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 and 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.

Criteria

1. Defer one third of grazing land from grazing during the nesting/fawning season each year.
2. Prepare a written grazing management plan that identifies
    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
    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

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

ALABAMA SUPPLEMENT TO ENHANCEMENT ANM09 GRAZING MANAGEMENT TO IMPROVE WILDLIFE HABITAT

This enhancement is designed to improve the wildlife habitat through proper grazing management. Research has shown that rotational grazing which allows adequate rest for the grasses is very important in maintaining the root system and the plants' growing points. It also promotes faster regrowth of the forage, improves soil quality and water quality.

The days of rest needed for plant recovery and regrowth range from 7 to 45 days, depending on the forage species (see below table). Stocking rates and growing conditions can also affect the forage growth. Grazing systems should be designed to meet the rest requirements of a particular forage as well as the needs of the livestock. By using four pastures with 14 days of grazing per pasture, the grazing cycle is 56 days and each pasture rests 75% of the time or 42 days.

FORAGE GUIDELINES FOR PRESCRIBED GRAZING SYSTEMS

Common Forages	Begin Grazing (in)	End Grazing (in)	Usual days of Rest
Alfalfa grazing types	10	4	35 - 40
Bahiagrass	6	2	10 - 20
Bermudagrass common	5	2	7 - 10
Bermudagrass hybrid	6	3	7 - 10
Big Bluestem	18	10	30 - 45
Dallisgrass	6	3	7 - 15
Eastern Gamagrass	15	8	30 - 45
Tall Fescue	6	3	15 - 30
Indiangrass	12	6	30 - 40
Orchardgrass	8	3	15 - 30
Switchgrass	18	10	30 - 45

Additional Alabama Criteria:

- Livestock will be rotated between at least 3 pastures in a particular functional group (warm season pastures or cool season pastures) to facilitate wildlife habitat. As a minimum starting and ending grazing periods will meet the guidelines in the above table or the Alabama NRCS Conservation Practice Standard, Prescribed Grazing (528).
- Pastures will be sized and stocked to facilitate meeting the requirements for grazing heights and resting periods. Adjustments to grazing management should be made as needed to address unexpected impacts of weather changes or even agricultural markets.
- Additionally, the grazing plan will document when and where grazing deferment is scheduled to meet the one-third grazing land deferment required by this enhancement.
- The nesting season when deferment is required is April 1 – July 15.

References: AL NRCS Conservation Practice Standard, Prescribed Grazing (528)
Southern Forages, 4th Edition, D. M. Ball, et al.

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Grazing Management Records

Keeping accurate records is a continual process in effective pasture and livestock management. Records help you track pasture conditions and effectively manage each pasture in your grazing system.

Pasture ID		Pasture acres		Forage type			
Soil test date		Lime/ Fertilizer rate		Lime/ Fertilizer type		Date applied	

Livestock		Date in	Forage height	Date out	Forage height	Notes (fertilizer applied)
Type	Number					

Pasture ID		Pasture acres		Forage type			
Soil test date		Lime/ Fertilizer rate		Lime/ Fertilizer type		Date applied	

Livestock		Date in	Forage height	Date out	Forage height	Notes (fertilizer applied)
Type	Number					

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PRIMARY NESTING

April 1 – July 15

Producer Name:			**Date:**		
Tract Number:			**County:**		
Total Pasture Acres in Tract:					
Field Number(s)	**Number Acres to be Deferred***	**Year of Deferment**	**Number Acres to be Grazed**	**Grazing Schedule (planned grazing dates)**	**Targeted Wildlife Species**

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*NOTE: A MINIMUM OF 33% OF ALL PASTURELAND ACRES MUST HAVE GRAZING DEFERRED EACH YEAR DURING THE PRIMARY NESTING SEASON FOR THIS ENHANCEMENT.
The submitted information accurately reflects the implementation of this enhancement.

SIGNATURE:_____Date:_____

June 2010