BACKGROUND

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) policy requires CRP participants to perform mid-contract management beginning with the Sign-Up 26 (2003). These management activities are designed to ensure plant diversity and improve wildlife habitat while protecting the soil and water resources. Mid-contract management activities are to be conducted in years four through six of a 10-year contract.

This worksheet describes the management activities to be performed on fields based on an evaluation of the CRP cover. With the information contained in this worksheet as well as other information provided by the NRCS, the listed activities need to be implemented on the identified CRP field(s). These activities need to meet standards and specifications. These actions are requirements of CRP and failure to perform them when needed may result in a contract violation.

PURPOSE OF PRACTICE

CRP grasses have been found that after years of nonuse by livestock can become decadent and will actually die out. To ensure the continued value and health of the stand to protect the soil and improve wildlife habitat, one or more of the eligible Mid Contract Management practices should be performed. These eligible practices include: Light Disking, Inter-seeding, Prescribed Burning, Managed Haying, and Managed Grazing. These practices are described on the following page. For CRP- SAFE contracts refer to the proposal as the eligible MCM practices are limited as to which of the mentioned practices may be applied.

DEVELOPING RECOMMENDATIONS

To develop recommendations for improving CRP stands an inventory must be completed on the existing stand to determine the stands condition and diversity. (Run 1 transect /40 Ac with a max. of 3 per contract regardless of acreage).

1. Is erosion being controlled? Yes or No
2. What WHEG or WSM was filled out? Before score _____ After score _____

   _____
3. Estimated lbs of biomass/acre? _____

FROM LINE-POINT TRANSECTS

Average number of species found each – Grass, Forb, Shrub _____
Average percent of canopy - _____
Average percent of basal vegetative cover - - - - - - - - - - - - - _____
Average percent of bare ground - _____
Average canopy height - _____

The following are the Mid-Contract Management options and/or in combination of each other are open to Colorado CRP participants:

LIGHT DISKING

Disking breaks up thick grass stands to invigorate existing species and allows annual forbs, wildflowers, and legumes to establish, as well as providing increased bare ground to help small animals move through the field, find seeds, and create dusting sites. If light disking is indicated as a needed management activity, the following are some specifics of applying this practice:

- Disking should be done across the slope or on the contour and in strips.
- Rotate the disturbed areas across the field.
- Do not disk areas where noxious weeds are prevalent.

PRESCRIBED BURNING

Prescribed burning reduces litter and provides bare soil for germination of desirable plants. It can also help control unwanted weeds and brush. A separate job sheet, an approved burn plan will be developed before burning the CRP acreage. If prescribed burning is indicated as a needed management activity, the following are some of the specifics of applying this practice:

- Prescribed burning must be done according to an approved burn plan written in accordance with state and county laws.
- Burning in early spring can help control invasive species like downy brome.

INTERSEEDING

It may be necessary to seed plant species that are missing from the stand and are not likely to establish naturally. These species will improve diversity of the stand and its value for a variety of wildlife. If interseeding is indicated as a needed management activity, the following are some of the specifics of applying this practice:

- Areas to be seeded will likely require one of the above disturbance activities prior to seeding.
- Follow listed rates, timing, and seeding methods in Plant Materials Tech Note 59.

MANAGED GRAZING

Livestock may be useful in altering the plant community on the CRP acreage. This may provide improved plant diversity and variation in plant height and density. If managed grazing is indicated as a needed management activity, the following are some of the specifics of applying this practice:

- Grazing must be done in accordance with an approved grazing management plan.
- The CRP acreage may not be grazed during the Primary Nesting Season.
- The grazing period can be no more than 75 days and must be completed by September 30th.

MANAGED HAYING

Removal of dried forage through managed haying is the last option for mid-contract management. This option provides removal of dead litter and provides sun and space for reinvigorating existing species while reducing competition to allow of other desirable species to sprout.

- Haying can only be done in accordance with an approved haying plan.

- Haying must be done outside the primary nesting season.
- Haying operations must be completed 120 days after the primary nesting season which would be (Nov. 16th)

RECOMMENDATION AS DISCUSSED WITH PRODUCER:

Producer's Signature: _____

LANDOWNER:		**DATE:**	
PREPARED BY:		**TOTAL ACRES:**	
TRACT NUMBER(s):		**FIELD NUMBER(s):**	
ORIGINAL COVER (CP Practice):			
TARGETED WILDLIFE SPECIES (if any):			
DESCRIBE PURPOSE OF MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY:			

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY PLANNED		
☐	Light Disking	Refer to NRCS practice standard 548 interim CRP specification.
☐	Prescribed Burning	Refer to NRCS practice standard 338 Prescribed Burning for specifications.
☐	Interseeding	Refer to NRCS practice standard 550 interim CRP specifications
☐	Managed Grazing	Refer to NRCS practice standard 528 interim CRP specifications.
☐	Managed Haying	Refer to NRCS practice standard 511 interim CRP specifications.
☐	No Management	Complete field assessment and write letter to producer explaining findings are outlining recommendations (this goes to producer only). Producer then requests a waiver from FSA.

CRP -- Line-Point Transects

Field Number: _____ **Transect #:** _____ **Producer:** _____

Date of Survey: _____ **Observer:** _____

Pt.	Species	Canopy Height	Residue	Basal Veg.	Bare Surface	Pt.	Species	Canopy Height	Residue	Basal Veg.	Bare Surface
1						26					
2						27					
3						28					
4						29					
5						30					
6						31					
7						32					
8						33					
9						34					
10						35					
11						36					
12						37					
13						38					
14						39					
15						40					
16						41					
17						42					
18						43					
19						44					
20						45					
21						46					
22						47					
23						48					
24						49					
25						50					
					Total						

Species - Common Name

Canopy Height - looking straight down @ 4' above ground (*do not include seed head*)

Basal Veg - point hit a live plant

Residue – point hit residue

Bare Ground -point hit bare ground

Multiple total by 2 to get %

Note: Can use toe transect method