

WILDLIFE HABITAT EVALUATION GUIDE
UPLAND GAME BIRDS

Date of Survey _____ Time Start _____ Time End _____
Observer! Recorder _____ Weather _____
Name of landowner _____ Location _____
Current land-use practice/irrigation method _____
Project-related changes _____

GROUP MODEL

Representative Species: Mourning dove and Ring-necked pheasant.

Habitat: Mourning doves occupy a wide-variety of habitats. Pheasants occur in croplands, hay and grain fields, hedgerows, marshes, and other open habitats.

Special Habitat Requirements: Doves require trees for nesting and perching and nearby water. The pheasant requires moderately dense vegetation for nesting and winter cover.

Food Habits: Doves feed mainly on seeds of grasses and cultivated grains with some snails eaten during spring. Pheasants feed primarily on cultivated grains, weed seeds, fruit, insects, and other invertebrates:

HABITAT INVENTORY

RATING

a. Cropland Quantity and Quality

a. ____

Percent of area in cropland:

41- 60%	= 1.0
21- 40% or 61- 80%	=0.5
11-20% or 81- 90%	=0.3
0-10%or91-100%	=0.1

Deduct 0.3 - 0.5 points for any heavy (e.g., moldboard plow) tillage, burning, grazing, or other destruction of crop residue, or pesticide application that would reduce cover and food supply.

Rationale: Croplands can provide essential food and cover for doves and pheasants depending upon farming practices. Some interspersions of non-cultivated areas with cropland is important to maintain adequate food and cover. Clean-farming practices and extensive use of pesticides are detrimental to these species.

b. Herbaceous Vegetation Quantity and Quality

b. ____

Percent of area with uncultivated herbaceous vegetation:

41-60%	= 1.0
21- 40% or 61- 80%	=0.5
11-20%or 81- 90%	= 0.3
0-10%or 91 -100%	= 0.1

Deduct 0.3 -0.5 points for any heavy (e.g., moldboard plow) tillage, burning, grazing, or pesticide application that would reduce cover and food supply.

Add 0.3 -0.5 if suitable nest trees are present for doves near the study site.

Rationale: Herbaceous vegetation can provide food as well as essential nesting, escape, and thermal cover. A balance of herbaceous cover and cropland is optimum.

c. Woody Vegetation Quantity and Quality c. ___

Percent of area with woody vegetation (shrubs and trees):

21-40%	= 1.0
41- 60%	= 0.5
11-20% or 61- 80%	= 0.3
0-10% or 81- 100%	= 0.1

Deduct 0.3 points for heavy grazing, burning, herbicide application, etc. Add 0.3 points if trees are suitable for use as nest sites.

Rationale: Mourning doves require trees or large shrubs for nesting. However, excessive amounts of woody vegetation diminishes open foraging habitat.

d. Interspersion of Vegetation Types d. __

Avg. distance between vegetation types 50-200 feet	= 1.0
Avg. distance between vegetation types 200-500 feet	= 0.5
Avg. distance between vegetation types <50 feet	= 0.3
Avg. distance between vegetation types > 500 feet	= 0.1

Rationale: Most members of this group are highly mobile and often travel lengthy distances between feeding and roosting sites. However, long distances between feeding and roosting areas could result in excessive energy expenditure.

e. Human Disturbance e. ___

Infrequently used roads; no occupied dwellings in study area; urban development at least 1/2 mile away	= 1.0
Occasionally used roads; 1 occupied dwelling per 40 acres; urban development 1/4 to 1/2 mile away	= 0.5
Study area <40 acres; contains 2 or more occupied dwellings or frequently used roads; within 1/4 mile of urban development	= 0.3

Rationale: Human activity and harassment can sometimes deter members of this group from otherwise suitable habitat.

f. Lakes, Ponds, Wetlands, Streams f. ___

Avg. distance from any point in study area to perennial lake, pond, stream or other wetland is <1/4 mile =1.0

Avg. distance from any point in study area to perennial stream or wetland is 1/4 to 1/2 mile or average distance from any point in study area to seasonal stream or wetland is < 1/4 mile =0.5

Avg. distance from any point in study area to perennial wetland is 1/2 -1 miles or average distance from any point in study area to intermittent lake, pond, stream, or wetland is 1/4 - 1/2 mile = 0.3

Avg. distance from any point in study area to a perennial wetland is greater than 1 mile or average distance from any point in study area to intermittent wetland is 1/2-1 mile = 0.1

Deduct 0.2-0.5 points for any grazing, cultivation, burning, vegetation removal or pesticide use within 1/2 mile of lake, pond, wetland or stream

Add 0.3 -0.5 if wetlands present include suitable perch and/or nest sites for mourning doves.

Rationale: Dense wetland vegetation (e.g. Bulrush) is known to provide important thermal and escape cover for pheasants.

HABITAT VALUE

Habitat value = $\frac{\text{Total Rating}}{\text{No. of inventory factors rated}}$

LIMITING FACTORS

ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

