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December 15, 2011

## KANSAS BULLETIN NO. KS300-12-12

### **SUBJECT: LTP–Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program–Ranking Process–National Priorities, State and Local Issues**

**Purpose:** Distribute Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Kansas Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) national priority questions and to provide guidance on addressing national, state, and local questions

**Expiration Date:** September 30, 2013

The following guidance will be used when answering the national priorities (attached), and state and local issues sections of the Program Contracts System (ProTracts) Ranking Tool to ensure consistency statewide. Only practices receiving financial assistance under the WHIP contract are to be considered for any question in the ProTracts Ranking Tool.

#### **National Priorities:**

1.a. Award points if a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract has expired OR will expire by September 30, 2012, and is still in permanent cover.

1.b. Award points if offered area meets the following:  
Sage Grouse–Not applicable (N/A)

Longleaf Pine–N/A

New England–New York Forestry–N/A

Lesser Prairie-Chicken Initiative–Award points if at least 50 percent of the offered area is located in the Lesser Prairie-Chicken Initiative area AND if the WHIP Plan of Operations (WPO) meets the minimum requirements for Lesser Prairie-Chicken based on the Kansas Wildlife Habitat Assessment Guide (KWHAG) (see Kansas Biology Technical Note KS-33 and Conservation Programs Geographic Information System [GIS] Interface [CPGI] tool).

(more)

DIST: A, F, S, Burr, Franklin, Krehbiel, Matt Smith (KDWPT)

Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative—Award points if the WPO includes one of the following Conservation Practices (CP):

Brush Management (314)
Herbaceous Weed Control (315)
Contour Buffer Strips (332)
Prescribed Burning (338)
Critical Area Planting (342)
Field Border (386)
Filter Strip (393)
Forage and Biomass Planting (512)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Range Planting (550)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitat (643)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
<i>Note—only award points if native grasses, forbs, legumes, trees and/or shrubs are planned for use in vegetative practices.</i>

- 1.c. Award points if the WPO restores or enhances critical habitat for threatened and endangered (T&E) species or provides habitat for species in need of conservation (SINC) AND includes one of the following CPs (any portion the offered area may fall within designated critical habitat of state or federally listed T&E species [see CPGI tool]):

Brush Management (314)
Herbaceous Weed Control (315)
Contour Buffer Strips (332)
Prescribed Burning (338)
Critical Area Planting (342)
Field Border (386)
Filter Strip (393)
Forage and Biomass Planting (512)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Range Planting (550)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitat (643)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Wetland Restoration (657)

Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
<i>Note—only award points if native grasses, forbs, legumes, trees and/or shrubs are planned for use in vegetative practices.</i>

- 1.d. Award points if offered area falls within designated critical habitat of state or federally listed T&E species (see CPGI TOOL) AND if the plan includes one of the following CPs:

Brush Management (314)
Herbaceous Weed Control (315)
Contour Buffer Strips (332)
Prescribed Burning (338)
Critical Area Planting (342)
Field Border (386)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
Filter Strip (393)
Forage and Biomass Planting (512)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Range Planting (550)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitat (643)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
<i>Note—only award points if native grasses, forbs, legumes, trees and/or shrubs are planned for use in vegetative practices.</i>

- 1.e. Award points if the WPO includes CP 550, Range Planting, that involves the establishment of pollinator habitat or the management of existing pollinator habitat. (NOTE: CP 550 contains a specific payment scenario for pollinator habitat in the Kansas FY 2012 payment schedule.)
- 1.f. Award points if plan includes either CPs 314 or 315 and targets noxious or invasive plant species (see Noxious and Invasive Species list link through electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG), Section II, or at [http://www.ksda.gov/plant\\_protection/content/349](http://www.ksda.gov/plant_protection/content/349)).

1.g. **Kansas State WHIP Plan does not directly identify aquatic species therefore this question is not applicable in Kansas.**

1.h. Award points if offered area includes forested or forested riparian areas AND includes one of the following CPs:

Forest Stand Improvement (666)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)

1.i. Award points if offered area includes establishment of permanent cover which benefits wildlife species on center pivot corners and/or irregular areas (i.e., 5 acres or less) currently being cropped AND if the plan includes one of the following CPs:

Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)
Field Border (386)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
Filter Strip (393)
Forage and Biomass Planting (512)
Range Planting (550)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitat (643)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Windbreak Shelterbelt Renovation (650)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
Forest Stand Improvement (666)
<i>Note—only award points if native grasses, forbs, legumes, trees and/or shrubs are planned for use in vegetative practices.</i>

1.j. Award points if the WPO meets the minimum requirements for a priority species of statewide concern (pheasants, northern bobwhite quail, or prairie-chicken) based on Kansas WHIP Species Specific Habitat Assessment OR if the WPO restores or enhances critical habitat for T&E species or provides habitat for SINC AND includes one of the following CPs:

Contour Buffer Strips (332)
Critical Area Planting (342)
Field Border (386)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
Filter Strip (393)
Forage and Biomass Planting (512)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Range Planting (550)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)

Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitat (643)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
<i>Note—only award points if native warm-season perennial grasses, forbs, legumes, trees and/or shrubs are planned in vegetative practices.</i>

- 1.k. Award points if the WPO establishes or manages species specific wildlife habitat in movement corridors for priority species of concern (pheasants, northern bobwhite quail, or prairie-chicken). Prairie-Chicken offered acreage must be within the current range.
2. Award points if the WPO is scheduled to complete habitat development practices within the first two years of contract obligation.

