LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN HABITAT ASSESSMENT FOR SANDSAGEBRUSH AND GRASSLAND HABITATS

Landowner Name: **Date:**

Project Location/Legal Description:

			BM	Planned
	Instructions: Score by using a "x" adjacent to appropriate Benchmark and/or Planned condition.		**ACRES**	
A.	**HUMAN CAUSED HABITAT FRAGMENTATION**			
	This section includes habitat fragmentations which may, or may not, be under the ability of the applicant to control. They are included in the evaluation to serve as a screening tool; to determining if the area has the potential to be suitable habitat for the lesser prairie-chicken.			
1.)	**Abundance of Primary Roads** (heavily maintained county roads, state highways, interstates, and gas/oil lease roads) Within One Mile Radius (2000 Acres). Estimate from center of evaluation unit. Ranch roads should not be included in evaluation.			
a	No primary roads within area	5		
b	Primary roads on ≤ 50% of section lines	3		
c	Primary roads on >50% of section lines (or more frequent than by section)	0		
	Assigned Point Value			
2.)	**Abundance of Man-Made Vertical Structures** Within One Mile Radius (2000 Acres). Count farmsteads and associated structures as 1-structure. Estimate from center of evaluation unit. Include all transmission line poles, wind turbines, cell phone towers, buildings (i.e. homes, barns, etc.), and tank batteries. Do not count working or functioning stock water windmills.			
a	No vertical structures present.	5		
b	Two or fewer vertical structures.	3		
c	More than two vertical structures.	0		
	Assigned Point Value			
3.)	**Abundance of Oil and Gas Wells** Within One Mile Radius (2000 Acres). Estimate from center of evaluation unit.			
a	No pump jacks or active gas well present.	5		
b	Fewer than or equal to one pump jack or gas well in every quarter section on average	3		
c	More than one pump jack or gas well every quarter section on average	0		
	Assigned Point Value			
B.	**POTENTIALLY MANAGEABLE FRAGMENTATION**			
4.)	**Percent of Area Identified as Native Grassland or CRP** Within One Mile Radius (2000 Acres). (Do not include cool season pastures/hayland/CRP or CRP monocultures). Estimate percentage of landuse type from the center of the evaluation unit(s)			
a	>75 Percent	15		
b	50 - 74 percent	7		
c	25 - 49 percent	3		
d	10 - 24 percent	1		
e	<10 percent	0		
	Assigned Point Value			
5.)	**Woody Invasion*** Evaluate woody cover from within the entire unit OR a one mile radius of the center of the evaluation unit, whichever is larger.			
a	No woody encroachment on grassland OR woody cover restricted to low elevation, narrow riparian areas (Lowland or Class I soils) or sand dunes.	15		
b	Woody encroachment is low density in the uplands but not widely scattered. None of the tree motts exceed 1/2 acre in size.	7		
c	Woody enroachment widely scattered invading uplands or a mott > 1/2 acre is present	3		
	Assigned Point Value			
6.)	**Potential of Mortality by Fence Collision** *Consider flight collision impacts near known "active" leks within the project area. Active is defined as leks that have been used at least once in the last five years. Only consider permanent multi-stranded fence lines, do NOT include temporary "hot wire" in the assessment.*			
a.	No permanent fences are within a 0.5 miles radius of an active lek.	5		
b.	Fences (existing or planned), or other flight obstructions, are marked within a 0.5 mile radius of an active lek; and the fence does not bisect the lek.	3		
c.	Potential flight collision structures are unmarked within a 0.5 mile radius of an active lek and/or the fence bisects the lek.	0		
	Assigned Point Value			

C. HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Nesting Habitat

7.) **Quantity of Nesting Habitat** Within a One Mile Radius (2000 acres)
Estimate from the center of the evaluation unit for the period of April 15 - June 15. Sand sagebrush taller than 3 foot can provide nesting cover, however, in cases of other woody cover >3ft do not include as nesting cover.

