

NRCS Wildlife Habitat

Exhibit 511-2

WILDLIFE HABITAT EVALUATION WORKSHEET CROPLAND

Client _____ Tract No. _____
 Date _____ Field No. _____
 Evaluated by _____ Acres _____

<u>CROPLAND HABITAT INDEX</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>BENCHMARK</u>	<u>PLANNED</u>
Crop residue management			
Over-winter residue >50%	20		
Over-winter residue 10-50%	10		
Over-winter residue <10%; fall cover crop or small grain	5		
Over-winter residue <10%; no fall crop	1	_____	_____
Crop rotation			
Row crop or small grain, with hay	10		
Row crop-small grain	7		
Continuous row crops (no small grain or hay)	4		
Tobacco or fescue rotation	1	_____	_____
Crop management for every year of contract			
>10% unharvested crop or food plots	10		
1-10% unharvested crop	7		
Total crop harvested, with weeds present	4		
Total crop harvested; no weeds present	1	_____	_____
Percent of field perimeter with a wildlife habitat border (min. 35' wide) of trees, shrubs or grasses not mowed, grazed, burned or disturbed btw. 4/15 & 8/15 OR habitat border is a corridor to connect 2 fragmented woodlots, wildlife habitat or to connect to other corridors			
75-100%	20		
50-74%	15		
25-49%	10		
<25%, <u>or</u> no border	1	_____	_____
Wildlife habitat border plant composition			
Predominantly native species	20		
50% - 100% mix of native species and < 50% mix of planted introduced species with <50% tall fescue	15		
> 50% mix of predominantly planted introduced species with < 50% tall fescue	10		
> 50% tall fescues, invasive or no habitat border	1	_____	_____
Proximity of the field to nearest wildlife cover habitat (area that provides suitable habitat for nesting and/or protective cover), measured from center of field			
<100 feet	20		
100 – 300 feet	15		
301 – 600 feet	10		
>600 feet	1	_____	_____
(A) Total Cropland Habitat Points (100 maximum)		_____	_____
(B) % habitat potential (planned divided by 100)		_____	_____

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This habitat index includes land used for annual row crops (for example, corn, soybeans, small grains, and vegetables), orchards, and hay as part of a rotation. Important factors for wildlife habitat are plant diversity, summer food sources, and nesting and protective cover on field edges. Availability of food and cover during the winter are also important.

Residue management reflects the importance of grain and crop residue that remains on the soil surface over winter. The rotation evaluated does not have to match the order listed, but should contain all elements listed.

Crop management primarily indicates amount of food sources, both in summer and winter. Unharvested grain at field edges, in wet spots, or in odd areas provides winter food and cover. Native plants and most weeds are important wildlife food. Wildlife habitat border includes riparian forest buffer, hedgerow, field border and or filter strip, woodland, wetlands and/or shrubby idle area. ***These areas cannot be used for turn rows, farm lanes or crop/equipment storage.***

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WILDLIFE HABITAT EVALUATION WORKSHEET GRASSLAND, PASTURELAND, OR HAYLAND

Client _____

Tract No. _____

Date _____

Field No. _____

Evaluated by _____

Acres _____

<u>GRASSLAND, PASTURELAND, or HAYLAND HABITAT INDEX</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>BENCHMARK</u>	<u>PLANNED</u>
Plant composition			
Mixture of native grasses and forbs	10		
Mixture of non-native grasses and forbs	8		
Predominantly single species native grass w/ forbs	7		
Predominantly single species grass w/ no forbs, or legumes alone	5		
Tall fescue mixed with other species (<50% tall fescue)	3		
Predominantly tall fescue (≥50% tall fescue) or row crops	1	_____	_____
Mowing or haying management			
Not mowed/cut April 15 to August 15, and at least 8" winter height	20		
Not mowed/cut April 15 to August 15, and <8" winter height	15		
Mowed/cut occasionally between April 15 & August 15, and at least 8" winter height	10		
Mowed/cut occasionally between April 15 & August 15, and <8" winter height	5		
Mowed/cut frequently April 15 to August 15, and <8" winter height	1	_____	_____
Use by domestic animals or humans			
No or minimal disturbance; >95% cover	10		
Light grazing pressure, with min. grazing height 6"; 85 - 95% cover	8		
Moderate grazing pressure; 75 - 84% cover	7		
Heavy grazing pressure; <75% cover	4		
Frequent human disturbance (e.g., lawn, ball field)	1	_____	_____
Percent of field perimeter with a wildlife habitat border (min. 35' wide) of trees, shrubs or grasses not mowed, grazed, burned or disturbed btw. 4/15 & 8/15 OR habitat border is a corridor to connect 2 fragmented woodlots, wildlife habitat or to connect to other corridors			
75-100%	20		
50-74	15		
11-49%	10		
<10%, <u>or</u> no border	1	_____	_____
Wildlife habitat border plant composition			
Predominantly native species	20		
50% - 100% mix of native species and < 50% mix of planted introduced species with <50% tall fescue	15		
> 50% mix of predominantly planted introduced species with < 50% tall fescue	10		
> 50% tall fescues, invasive or no habitat border	1	_____	_____
Proximity of the field to nearest wildlife cover habitat (area that provides suitable habitat for nesting and/or protective cover), measured from center of field			
<100 feet	10		
100 – 300 feet	7		
301 – 600 feet	4		
>600 feet	1	_____	_____
Woodland or woodlot adjacent to field			
Fenced/no grazing	10		
Grazed	0	_____	_____
(A) Total Grassland/Hayland Habitat Points (100 maximum)		_____	_____
(B) % habitat potential (planned divided by 100)		_____	_____

