

# MICHIGAN GRASSLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (GRP) PRE-APPLICATION TOOL FY 2011

APPLICANT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

**GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT GRP:** GRP is a voluntary program that provides restoration cost-share in conjunction with annual payments or easements to landowners for preserving Grasslands on private lands. In return, landowners agree to manage their contract acreage according to an approved plan based on the landowner’s intentions and identified resource concerns, for the life of the contract.

**DIRECTIONS:** READ ALL OF THE FOLLOWING. AS AN APPLICANT, IF YOU CAN ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS “YES” AND PROVIDE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION, THEN THE PROJECT IS ELIGIBLE FOR GRP; IF YOU CANNOT ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS “YES” AND PROVIDE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION, THEN THE PROJECT IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR GRP.

Eligibility Criteria:	Yes	No
1. The property being offered is privately owned or owned by an Indian Tribe?		
2. The property being offered is grassland, land that contains forbs, or shrubs for which grazing is the predominant use; or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land located in an area that has been historically dominated by grassland, forbs and shrubs, and is compatible with grazing uses; or</li> <li>• Land that has potential to provide habitat for animal or plant populations of significant ecological value if the land is retained in the current use and condition of the land is restored to a natural condition or contains historical or archeological properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or addresses issues raised by State, regional and national conservation priorities.</li> </ul>		
3. You can provide proof of control of the property for the life of the contract to USDA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rental Agreements: written proof of control = Deed, Land Contract, or Rental/Lease Agreement</li> <li>• Easements: ownership = Deed</li> </ul>		
3. Are all applicants and/or entity members in compliance with the <b>Highly Erodible Land and Wetlands Provisions</b> , with an <b>AD-1026</b> on file with the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) county office? (For easements – all listed holders on the deed must meet eligibility)		
4. Applicants and/or entity members have a completed <b>CCC-926</b> with FSA to document Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)?		
6. The property being offered is not currently enrolled in the Conservation Security Program (CSP <sub>2002</sub> ), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP <sub>2008</sub> ), Farm & Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP), or Conservation Reserve Program (CRP, CCRP, CREP, SAFE)?		
7. Does the property being offered have a right-of-access?		

8. The property offered is not under an existing easement, contract, or deed restriction that already provides protection for the grassland resource; or the land already is under the ownership by an entity whose purpose is to protect and conserve grasslands and/or other conservation values?		
9. The land is not contaminated with hazardous materials?		
10. The property offered does not have easements or right-of-ways that would adversely affect the benefits of GRP?		
<b>Grazing and Haying/Mowing Management:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
11. Do you agree to develop and follow an NRCS-approved Grazing Management Plan? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If selected for funding, a <b>Grazing Management Plan</b> will be developed with NRCS within 90 days of selection, and the <b>Grazing Management Plan</b> must be implemented within one year of development.</li> </ul>		
12. Do you agree to implement the following <b>haying, mowing, and harvesting for seed management</b> if funded: <p>A) For <b>grazed</b> acres that are included in the Grazing Management Plan as part of the normally-grazed acres, no more than 1/3 of these acres may be hayed/mowed <b>during the primary nesting season (April 15 – August 1)</b> in any given year.</p> <p>B) For acres planned for <b>haying/mowing/seed production</b> and included in the Conservation Plan as part of the hay acres, <b>one of the following management systems may be used:</b></p> <p>i) During the primary nesting season (April 15 – August 1) one cutting of hay may be taken on a maximum of 70 percent of the contracted acres managed for hay/seed production.</p> <p>ii) During the primary nesting season (April 15 – August 1), multiple cuttings may be taken on a maximum of 50 percent of the contracted acres managed for hay. The harvested area must be on the same 50 percent during any given year. The harvest area can be rotated on a yearly basis through the acres managed for hay/seed production.</p>		
<p><b>Permitted Activities:</b></p> <p><u>Haying, Mowing, and Seed Production</u> – As described in question number 12 and documented in the Grazing Management Plan.</p> <p><u>Fire Pre-Suppression</u> – Identified fire breaks and prescribed burning in the GRP Grazing Management Plan.</p> <p><u>Recreational Uses</u> – Undeveloped recreational uses, including hunting, fishing, bird watching, and the leasing of such rights for economic gain, pursuant to applicable State and Federal Regulations that may be in effect at the time. These rights are granted as long as that usage does not adversely affect the land for the purposes identified by the easement or rental contract, as determined by USDA, and as described in the GRP Grazing Management Plan. The participant retains the right to prevent trespass and control access by the public according to State and Federal law.</p> <p><u>Subsurface Resources</u> – USDA will not enter into an easement on land unless mineral rights are subordinated or unless a remoteness test has been conducted and it is found to show an extremely low potential for development of minerals on the site. Program</p>		

