

WILDLIFE HABITAT EVALUATION INVENTORY WORKSHEET FOR LENTIC³ SYSTEMS

Client: _____ Date: _____ Farm No.: _____
Tract(s): _____ Field(s): _____ Acres: _____
Conservationist: _____

This Wildlife Habitat Evaluation inventory worksheet lists a number of habitat considerations/elements related to wildlife values for "lentic" wetland habitats. Wetlands¹ such as marshes, bogs, and wet meadows, occur where the entire soil profile is saturated during the active growing season and the potential vegetation is dominated by species adapted to saturated soil conditions ("obligate wet²" and "facultative wet²" plants). Other wetland types may exhibit wetland features early in the growing season but will normally lack obvious wetland characteristics during the summer and fall. The present vegetation of these seasonal or temporary wetlands is typically dominated by "obligate wet²" and "facultative wet²" plants during the wetter(early) part of the growing season while "facultative upland²" and "obligate upland²" plants (usually annuals) may be prevalent in the drier part of the growing season. In assessing seasonally flooded and temporarily flooded types of wetlands, the time of year and seasonality of the vegetation must be considered and the evaluator should be familiar with the ecology of these wetland types. Although intermittently flooded areas (*i.e.*, playas and small, low-lying, depressional areas [playettes]) are often important to wildlife, these areas are not considered wetlands as they do not have hydric soils or support hydrophytes.

Check (✓) the type of water regime for the wetland being evaluated:

Permanently Flooded: *Water covers the land surface throughout the year in all years. Vegetation is composed of obligate hydrophytes².*

Semi-permanently Flooded: *Surface water persists throughout the growing season in most years. When surface water is absent, the water table is usually at or very near the land surface.*

Seasonally Flooded: *Surface water is present for extended periods especially early in the growing season, but is absent by the end of the season in most years. When the surface water is absent, the water table is often near the land surface.*

Temporarily Flooded: *Surface water is present for brief periods during the growing season, but the water table usually lies well below the soil surface for most of the season. Plants that grow both in uplands and wetlands are characteristic of the temporarily flooded regime.*

The wetland area evaluated must score a rating of 0.5 for each habitat consideration/element listed in the Wildlife Habitat Index to substantiate reporting conservation practice Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (Code 644).

WILDLIFE HABITAT INDEX (WETLAND HABITATS)

HABITAT CONSIDERATION	HABITAT POINTS	PRESENT	PLANNED	APPLIED
PHYSICAL DEGRADATION				
None (or restored wetland)	1.0			
<i>Subtract 0.2 of a point from the maximum (1.0) for each of the following conditions:</i>				
Removal of woody vegetation	- 0.2			
Presence of operational drainage ditch(s)	- 0.2			
Presence of operational inflow diversion(s)	- 0.2			
Filled	- 0.2			
Leveled	- 0.2			
Total rating for degraded wetland conditions				

PROPER FUNCTIONING CONDITION (PFC) FOR LENTIC³ (STANDING WATER) WETLAND HABITATS				
PFC Rating is <i>Proper Functioning</i>	1.0			
PFC Rating is <i>Functional-At Risk w/Trend Upward</i>	0.8 to 0.9			
PFC Rating is <i>Functional-At Risk w/Trend Not Apparent</i>	0.5 to 0.7			
PFC Rating is <i>Functional-At Risk w/Trend Downward</i>	0.1 to 0.4			
PFC Rating is <i>Non-Functional</i>	0			

GRAZING MANAGEMENT (Refer to NRCS conservation practice Prescribed Grazing (Code 528) standard and specifications)				
Wetland area evaluated is not grazed	1.0			
Grazing management meets NRCS practice standard and specifications. (<i>i.e., periods of grazing and rest are identified; minimum stubble height for utilization of herbaceous vegetation established and maintained; browse utilization levels and recruitment objectives established and attained</i>). Documentation of livestock forage utilization can be made using NV-ECS-01 or NV-ECS-414. Documentation of livestock browse utilization and recruitment can be made using NV-ECS-416.	0.5 to 1.0			
Grazing management does <u>not</u> meet NRCS conservation practice standard and specifications.	0 to 0.4			

PLANT COMMUNITY COMPOSITION (Percent composition based on plant density [number plants/unit area])				
75 to 100% native plants	0.8 to 1.0			
50 to 74% native plants	0.5 to 0.7			
25 to 49% native plants	0.1 to 0.4			
Less than 25% native plants	0			

WILDLIFE HABITAT INDEX (WETLAND HABITATS) *continued*

HABITAT CONSIDERATION	HABITAT POINTS	PRESENT	PLANNED	APPLIED
PLANT DIVERSITY				
More than 8 perennial obligate wet ² or facultative wet ² plant species	0.8 to 1.0			
5 to 7 perennial obligate wet ² or facultative wet ² plant species	0.5 to 0.7			
2 to 4 perennial obligate wet ² or facultative wet ² plant species	0.1 to 0.4			
0 to 1 perennial obligate wet ² or facultative wet ² plant species	0			
WATER DEVELOPMENTS (<i>spring development or excavated pond</i>)				
No water development (spring/seep or excavated pond) is included within wetland area being evaluated.	1.0			
Developed spring/seep or excavated pond is not fenced and fully accessible to all wildlife.	0.9 to 1.0			
Developed spring/seep provides water to wildlife at the spring source. Spring source is fenced with a wildlife-friendly fence. The tank/trough has an escape ramp built to NRCS-approved specifications/design. Pond is accessible to wildlife. If the pond is fenced, the fence is wildlife-friendly.	0.5 to 0.8			
Spring is developed and all available water is going to tank/trough. The tank/trough does not have escape ramps. The tank/trough has restricted access for wildlife and bats. Pond is <u>not</u> accessible to some (especially deer and antelope) wildlife.	0 to 0.4			

Total Wetland Habitat Points (*6 points maximum*) =

Wetland Habitat Index (*Total Points/6*) =

NOTES:

¹For a more complete definition of wetlands and wetland habitats see, Cowardin, L.M., V. Carter, F.C. Golet, and E.T. LaRoe. 1979. Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States. Reprinted 1992. U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service.

²For wetland plant classifications see, US Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service. 1988. National List of Plant Species that Occur in Wetlands: Nevada. Biological report 88(26.8); and 1995 Supplement to the List of Plant Species that Occur in Wetlands: Intermountain (Region 8).

³US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. 1994. Riparian Area Management: Process for Assessing Proper Functioning Condition for Lentic Riparian-Wetland Areas. TR1737-11 1994.