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This habitat index includes hayland, pastureland, idle areas and CRP lands that are maintained in grass/forb cover. It also includes cropland that will be completely converted to grassland. Important characteristics of this habitat are plant diversity, summer food sources, and nesting and protective cover in the field and on field edges. Other values include winter cover and food supplies.

Management that avoids disturbance during the nesting season, yet allows time for sufficient regrowth to provide winter cover, is preferred. Sites with several plant species provide better food and cover, but it is not necessary for species to be completely intermixed. Undisturbed vegetative cover that is adjacent to pasture or hayland fields is especially important in providing food and undisturbed cover. Native plants and most weeds are important wildlife food. Introduced plants such as Kentucky bluegrass, most fescues, orchardgrass, timothy, and ryegrass and legumes such as red, white or ladino clover, and alfalfa

Wildlife habitat border includes riparian forest buffer, hedgerow, field border and or filter strip, woodland, wetlands and/or shrubby idle area. **These areas cannot be used for turn rows, farm lanes or crop/equipment storage.**

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WILDLIFE HABITAT EVALUATION WORKSHEET WOODLAND/MIGRATION CORRIDOR

Client _____

Tract No. _____

Date _____

Field No. _____

Evaluated by _____

Acres _____

<u>WOODLAND/MIGRATION HABITAT INDEX</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>BENCHMARK</u>	<u>PLANNED</u>
Land Use			
Savannah creation (few scattered trees w/ herbaceous plants in understory – usually fire maintained)	20		
Predominantly hardwood trees with understory	20		
Scrub/Shrub Woodland	20		
Shrub edge/buffer adjacent to hardwood woodland	15		
Hardwoods with little understory (not thinned or planted thick)	10		
Thinned Pine Plantation	1		
Cropland, grassland, old field, mowed, disturbed	0	_____	_____
Woody Canopy			
51-75% Cover	20		
25-50% Cover	15		
>75% or <25% Cover	10	_____	_____
Understory composition			
>75% cover of native shrubs, vines, and/or herbaceous plants (total of at least 3 species); if pines, then >75% of herb. Only	20		
50-75% cover of native shrubs, vines, and/or herbaceous plants (total of at least 3 species)	15		
<50% cover of native shrubs, vines, and/or herbaceous plants, with the remainder unvegetated (Score as 10 if depressional wetland); not disturbed, grazed or mowed 4/15 – 8/15	10		
Primarily invasive species (e.g., multiflora rose, Japanese honeysuckle, etc.) or grazed, mowed or disturbed by humans	1	_____	_____
Fragmentation			
Connects 2 fragmented habitats	20		
Adjacent to 1 fragmented habitat	10		
Provides no connection	1	_____	_____
Habitat Width			
>300 feet	20		
201 – 300 feet	15		
101 – 200 feet	10		
<100 feet	1	_____	_____
(A) Total Woodland/Migration Corridor Points (100 maximum)		_____	_____
(B) % habitat potential (planned divided by 100)		_____	

This index includes areas with at least 10% canopy cover of woody species. Very small wooded areas do not need to be evaluated separately. Woodland managed so there is a diversity of tree species and size classes provides the best general habitat. This is a reflection of both past and current management. Grazing or intensive human use affects the understory, soil compaction, and duff layer. **Woods that are cut over or are currently not grazed but still show effects will be evaluated according to the past disturbance.**

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WILDLIFE HABITAT EVALUATION WORKSHEET
RIPARIAN CORRIDOR

Client _____ Tract No. _____
 Date _____ Field No. _____
 Evaluated by _____ Acres _____

RIPARIAN CORRIDOR HABITAT INDEX

	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>BENCHMARK</u>	<u>PLANNED</u>
Fragmentation (from woody or perennially vegetated riparian area)			
Contiguous riparian buffer > 50 feet wide	20		
Less than ¼ mile from > 50 foot wide buffer	15		
¼ - ½ mile distance from >50 foot wide buffer	10		
More than ½ mile from buffer riparian areas	1		
None present	0	_____	_____
Cover type in adjacent flood plain (100 or > feet from streambank)			
Presence of wetland/woods (begins 100-200 ft. from streambank)	20		
Presence of wetland/woods (begins 200-300 ft. from streambank)	15		
Presence of old field or NWSG (begins 100-200 ft. from streambank) or native cool season	10		
Presence of non-native cool season grasses (begins 100-200 ft. from streambank),	5		
Cropland/other	0	_____	_____
Plant composition in the riparian buffer (min. 35 feet wide)			
Predominantly trees and/or shrubs	20		
Predominantly perennial herbaceous plants	10		
Predominantly row crops, other annual plants, or bare ground	1	_____	_____
Management of the riparian buffer (within 100 feet of streambank)			
Generally undisturbed by humans or domestic animals	20		
Not mowed/disturbed April 15 to August 15	15		
Mowed/disturbed occasionally between April 15 and August 15 livestock has controlled access)	10		
Mowed/disturbed frequently between April 15 and August 15, <u>or</u> no permanently vegetated buffer (livestock not excluded from riparian area)	1	_____	_____
Buffer width			
300 feet wide, or more	20		
100-299 feet wide	15		
35-99 feet wide	10		
<35 feet wide, <u>or</u> no permanently vegetated buffer	1	_____	_____
(A) Total Riparian Corridor Habitat Points (100 maximum)		_____	_____
(B) % habitat potential (planned divided by 100)		_____	