<p>participants may retain the right for subsurface extraction and exploration of oil, gas, minerals, and geothermal resources underlying the property provided that such activities result in only a temporary disturbance to the surface of the soil and the disturbance is either sufficiently mitigated or removed. GRP rental agreements are subject to modification if subsurface minerals are developed.</p> <p><u>Renewable Energy</u> – Installation of renewable energy sources for power generation is authorized provided their placement is consistent with the grazing uses and other conservation values of the program. <u>The opportunity to place generating stations on GRP is not a guaranteed right and must be pre-approved in writing prior to installation.</u> Rental contracts must be terminated before installation of renewable energy or related infrastructure.</p> <p>Wind power generating facilities (on farm or off farm) will not be authorized on GRP conservation easements unless USDA determines, based on a site-specific National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental analysis, that there will be no adverse effect on threatened, endangered or other at-risk species, migratory wildlife, or related natural resources, cultural resources, or the human environment or when the impacts of such facilities can be mitigated to a level of non-significance.</p> <p><b>Prohibited Activities:</b></p> <p><u>Production of crops, other than hay</u> – Planting of non-perennial crops, fruit trees, vineyards or other agricultural commodities is inconsistent with maintaining grazing land. Harvesting crops, other than hay, for human or domestic animal consumption or any agricultural commodity is prohibited. Any annual crops planted before the easement is recorded and rental agreement or restoration agreement is approved can be harvested.</p> <p><u>Development</u> – Expansion of existing residential facilities or the addition of new houses is prohibited. This includes subdivision of lots for resale and future housing development. No portion of the property shall be paved or otherwise covered with impervious material.</p> <p><u>Mining</u> – Extraction of soil, sand, gravel, mineral, oil, gas, or any other surface mining activity, including mining for peat and other organic materials is generally prohibited.</p> <p><u>Trash Dumping</u> – Dumping, collecting, recycling, or storing of trash, refuse or waste is prohibited, except that animal waste may be applied as fertilizer at rates recommended in the GRP management plan. Sewage sludge is not allowed.</p> <p><u>Hazardous Waste</u> – Sites containing hazardous materials will not be enrolled in GRP. Hazardous materials include petroleum products, fuel oil, waste oils, explosives, reactive materials, ignitable materials, corrosive materials, hazardous chemicals, hazardous substances, toxic substances, radioactive materials, infectious materials, and any other substance that may pose a hazard to human health or the environment. Disposal of hazardous waste or oil field/mining by-products on the property is prohibited.</p> <p><u>Other Activities</u> – The NRCS State Conservationist, with advice from the State Technical Committee, may determine additional activities that would adversely affect grassland and shrubland functions and values on the site.</p>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
13. Have you read and understand the provisions listed above?		

<p>14. Do you understand that a transfer tax fee assessed by the State of Michigan will be required to be paid in full by the landowner before easement compensation is made? <i>Contact our County Clerk for more information on transfer tax fees.</i></p>		
<p>15. Compensation for easements will be based on a Geographic Area Rate Cap (GARC) (see attached map). Do you agree to accept the GARC for easement compensation?</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The GARCs are updated annually and therefore this value may change before you are selected for funding.</p>		
<p>16. Are there any known potential environmentally hazardous or contaminated sites on the property (dumps, trash piles, above ground or below ground storage tanks, fertilizer/chemical storage or mixing areas, etc.)?</p>		
<p>In order to enroll in GRP, the applicant must provide clear title to the land and/or provide recorded consent or subordination agreements from each holder of a security interest which may include leases, mineral rights, easements, mortgages, and liens.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> NRCS will conduct a preliminary title search and any encumbrances revealed will need to be cleared before an application will be considered.</p>		
<p><b>Landowner Certification:</b></p> <p>Signature: _____ Date: _____</p>		
<p><b>To be completed by the NRCS District Conservationist:</b></p>		
<p>17. Will the presence of buildings, roads, or other improvements (existing or planned) impede the restoration of the site?</p>		
<p>18. Are there currently any cultural resources and/or threatened or endangered species present on the proposed easement? <b><u>A copy of the CPA-52 will be included.</u></b></p>		
<p>District Conservationist: _____ Date: _____</p>		
<p>Include this completed GRP Pre-application Screening Tool with the GRP application to the GRP Coordinator to determine final program eligibility.</p> <p>If the application is determined to be ineligible, the State Conservationist will issue a final program decision letter to the applicant.</p>		
<p><b>This section to be filled out by the State Office:</b></p>		
<p>This application has been determined to be:</p>	<p><b>Eligible</b></p>	<p><b>Ineligible</b></p>
<p>GRP Coordinator: _____ Date: _____</p>		

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