

Grassland Reserve Program Summary Sheet

Name: _____ County: _____ Application Date: _____

Category of Participation (*See Criteria III.b*):
 Permanent easement _____ 20-year LTA _____ 15-year LTA _____ 10-year LTA _____

Estimated Purchase Cost for Easement (Provide best estimate using local information or contacts.):
 \$ _____

Estimated Rental Rate for LTA (County rates x acres x years): _____ x _____ x _____ = \$ _____

Acres (total): _____ Estimated restoration costs _____

Estimated total cost _____

Summary of Points	
I. Grazing Operation (150 max.)	_____
II. Conversion Risk (250 max.)	_____
III. Biodiversity (350 max.)	_____
IV. Operation & Maintenance of Grazing Operations (250 max.)	_____
TOTAL POINTS	_____

This summary score sheet must be signed by an Area or State Grazing Lands Specialist, District Conservationist, and applicant. Applications will not be accepted without all three signatures. Forms should be included with the application.

NRCS GRP Team Member _____

Date _____

NRCS District Conservationist _____

Date _____

Applicant _____

Date _____

GRP Ranking Criteria for 2010

I. Grazing Operation – 150 pts

Is this land currently part of an existing grazing operation (includes hay land to provide hay for the operation)?

Yes	<u>50</u>
No	<u>0</u>

Will applicant follow a prescribed grazing plan with a weekly rotation of a minimum 4 pastures/paddocks per grazing herd to provide 75% rest if selected.

Yes	<u>100</u>
No	<u>0</u>

II. Conversion Risk – 250 pts (Points in Sections II.A and II.B are not additive) Use the section with the highest score.

A. Conversion to Non-Ag Use

Located in the following counties: Benton, Washington, Lonoke, Faulkner	<u>250</u>
Within 10 miles of the following cities: Bentonville, Bryant, Cabot, Conway, Fayetteville, Maumelle, Rogers	<u>250</u>
Within 20 miles of the same cities:	<u>150</u>
Within 10 miles of the following cities: Benton, Jonesboro, Mountain Home, Paragould, Russellville, Searcy, Texarkana, Van Buren	<u>150</u>
Within 20 miles of the same cities:	<u>75</u>
Within one mile of any subdivision with a minimum of 10 non-ag homes	<u>100</u>
Areas not listed above	<u>0</u>

B. Conversion to Cropland (Cropland other than hay, fruit trees, or vineyards)

“Class” refers to the primary soil capability class located on the property.

Adjacent to Cropland

Class I, IIe, IIIe	<u>200</u> (add 50 points if in MLRA 134)
Class IIw, IIIw, IVe, IVs	<u>150</u> (add 50 points if in MLRA 134)
Class VIe, VIs	<u>50</u> (add 50 points if in MLRA 134)
Class IVw, Vw, VIIe, VIIs VIIw, VIIIe	<u>0</u>

Within 1 mile of Cropland

Class I, IIe, IIIe	<u>150</u> (add 50 points if in MLRA 134)
Class IIw, IIIw, IVe, IVs	<u>100</u> (add 50 points if in MLRA 134)
Class VIe, VIs	<u>50</u> (add 50 points if in MLRA 134)
Class IVw, Vw, VIIe, VIIs VIIw, VIIIe	<u>0</u>

More than 1 mile from cropland 0

III. Biodiversity – 350 pts (Points in Sections III.A, III.B, and III.C are additive)

A. Plant Diversity (Points in Sections III.A.1-III.A.4 are not additive)

1. Major native warm season grasses (NWSGs)

Major native grasses such as big and little bluestem, eastern gamagrass, Indiangrass, and switchgrass.

3 or more species of NWSGs in 50% of the community	<u>250</u>
2 species of NWSGs in 50% of the community	<u>200</u>
1 species of NWSGs present in 75% of the community	<u>150</u>
0 species of NWSGs	<u>0</u>

2. Natural grasses and legumes

Introduced grasses such as orchardgrass, bromegrass, bluegrass, bermudagrass, dallisgrass, bahiagrass, and Caucasian bluestem, and fescue. These fields could include minor native warm season grasses such as broomsedge, beaked panicum, longspike tridens and purple top and do not include the major native warm season grasses as defined in III.A 1.

>6 species of grasses/2 species of legumes (20% composition)	<u>200</u>
3-5 species of grasses and one legume component (20% composition)	<u>100</u>
2 species of grasses and legumes with less than 20% composition	<u>50</u>
introduced grass monoculture	<u>0</u>

3. Silvopasture

Establishment of a silvopasture system (200-400 trees per acre) by thinning trees in a forested area and planting to grassland or by planting trees into established grassland. If grazed, a rotational grazing system is required.

Silvopasture	<u>250</u>
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4. Quail habitat

Primary emphasis of the grassland management is to establish a habitat for quail. This will be accomplished by establishing corridors of native warm season grasses and other vegetation for quail, managing grazing to leave areas ungrazed during the primary nesting season, and not haying any of the land until after August 15.

