

## Old Field/Shrubland Habitat Assessment Guide

Landowner Name:	
Evaluator:	Date:

**Instructions:** This assessment shall be used to identify the habitat limiting factors for old field/shrubland dependent wildlife species. This habitat assessment guide should not be used for sites associated with agricultural tracts (i.e., do not use when doing whole farm planning for agricultural lands). Each field must be assessed and scored individually. Weighted averages are not allowed.

If the evaluation determines that the current habitat quality is less than 0.5 (on a scale of 0 to 1), recommendations will be made to improve the existing habitat so the planned (future) condition will have a quality rating of 0.5 or more. **If wildlife is the client's primary objective, the land unit must achieve a quality rating of 0.7 or better.** If the evaluation determines that the current condition is equal to or greater than 0.5 (or 0.7 if wildlife in the primary objective), recommendations will be made to maintain the existing habitat in its present condition.

For all the habitat components below, select the habitat description that most closely mirrors the field(s) being appraised and enter that value in the table. Both the existing and planned conditions must be evaluated.

**1. Patch Size.** Estimate the patch size (it will generally be the same as the field size unless similar habitat is directly adjacent).

- >10 acres = 10
- 3 to <5 acres = 5
- 5 to 10 acres = 7
- <3 acres = 1

	Site No.				
<i>Existing Condition</i>					
<i>Planned Condition</i>					

**2. Vegetative Structure**

- >50% shrub cover, remaining in herbaceous vegetation = 10
- Roughly >30-50% shrub cover, remaining in herbaceous cover or scattered sapling/pole sized trees = 8
- Roughly 15-30% shrub cover, remaining in herbaceous cover or scattered sapling/pole sized trees = 5
- Site predominantly herbaceous cover or sapling/pole sized trees with little to no shrubs = 1

	Site No.				
<i>Existing Condition</i>					
<i>Planned Condition</i>					

**3. Plant Species Diversity**

- High species diversity, including >2 native, fruit bearing shrub species = 10
- Moderate species diversity, including 1-2 native, fruit bearing shrub species = 5
- Low species diversity and/or  $\geq 30\%$  exotic invasive plant species = 1

	Site No.				
<i>Existing Condition</i>					
<i>Planned Condition</i>					

**4. Average Height of Shrubs** – Determine the percentage of the woody cover in each field having shrubs from 2 feet to 6 feet in height and stems less than 3 inches in diameter.

- 86 – 100% of the woody cover meets the above description = 10
- 61-85% of the woody cover meets the above description = 8
- 46-60% of the woody cover meets the above description = 6
- 30-45% of the woody cover meets the above description = 4
- <30% of the woody cover meets the above description = 0

	Site No.				
Existing Condition					
Planned Condition					

**5. Management of Site**

- No disturbance April 15 to September 15 & managed for diversity and perpetuation of varying vegetative heights and structure over time (e.g. cut on a 3-7 year rotation) = 10
- No disturbance April 15 to September 15, site will be allowed to succeed to forest = 5
- Occasional disturbance between April 15 and August 1 = 3
- Yearly disturbance between April 15 and August 1 = 1

	Site No.				
Existing Condition					
Planned Condition					

**Scoring**

For each site being evaluated, enter the before and after values for every habitat component. There is a total of 50 points possible. Divide the total for each site (both the existing and planned conditions) by 50. This will give you a value between 0 and 1, which represents the habitat value of the particular field for old field/shrubland dependent wildlife species in the existing condition and in the planned condition.

	Patch Size	Vegetative Structure	Plant Species Diversity	Shrub Height	Mgmt.of Site	Total Points	Habitat Value (total/50)
<b>Site No.</b>							
Existing Condition							
Planned Condition							
<b>Site No.</b>							
Existing Condition							
Planned Condition							
<b>Site No.</b>							
Existing Condition							
Planned Condition							
<b>Site No.</b>							
Existing Condition							
Planned Condition							