. The framework includes the following functions:

- Cost Effectiveness of the selected system based on the selected Resource Concern (s), Applicant Selected Practices, Practice Average Cost and Conservation Practice Physical Effects;
- Consideration of National Priorities;
- Consideration of State Priorities; and
- Consideration of Local Priorities

Each State is responsible for developing their specific ranking tool or tools.

Function 1: Cost Effectiveness of the selected system based on the selected Resource Concern (s), Applicant Selected Practices, Practice Average Cost and Conservation Practice Physical Effects

WHIP allows an applicant to select practices from the FY 2007 Approved Practice Cost List to address the applicant's Wildlife Resource Concerns. The ranking will only review practices that have a direct substantial effect on the Resource Concern selected by the landowner. The following is a listing of the practices that will be evaluated for each resource concern:

Plant Resource Concerns

- Noxious and Invasive Plants
- T&E Plants Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern
- Threatened and Endangered Plant Species

Practices Evaluated for each Plant Resource Concern

Noxious and Invasive Plants:

Brush Management (314)
Land Clearing (460)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)

T&E Plants Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern:

Conservation Cover (327)
Early Successional Habitat Development and Management (647)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Shallow Water Management for Wildlife (646)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Use Exclusion (472)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)

Threatened and Endangered Plant Species

Conservation Cover (327)
Early Successional Habitat Development and Management (647)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Shallow Water Management for Wildlife (646)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Use Exclusion (472)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)

Fish and Wildlife Resource Concerns

- Habitat Fragmentation
- Imbalance Among and Within Populations
- Inadequate Cover/Shelter
- Inadequate Food
- Inadequate Space
- Inadequate Water
- T&E Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern
- Threatened and Endangered Fish and Wildlife Species

Practices Evaluated for Each Fish and Wildlife Resource Concern

Habitat Fragmentation

Brush Management (314)
Conservation Cover (327)
Critical Area Planting (342)
Early Successional Habitat Development and Management (647)
Field Border (386)
Fish Passage (396)
Forest Stand Improvement (666)
Hedgerow Planting (422)
Prescribed Burning (338)
Prescribed Forestry (409)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390)
Shallow Water Management for Wildlife (646)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Use Exclusion (472)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)

Imbalance Among and Within Populations

Brush Management (314)
Critical Area Planting (342)
Early Successional Habitat Development and Management (647)
Field Border (386)
Fish Passage (396)
Forest Stand Improvement (666)
Hedgerow Planting (422)
Prescribed Burning (338)
Prescribed Forestry (409)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390)
Shallow Water Management for Wildlife (646)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Use Exclusion (472)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)

Inadequate Cover/Shelter

Brush Management (314)
Conservation Cover (327)
Critical Area Planting (342)
Early Successional Habitat Development and Management (647)
Field Border (386)
Fish Passage (396)
Forest Stand Improvement (666)
Hedgerow Planting (422)
Prescribed Burning (338)
Prescribed Forestry (409)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390)
Shallow Water Management for Wildlife (646)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Use Exclusion (472)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)

Inadequate Food

Brush Management (314)
Conservation Cover (327)
Critical Area Planting (342)
Early Successional Habitat Development and Management (647)
Field Border (386)
Fish Passage (396)
Forest Stand Improvement (666)
Hedgerow Planting (422)
Prescribed Burning (338)
Prescribed Forestry (409)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390)
Shallow Water Management for Wildlife (646)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Use Exclusion (472)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)

Inadequate Space

Brush Management (314)
Conservation Cover (327)
Early Successional Habitat Development and Management (647)
Field Border (386)
Fish Passage (396)
Forest Stand Improvement (666)
Hedgerow Planting (422)
Prescribed Burning (338)
Prescribed Forestry (409)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390)
Shallow Water Management for Wildlife (646)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Use Exclusion (472)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)

Inadequate Water

Fish Passage (396)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Shallow Water Management for Wildlife (646)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
Wildlife Watering Facility (648)