WILDLIFE HABITAT EVALUATION WORKSHEET
Idle (old) fields – meadow and shrub
IF vegetation is >50% grasses, use the grassland assessment

Client _____ Tract No. _____
 Date _____ Field No. _____
 Evaluated by _____ Acres _____

<u>IDLE HABITAT INDEX</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>BENCHMARK</u>	<u>PLANNED</u>
Species Composition (Choose Meadow OR Shrub)			
Meadow	Shrub		
a) ≥50% perennial forbs; ≤10% shrubs/saplings; <30% cool season grasses	a) 20-30% shrubs; >50% forbs/native grasses	20	
b) >10% woody plants; 25- 50% perennial forbs; <50% cool season grasses	b) 10-20 shrubs; 30-40% forbs/NWSG/legumes; 20- 40% saplings/seedlings	10	
c) >10% woody plants and/or >50% native grasses WSG or CSG (considered grassland)	c) ≥40% small trees or larger species (> 4 in. diameter)	1	_____
Vegetation Density			
10-29% bare ground/light litter		20	
30-39% bare ground/light litter		10	
<10% or >40% bare ground/light litter OR .50% heavy litter		1	_____
Field size (average if more than one)			
>25 acres		20	
10-25 acres		10	
3-9 acres		5	
<2 acres		1	_____
Management/maintenance			
Disk strips 10-15 feet wide; alternate strips every 2-3 years or burn 1/3 every third year		40	
Burn the entire field every third year		20	
Overseed bare areas with forbs and legumes		15	
Mow strips 80-100 feet apart alternating once every 5 years		10	
No maintenance		0	_____
(A) Total Idle Field Habitat Points (100 maximum)		_____	_____
(B) % habitat potential (planned divided by 100)			_____

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WILDLIFE HABITAT EVALUATION WORKSHEET SHALLOW WATER AREA

Cropland or Grazing land ONLY.

*****IF MORE THAN 50% OF THE SOILS ON THE SITE ARE HYDRIC, SITE IS INELIGIBLE*****

Client _____ Tract No. _____
 Date _____ Field No. _____
 Evaluated by _____ Acres _____

SHALLOW WATER HABITAT INDEX

	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>BENCHMARK</u>	<u>PLANNED</u>
Presence of surface water 1-18 inches deep (Controlled Flooding over 2 to 3 weeks)			
Extended Seasonal Flooding (Oct. – April, or longer)	20		
Extended Seasonal Flooding (Oct. – March)	10		
Winter Seasonal Flooding (Nov. – Feb.)	5	_____	_____
Rate of drawdown			
6-8 weeks	10		
3-5 weeks	5		
1-2 week	1	_____	_____
Size of the water area, at seasonal high water			
Greater than 5 acres	20		
3-5 acres	15		
1-2.9 acres	10		
Less than 1 acre, <u>or</u> no surface water	1	_____	_____
Composition and management of vegetation in the water area			
Naturally-occurring wetland plants; occasional mowing to control woody vegetation, or little to no management	10		
Naturally-occurring wetland plants; moist soil management (disking every 2-3 years to encourage the re-establishment of seed-producing annuals)	8		
Annual planting of grain crops (e.g., corn, soybeans, sorghum, millets, etc.); crop is not harvested, or pasture or one haying	5		
Annual planting of grain crops; entire crop harvested (active cropland)	3		
Mainly unvegetated, <u>or</u> non-wetland plants with minimal seed production	1	_____	_____
Location Relative to Other Wetlands			
Contiguous (<660 feet) with Non Forested Wetland > 1 Acre in size	20		
660 feet – ¼ mile from Non Forested Wetland > 1 Acre in size	15		
¼ mile – ½ mile from Non Forested Wetland > 1 Acre in size	10		
> ½ mile from Non Forested Wetland > 1 Acre in size	1	_____	_____
Location in a Bird Focus Area (if not score is 1) (<i>See attached map.</i>)	10	_____	_____
Pesticide Use (Class I, II or III, if Class I toxicity – score is 0)			
Light/None	10		
Medium	5		
Heavy	0	_____	_____
(A) Total Shallow Water Habitat Points (100 maximum)		_____	_____
(B) % habitat potential (planned divided by 100)		_____	

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