

**Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM09 – Grazing management to improve wildlife habitat**



**Enhancement Description**

Implement a grazing management plan that will allow for rest periods to provide adequate residue for nesting and fawning cover and increase diversity of vegetation structure to benefit a variety of wildlife species.

**Land Use Applicability**

Pastureland, Rangeland, Forestland

**Benefits**

Wildlife habitat can be greatly improved through proper grazing management. Proper grazing management is essential to healthy wildlife populations because plants supply many species of birds and animals with food and cover for nesting, fawning, loafing, roosting, travel and escape from predators and adverse weather. These include song birds, quail, turkey, pheasants, deer, and rabbits to name just a few. Some species of ground nesting grassland birds are in decline and others have become uncommon. Healthy stands of forage can be managed to provide habitat for a wide array of wildlife.

**Conditions Where Enhancement Applies**

This enhancement applies to all pasture (including silvopasture), range or forest land use acres.

**Criteria**

1. Defer 33% of the grazing land on the land use from grazing during the nesting/fawning season each year.
2. Develop and implement a written grazing management plan that identifies the following:
  - a. wildlife management objectives for grazing land,
  - b. targeted wildlife species,
  - c. nesting or fawning dates,
  - d. the location and number of acres to be deferred each year,
  - e. a schedule for the year of deferment, and
  - f. stocking rates that will allow proper forage utilization while maintaining proper plant heights that provide food and shelter for wildlife and maintain plant health.

**Additional criteria for silvopasture**

1. Inventory the habitat condition of the silvopasture, the farm, and adjoining farms to determine habitat needs for the targeted wildlife.
2. Use one or more of the following methods to improve habitat for the targeted species.
  - a. Establish additional understory vegetation (e.g., native grass, forbs and shrubs) that will improve habitat conditions for the targeted species.



- b. Establish clusters of other tree species if needed as a food source (e.g., oaks for mast).
- c. Manage tree canopy to achieve the desired understory plant community.
- d. Leave some dead or dying trees as snags if cavity nesting wildlife is targeted.
- e. Remove trees or invasive plants that do not provide the desired habitat.
- f. Replace removed trees by planting new trees or shrubs that will provide the desired habitat.
- g. Thin less desirable trees to encourage the growth of trees that will provide the desired wildlife habitat.

### **Adoption Requirements**

This enhancement is considered adopted when a grazing management plan targeting selected wildlife species has been written and one-third of the grazing land is avoided during the nesting/fawning season each year as prescribed.

### **Documentation Requirements**

- 1. A schedule of when grazing activities occurred documenting that grazing activities were deferred on a minimum of 33% of the available acreage.
- 2. A map showing the acreage where these activities are applied.

### **References**

Holechek J. L., R. Valdez, S.D. Schemnitz, R.D. Pieper and C.A. Davis. 1982. Wildlife Society Bulletin Vol. 10, No. 3: 204-210.

Lyons, R.K. and B.D. Wright. 2003. Using Livestock to Manage Wildlife Habitat. Available electronically from <http://hdl.handle.net/1969.1/87188>.

Nistler, C. M., J. Boren and D. Rollins. 2006. Proceedings – Symposia: Prescribed Livestock Grazing to Enhance Wildlife Habitat. 112 pages. Society for Range Management.

Undersander, D., S. Temple and J. Bartlet and L. Paine. 2000. Grassland Birds: Fostering Habitats using Rotational Grazing. University of Wisconsin-Extension Publication A3715.

USDA-NRCS. 2010. Conservation Practice Standard: Prescribed Grazing-Code 528.



### Utah State Supplement 2015 to ANM09

Nesting/fawning season is Apr 1 – July 15.

The following conservation measures are required to be planned and implemented with this enhancement in all sage grouse habitat:

Enhancement Name	Enhancement Code 2015 (Old Code <sup>^</sup> )	Associated SGI Practices (Code)	Conservation Measures <sup>+</sup>
Grazing Management to Improve Wildlife Habitat	ANM09	512, 528, 550, 645	1, 2, 3, 10

See full table complete list of conservation measures in FOTG for more information.

### Sage Grouse Initiative Supplement 2015 for ANM09

#### Benefits to Sage Grouse

Planned grazing systems will provide adequate cover for sage grouse and can be implemented to increase residual cover of perennial grasses and forbs to improve sage-grouse nesting and early brood rearing success. Increased residual cover will also improve plant litter cover over the soil surface. Plant litter facilitates better moisture infiltration and produces more vegetative cover for nesting grouse as well as increased forbs for brood habitat. Grazing systems can also decrease the time anyone pasture is exposed to grazing animals and people reducing overall disturbance of sage.

#### Additional Criteria

1. Defer 20% of the grazing land within the sage grouse habitat area for year one and continuing through the nesting season in year two.
  - a. The same pasture cannot be deferred in consecutive years unless it is the only pasture within the sage grouse habitat area.
2. The grazing plan must be developed in accordance with NRCS practice standard (528) Prescribed grazing to ensure that stocking rate is in balance with forage supply, season of use is rotated to ensure plants have adequate reproduction opportunity, and rangeland is monitored to inform of adaptive management.
3. No winter grazing in sage-grouse wintering areas.

#### Additional Documentation

A written grazing plan as described in criteria 2 above and actual use records.

**Operations & Maintenance, Conservation Measures, and Client Acknowledgement**

<b>Operation and Maintenance</b>	
Operation:	
Maintenance:	
<b>Conservation Measures</b>	
Actions that must be implemented by the landowner/manager during enhancement implementation:	
<b>Client's Acknowledgement Statement</b>	
The Client acknowledges that:	
a. They have received a copy of the enhancement and understand the contents and requirements.	
b. It shall be the responsibility of the client to obtain all necessary permits and/or rights, and to comply with all ordinances and laws pertaining to the application of this enhancement.	
<b>Biologist:</b>	_____ <b>Date:</b> _____
<b>Planner:</b>	_____ <b>Date:</b> _____
<b>Client:</b>	_____ <b>Date:</b> _____