**State Issues:**

- 1.a. Award points if, per the Kansas Biology Technical Note KS-33, minimum requirements for pheasants, northern bobwhite quail, or prairie-chicken have been met. (If state question 1.d. is “yes” this question should be marked “no.”)
- 1.b. Award points if the WPO restores or enhances critical habitat for T&E species or provides habitat for SINC AND includes one of the following CPs:

Contour Buffer Strips (332)
Critical Area Planting (342)
Field Border (386)
Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
Filter Strip (393)
Forage and Biomass Planting (512)
Prescribed Grazing (528)
Range Planting (550)
Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitat (643)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
<i>Note—only award points if native warm-season perennial grasses, forbs, legumes, trees and/or shrubs are planned in vegetative practices.</i>

- 1.c. Award points if the WPO includes planned practices that restore, enhance or create wetlands, native prairie ecosystems, or riparian areas AND includes one of the following CPs:

Range Planting (550)
Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitat (643)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)

- 1.d. Award points if, per the Kansas Biology Technical Note KS-33, the minimum requirements for pheasants, northern bobwhite quail, or prairie-chicken are not met. (If state question 1.a. is “yes” this question should be marked “no.”)
- 1.e. Award points if the WPO addresses habitat needs for wildlife species other than pheasants, northern bobwhite quail, or prairie-chicken.
- 2.a. Award points if the WPO includes an existing stand of native grass that is greater than or equal to 80.0 acres.
- 2.b. Award points if the WPO includes an existing stand of native grass that is greater than 21.0 acres but less than 80.0 acres.
- 2.c. Award points if the WPO includes a native grass seeding or an existing stand of native grass that is less than or equal to 21.0 acres.
- 3.a. Award points if the WPO includes CP 314, Brush Management, for wildlife species on all of the applicable WPO acres on Kansas grasslands.
- 4.a. Award points if there is no infestation or a low infestation of invasive trees present.
- 4.b. Award points if there is a medium level of infestation of invasive trees present.
- 4.c. Award points if there is a high level of infestation of invasive trees present.
- 5.a. Award points if CP 338, Prescribed Burning, is scheduled in the WPO. Priority wildlife species include pheasants, northern bobwhite quail, and prairie-chicken.
- 6.a. Award points if the WPO includes the planting of greater than 20.0 acres of CP 550, Range Planting.
- 6.b. Award points if the WPO includes the planting of 10.0 to 20.0 acres of CP 550, Range Planting.
- 6.c. Award points if the WPO includes the planting of less than 10.0 acres of CP 550, Range Planting.

- 7.a. Award points if there are 4 or more complementary conservation programs actively managed for wildlife on or adjacent to the WPO acres.
- 7.b. Award points if there are 3 complementary conservation programs actively managed for wildlife on or adjacent to the WPO acres.
- 7.c. Award points if there are 2 complementary conservation programs actively managed for wildlife on or adjacent to the WPO acres.
- 7.d. Award points if there is 1 complementary conservation program actively managed for wildlife on or adjacent to the WPO acres.

Complementary Conservation Programs

Conservation Security Program (CSP 2002)
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP 2008)
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
Continuous CRP (CCRP)
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)
Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)
Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)
Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Wildlife
Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Walk In Hunting Access (WIHA)
Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Fishing Impoundments and Stream Habitats (FISH)
<i>Note—other similar programs that are actively managed for wildlife on the applicant's land or land adjacent to the offered acres may be eligible.</i>

- 8.a. Award points if the offered acreage is adjacent to a long-term easement area that is actively managed for wildlife such as areas enrolled in the WRP, GRP, and FRPP OR with other nongovernment organizations (i.e., The Nature Conservancy and Kansas Land Trust).
- 9.a. Award points if there is at least 10 percent of financial assistance from a conservation partner other than the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

**Local Priorities:**

- 1.a. Award points if the planned habitat value improvement score from the Kansas Wildlife Habitat Assessment Guide (KWHAG) meets the minimum threshold for the location of the offered acres (West-18; Central-21; East-24).

- 2.a. Award points if the WPO acres include a shallow water development area or a wetland development area of less than 10 acres AND includes an existing or planned native grass buffer that is at least 30 feet wide. At least one of the following practices must be scheduled:

Critical Area Planting (342)
Dike (356)
Filter Strip (393)
Range Planting (550)
Structure for Water Control (587)
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
Wetland Restoration (657)
Wetland Creation (658)
Wetland Enhancement (659)
<i>Note—only award points if native grasses, forbs, legumes, trees and/or shrubs are planned for use in vegetative practices.</i>

- 3.a. Award points if 50 percent or more of the offered acreage falls within the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism’s (KDWPT’s) Quail Focus area (see KDWPT Quail Initiative area map).

**Contact.** Forward questions through established channels to Joní Y. Franklin, Resource Conservationist, at (785) 823-4556 or [joni.franklin@ks.usda.gov](mailto:joni.franklin@ks.usda.gov).

*(Signed)*

ERIC B. BANKS  
State Conservationist

Attachment