T&E Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern

Brush Management (314)
Conservation Cover (327)
Critical Area Planting (342)
Early Successional Habitat Development and Management (647)
Field Border (386)
Fish Passage (396)
Forest Stand Improvement (666)
Prescribed Burning (338)
Prescribed Forestry (409)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)

Use Exclusion (472)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)

Threatened and Endangered Fish and Wildlife Species

Critical Area Planting (342)
Early Successional Habitat Development and Management (647)
Fish Passage (396)
Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
Use Exclusion (472)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)

Soil Erosion Resource Concerns

- Shoreline Erosion
- Streambank Erosion

Practices Evaluated for Each Soil Erosion Resource Concern

Shoreline Erosion

Shoreline Erosion: Critical Area Planting (342)
Grade Stabilization Structure (410)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Use Exclusion (472)

Streambank Erosion

Shoreline Erosion: Critical Area Planting (342)
Grade Stabilization Structure (410)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390)
Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Use Exclusion (472)

Water Quality Resource Concerns

- Harmful Temperatures of Surface Waters

Practices Evaluated for Each Water Quality Resource Concern

Harmful Temperatures of Surface Waters

Riparian Forest Buffer (391)

Riparian Herbaceous Buffer (390)

Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)

Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)

Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)

Function 2: National Questions

National Priorities	Points
Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the restoration of declining or important native wildlife habitats?	100
Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the protection, restoration, development or enhancement of wildlife habitat for at-risk species which can include candidate species and State listed threatened and endangered species?	100
Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the protection, restoration, development or enhancement of wildlife habitat for Federally listed threatened and endangered wildlife species?	100
Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the reduction of invasive species on wildlife habitats?	100
Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the protection, restoration, development or enhancement of declining or important aquatic wildlife species' habitats?	100

Function 3: State Questions

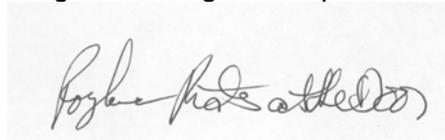
Issue Questions	Responses
1. Has the project been identified by any Federal, State, Local Agencies or NGO as being a high priority project or is the project identified in a federal, state or local management plan.	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
2. Does the project have direct impacts on a federal or state listed T&E species.	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
3. Is the property protected through a conservation easement such as: PDR, fee simple purchase, FFOS, Forest Legacy. This is only applicable to private landowners and NGO's.	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
4. Will a conservation practice be started within 12 months of signing the contract. i.e. If the first practice to be installed is a structural practice that requires engineering and permitting then it is likely that the answer is no.	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>

5. Will the project create, restore, or enhance one of the following habitats: Riparian Wetlands, Riparian Buffers, Wetlands, Tidal Wetlands, Early Successional Habitat, Grassland Habitat, Aquatic Ecosystems, Listed T&E Species.	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
6. Will the project create, restore, or enhance one of the following habitats: Old Field, Habitats in Wooded or Agricultural Landscapes.	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
7. Will the project create, restore, or enhance one of the following habitats: Urban Habitats or Small Woodlands (less than 10 acres)	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
8. NRCS practice average cost share is 75%	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
9. NRCS practices average cost share is less than 75% but > 50%	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
10. NRCS practice average cost share is less than 50%	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>

Function 4: Local Issues

Issue Questions	Responses
1. The Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) before restoration minus the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) after restoration is >0.8	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
2. The Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) before restoration minus the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) after restoration is <0.8 but > or equal to 0.6	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
3. The Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) before restoration minus the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) after restoration is < 0.6 or > or > or equal to 0.30	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
4. The Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) before restoration minus the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) after restoration is < 0.30	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
5. If located in the Northern District, are practices planned that will improve riparian/coastal buffer habitats?	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>
6. If located in the Northern District, are practices planned that will improve fish passage?	Yes <input type="radio"/> or No <input type="radio"/>

Contact: If you have questions or need assistance, please contact the Rhode Island WHIP Program Manager, Joseph Bachand, at 401-822-8818



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State Conservationist