a	>50 percent of area composed of native grass and/or shrubs with canopy cover >45% and plant height averaging between 11-20"	20
b	30 - 50 percent of area composed of native grass and/or shrubs with canopy cover >45% and plant height averaging 11-20"	14
c	<30 percent of area composed of native grass and/or shrubs with canopy cover >45% and plant height averaging 11-20"	2
d	None of the area contains native grass and/or shrub cover with canopy cover >45% and plant height averaging 11-20"	0
	Assigned Point Value	

D. Brood Habitat

8.) **Brood Cover Quantity**** Within a Half Mile Radius (approx. 500 acres)
Estimate from the center of the evaluation unit from June 15 - August 15. Estimate the percentage of ground obscured by forbs >12" tall. Do not include vegetation >3 feet or invasive species.

a	>30% of the evaluation area >20% forb cover	10
b	>30% of the evaluation area has 10-20% forb cover	6
c	>30% of the evaluation area has 5-10% forb cover	3
d	>30% of the evaluation area has <5% forb cover	0
	Assigned Point Value	

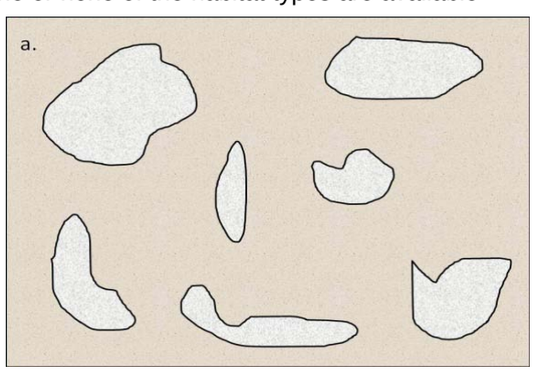
9.) **Accessibility of Brood Habitat** Within a Half Mile Radius (500 acres)
Estimate from the center of the evaluation unit from June 15 - August 15. Estimate the percentage of bare earth or short grasses (<2") at ground level.

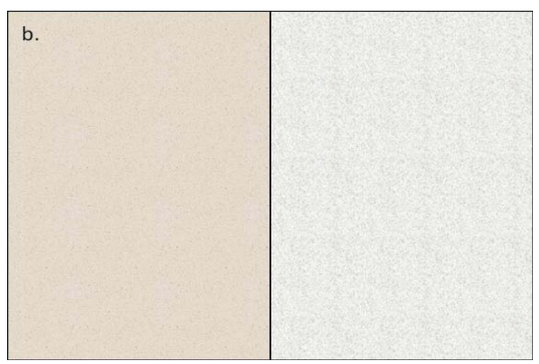
a	30 -50 percent of area averages >30% bare ground or short grazed grasses	10
b	10-30 percent of area averages >30% bare ground or short grazed grasses	5
c	<10 percent OR >50 percent of area averages >30% bare ground or short grazed grasses	0
	Assigned Point Value	

E. Juxtaposition of Habitats

10.) **Proximity of Habitats** Within a Half Mile Radius (500 acres)
Estimate on June 15 from center of evaluation unit. See below definitions for description of nesting and brood habitat.

a	Brood and nest habitat are both available in more than two distinct patches (i.e. mosaic pattern)	10
b	Brood and nest habitat are both available but in two distinct blocks	5
c	Only one or none of the habitat types are available	0





Assigned Point Value

Comments:

	BM	Planned
Total Points	0	0
Maximum	100	

Notes:
* Invasive woody species includes osage orange, elm, russian olive, eastern red cedar, mesquite, or hyrbrid shinnery oak motts. Woody encroachment may be defined as widely scattered invasions on uplands and exceed an average 5% canopy cover.
** Noxious weeds are not included in determining amount of brood cover
Nesting Habitat = An area where canopy cover of residual grasses and/or shrubs (not trees) is >45% from April 15 - June 15 with an average plant height of 11-20" for LEPC.
Brood Habitat : an area where >20% of the ground is obscured by forbs >12". Cover at ground level averages >30% bare ground or short grazed grasses (<2"). Good brood habitat provides food (i.e. insects & seeds) , overhead protection from predators, and is easily traversed by young chicks. This habitat type needs to be available from June 15 - August 15.

LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN INITIATIVE