Grazing Management Plan
Practice Activity Code (110) (No.)

1. Definition

A grazing management plan is a site specific conservation plan developed for a client which addresses one or more resource concerns on land where grazing related activities or practices will be planned and applied.

The grazing management plan will:

a) Meet NRCS quality criteria for soil erosion control, water quality, fish and wildlife, rangeland/pasture/grazed woodland health and productivity, and other identified resource concerns.

b) Will be developed following the principle provided in Chapter 11 of the National Range and Pasture Handbook.

c) Comply with federal, state, tribal, and local laws, regulations, and permit requirements.

c) Meet the client's objectives.

2. Grazing Management Plan Technical Criteria

This section establishes the minimum criteria to be addressed in the development of Grazing Management Plans.

A. General Criteria

1. An Environmental Evaluation (EE) (CPA 52) is to be prepared for all activity plans to demonstrate NRCS compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Endangered Species Act, Environmental Justice, Air Quality, and other designated environmental concerns and environmental laws. The environmental effects from the activity plans on environmental resource concerns should be clearly documented on the EE (CPA-52 form). The following is abbreviated guidance for preparation of the EE:

a. Planners and TSPs should follow the EE guidance delineated in the National Environmental Compliance Handbook.

b. The EE describes the existing conditions for all applicable resource concerns.

c. The EE will assess the resources potentially impacted by the no action, proposed action and any reasonable alternatives.

d. Guide sheets will accompany the EE, as needed, to provide information on how to assess and deal with special environmental concerns.

e. The findings section of the EE is to identify whether NRCS has determined based on the analysis of the EE: (1) that a site specific environmental assessment (EA) or an environmental impact statement (EIS) should be prepared based on the significance of potential impacts, or (2) the EE can be tiered to a state, regional, or national programmatic EA or EIS because the proposed effects have been sufficiently analyzed in a state, regional, national programmatic EA or EIS.

f. TSP and planners are required to complete NRCS' Level I Environmental Compliance training prior to prepare any EE CPA 52.

Conservation Systems are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this system, contact your Natural Resources Conservation Service State Office, or visit the Field Office Technical Guide.

2. A Grazing Management Plan shall be developed by certified Technical Service Providers (TSPs). In accordance with Section 1240 (A), the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) program provides funding support through contracts with eligible producers to obtain services of certified TSPs for development of Grazing Management Plans. The specific TSP criteria required for Grazing Management Plan development is located on the TSP registry (TechReg) web site at: http://techreg.usda.gov/

B. Background and site information

   1. Landowner information – name, address, operation, size
   2. Location and plan map of parcel

C. Identify Client Objectives such as:

   1. Forage yield, quality, diversity, and persistence.
   2. Meet livestock nutritional needs.
   3. Maximize browse, forage and roughage pasture yields.
   4. Improve cost efficiency.
   5. Maintain or improve wildlife habitat.
   6. Maintain or improve water quality
   7. Prevent or reduce erosion
   8. Pollinator habitat and pollinator protection
   9. Others as appropriate

D. Existing Conditions

   1. Consult Ecological Site Description as reference condition
   2. Vegetative species, diversity, and condition by land use, ecological site and forage suitability group.
   3. Animal types, (breed and species including wildlife) and number
   4. Acres available
   5. Waste handling and storage
   6. Watering system
   7. Fencing
   8. Documentation of existing practices/history/grazing records
   9. Current forage and roughage conditions
   10. Current Animal demand/forage balance (livestock and wildlife)
   11. All Resource concerns (not meeting Quality Criteria)

E. Desired Future Conditions

   1. Record Keeping
   2. Monitoring Plan

3. O & M for practices
4. Nutrient Management as applicable
5. Fencing
6. Animal Demand / Forage/Roughage Balance
7. Adequate Water Source(s)
8. Plant species composition

F. Grazing Land Planning Documentation

1. Conservation plan map –scale, north arrow, planned and existing boundaries, fields, paddocks, watering systems, fence, land use, appropriate map symbols, identification of forage suitability groups and/or ecological sites by field
2. Grazing distribution and key grazing sites and species
3. Soils map – legend, interpretations, forage suitability index for grazing activities, ecological site descriptions
4. Resource Concerns addressed by the conservation plan
5. Contingency plans for winter, drought, fire, flood mud, mortality, bio-security, etc.
6. Planned Animal demand /forage balance (livestock and wildlife)
7. Conservation plan (record of decisions) *(Utilizing Customer Service Toolkit – Plug-In or MsWord Document)* to address the resource needs for the "Grazing Management Plan". The record of decisions shall include the planned practice, schedule for implementation, and site specific specifications to apply the conservation practice. The site specific specifications can be on an NRCS Jobsheet available for the conservation practice or in a narrative form for the non-engineering type practices. Planned engineering type practices shall include the conservation practice, schedule of implementation, and identified on the plan map. The plan may include, but are not limited to the conservation practices listed below:

   * Essential practices

   - Brush Management (314)
   - Fencing (382)*
   - Firebreak (394)
   - Forage Harvest Management (511)
   - Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment (548)
   - Nutrient Management (590)
   - Pasture and Hay Planting (512)
   - Prescribed Grazing (528)*
   - Range Planting (550)
   - Use Exclusion (472)

- Watering Facility (614)*

8. Additional practices for consideration but not planned. Planning of these practices will be conducted by appropriately certified NRCS or TSP planners.

- Channel Bank Vegetation (322)
- Prescribed Burning (338)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Pond (378)
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)
- Silvopasture Establishment (381)
- Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390)
- Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
- Pipeline (516)
- Heavy Use Area Protection (561)
- Spring Development (574)
- Animal trails and Walkways (575)
- Streambank and Shoreline protection (580)
- Pest Management (595)
- Water Well (642)
- Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
- Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
- Early Succession Habitat Development (647)
- Wetland restoration (657)
- Wetland Creation (658)
- Wetland Enhancement (659)

3. Deliverables for the Client – a hardcopy of the plan that includes:

- Cover page – name, address, phone of client and TSP; Total Acres of the Plan, signature blocks for the TSP, producer, and a signature block for the NRCS acceptance.
- Soils map and appropriate soil descriptions
- Resource assessment results (wind and water erosion, water availability, soil fertility, and others that may be needed)
- For management practices. The planned practices and the site specific specifications on how each practice will be applied; when the practice will be applied, and the extent (acres or number) that will be applied.
- For engineering/structural practices. The planned practice when it will be applied and extent, and located on the conservation plan map.

4. Deliverables for NRCS Field Office:

- Complete Hardcopy and Electronic copy of the client's plan (MsWord copy).
- Digital Conservation Plan Map with fields, features, and structural practices located.
- Digital Soils Map.
- Completed CPA 52 and appropriate worksheets.