Quail habitat	<u>250</u>
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5. Cultural resources

A farm that has an area important to cultural resources (such as old homesteads, wood barns, rock walls or evidence of Native Americans) that will be protected.

Cultural resources	<u>250</u>
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B. Retaining Habitat Function

Permanent Easements	<u>50</u>
20 Year LTA	<u>30</u>
15 Year LTA	<u>20</u>
10 Year LTA	<u>10</u>

C. Protected Area (Location Significance)

Proximity of the area to one of the following permanently protected areas: National Wildlife Refuges, Wildlife Management Areas, National Forests, WRP easements, FSA easements, other areas owned by or under easement to federal agencies, state agencies, or conservation organizations.

Adjacent to the defined area	<u>50</u>
Within ½ mile of defined area	<u>40</u>
From ½ to one mile of defined area	<u>30</u>
Greater than one mile from defined area	<u>0</u>

IV. Operation and Maintenance of Grazing Operations—250 pts
(Points in Sections IV.A and IV.B are not additive)

Considering landowner willingness, legal constraints, and the location, accessibility, and topography of the site, indicate one of the groups of operation and maintenance techniques or options that will be used in a management plan. **Each operation MUST follow a prescribed grazing plan if grazed or a vegetation management plan if not grazed.** Such plans must be approved by NRCS. Points are allocated based on the intensity of management or combinations of management practices that increase the diversity of the plant community. Choose either native or natural grassland components for points awarded. To be native warm season grass pasture, it should have over 50% of the forage available from at least one native warm season grass (as defined in IIIA1).

A. Native warm season grass plantings or native prairie grassland (Points in Sections IV.A.1 and IV.A.2 are not additive.)

1. Grazing and haying combination--250 points

- Control encroachment/competition of cool season grasses with a) early grazing, b) chemical control, 3) cutting of hay, or 4) prescribed burning to remove cool season competition.
- Follow a grazing plan that allows each acre to rest more than 85% of the time (8 paddocks/pastures available per grazing herd/flock and rotated twice each week).
- Hay areas that are out of control, harvesting different areas at different times every year. Each year delay cutting at least one third of the area until after primary nesting season (April 1 – July 15) and allow re-growth of this area to accumulate for fall cover.
- Conduct prescribed burning every third year.

2. Grazing or cutting hay--150 points

- If grazing, follow a plan that allows each acre to rest more than 75% of the time (4 paddocks/pastures available per grazing group and animals rotated each week).
- If not grazing, cut hay once a year after primary nesting season (April 1- July 15) and allow fall cover to accumulate.
- Conduct prescribed burning every third year.
- Judicious use of herbicides and plantings to increase botanical composition diversity according to plan.

B. Natural grassland for grazing managed to encourage diversity of composition (Points in Sections IV.B.1 and IV.B.2 are not additive.)

1. Grazing and haying combination--250 points

- Grazing with a plan that allows each acre to rest more than 85% of the time with 8 paddocks/pastures available per grazing herd/flock and rotated twice each week) and surplus forage harvested for hay on a 3-yr rotation.
- Hay areas that are out of control, harvesting different areas at different times every year. Each year delay cutting at least one third of the area until after primary nesting season (April 1 – July 15) and allow re-growth of this area to accumulate for fall cover.
- Manage to stimulate plant diversity with timing of fertilization, seeding of legumes, grazing management and native/natural plants, and harvest of forages as prescribed in the conservation plan.
- Minimize chemical weed control.

2. Grazing or cutting hay--150 points

- If grazing, follow a plan that allows each acre to rest more than 75% of the time (4 paddocks/pastures available per grazing group and animals rotated each week).
- If not grazing, cut hay once a year after primary nesting season (April 1- July 15) and allow fall cover to accumulate.
- Judicious use of herbicides and plantings to increase botanical composition diversity according to plan.

GRP RESTORATION PLAN

Applicant _____ County _____ Date _____

I. Applicant Objectives:

LTA _____ Length _____

Easement _____

Number of acres _____

II. A completed GRP application packet should consist of the following items. These items should be submitted to the state office.

- 1) Application Form
- 2) All Sheets of the Ranking Criteria
- 3) Preliminary Restoration Map (Aerial Map delineating habitat boundaries)
- 4) Description of Restoration and Estimated Costs

RESTORATION COSTS (describe in detail with cost estimates per practice and show 50% cost-share). See the program cost list for approved practices, components and costs.

*Fencing description (type and length) and estimated costs:

*Water systems description (feet pipe, water source, number of tanks and type) and estimated costs:

Seeding costs (ONLY NATIVE WARM SEASON GRASSES MAY BE SEEDED unless in silovpasture):

Silvopasture costs (expenses related to tree planting or forage establishment—any grasses are eligible)

Other restoration costs appropriate to consider:

Estimated cost of practices:

*Priority costs _____ Other practices _____ Total _____

Cost share (50% of the above total) _____

