

Conservation Security Program

Pastureland

Screening Tool



Name: _____

Farm/Ranch: _____







Pastureland Screening Tool

- * IN ORDER TO BE PLACED IN A CATEGORY FOR CSP PAYMENT YOU MUST FIRST EVALUATE THE CONDITION OF YOUR PASTURELAND USING THE PASTURELAND SCREENING TOOL.
- * USE YOUR BEST JUDGEMENT AND MEMORY IF YOU ARE EVALUATING YOUR PASTURELAND DURING THE NON-GROWING SEASON.
- * AS A MINIMUM, ONE SCREENING TOOL MUST BE COMPLETED FOR EACH OPERATING UNIT.
- * THERE ARE TWO PASTURELAND SCREENING TOOLS AVAILABLE TO USE. ONE FOR WESTERN WASHINGTON AND ONE FOR EASTERN WASHINGTON. CHECK THE TOP OF EACH WORKSHEET FOR THE CORRECT TOOL.

Indicator Evaluation Categories:

- * CIRCLE THE DESCRIPTION WHICH BEST FITS THE SITE. WHEN ALL CATEGORIES ARE EVALUATED, TOTAL THE NUMBER OF CIRCLES IN EACH COLUMN ON THE LINE AT THE BOTTOM OF THAT COLUMN. ON THE NEXT LINE, MULTIPLY THE TOTALS IN EACH COLUMN BY THE POINTS AT THE TOP OF EVERY COLUMN. THE FINAL SCORE IS THE SUM OF THE LAST LINE.
- * CATEGORIES WITH A LOW RATING ARE THE ONES WHICH WILL RESPOND THE QUICKEST (AND GENERALLY THE MOST ECONOMICALLY) TO POSITIVE CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT, RESULTING IN IMPROVEMENT IN PASTURE CONDITION. EVEN IF RESEEDING IS A DECISION, IMPROVEMENT IN LOW-RATED MANAGEMENT FACTORS WILL IMPROVE THE SUCCESS OF THE NEW STAND.

Screening Tool for WESTERN Washington

Washington Natural Resources Conservation Service



Score (for each indicator, circle the block which most closely describes the field, scores of 2 & 4 can also be used)		
Indicator ↓	1	2
Forage stand vigor	Poor growth of forage plants, uneven stand, light green color, slow spring growth & regrowth	↔
Stubble Height (bunchgrasses = Orchardgrass, Tall fescue, Timothy, Annual Ryegrass; Sodformers = Bentgrass, Bluegrass, Quackgrass)	Less than proper height most of the time. Most desirable species grazed out.	↔
Amount of field frequently covered by over mature forages or with plant surfaces frequently covered by manure	> 40%	↔
Soil Compaction/ Rutting, evidence of use when soil saturated	Soil very hard, surface uneven over large areas due to rutting & hoof action.	↔
Percentage of bare ground, including livestock trails & concentration areas	> 40%	↔
Percentage of unusable weeds/annual species present (by cover @ 6" ht)	>50%	↔
Percentage of leafy cover of large desired forage species @ 6" tall, i.e. Orchardgrass, Tall fescue, White clover	< 30%	↔
Legume percentage during summer	Less than 5%, or greater than 50% of forage stand	↔
Harvest Frequency	Once a year, or continuous grazing	↔
Fertility	Low fertility, plants pale green or have deficiency signs, pH inadequate, forage around urine and manure patches much darker green than rest of field; OR P or K soil test levels are very high, fall soil nitrate level is Very High.	↔
Uniformity of use	Under-grazed or overgrazed areas cover over 50% of the pasture.	↔
Total circles in each column:		
Multiply Header rank by the total (above) in each column:		
Total Score (sum of previous line):		

Screening Tool for WESTERN Washington

Washington Natural Resources Conservation Service



Score (for each indicator, circle the block which most closely describes the field, scores of 2 & 4 can also be used)		
3	4	5
Some uneven growth of forage plants, stand produces less than soil potential	↔	Healthy, vigorous forage plants. Plants dark green and leafy. Uniform stand, good production, plants grow rapidly.
Concentrated grazing gives “mown lawn” look. (bunchgrass=2”, sodformers=1”).	↔	Proper height for key management species for forage production (bunchgrass=3”, sodformers=2”)
15% - 30%	↔	< 10%
Compaction layer present, can be identified with probe or shovel. Some soil ruts or hoof marks evident.	↔	None
>25%	↔	< 10%
>25%	↔	< 10%
<50%	↔	>= 85%
5% - 15% or 30% - 50% of forage stand	↔	15% - 30% of forage stand
Grazing period > 7 days per paddock, regrowth periods not adequate to achieve proper forage regrowth height (bunchgrass = 6”, sodformers = 4”).	↔	More intensive grazing management with grazing periods ≤ 3 days per paddock, regrowth periods adequate to reach proper forage height.
Adequate fertility amounts & pH level for yield, plants healthy green color, application timing not optimal for plant uptake.	↔	Fertility timing and amount are optimal for plant uptake and growth, uniform distribution of plants with a healthy green color.
Under-grazed or overgrazed areas cover 10-25% of the pasture.	↔	Under-grazed or overgrazed areas cover < 10% of the pasture.

Screening Tool for EASTERN Washington

Washington Natural Resources Conservation Service



Score (for each indicator, circle the block which most closely describes the field, scores of 2 & 4 can also be used)		
Indicator	1	2
Average Stubble Height at end of grazing period	Less than 2 inches	↔
End of grazing period Uniformity of use – over-mature plants	Grass seed heads are obvious and stubble height > 6 inches on >50% of the pasture	↔
End of grazing period Uniformity of use – high impact areas	Stubble height less than 2 inches over 50% of the pasture	↔
Percentage of bare ground, including livestock trails & concentration areas	>40%	↔
Percentage of unusable weeds/annual species present	>50%	↔
Most abundant perennial grass forage species	Kentucky bluegrass, bentgrass, other species	↔
Legume percentage of forage stand	Less than 5%, or greater than 50%	↔
Regrowth Periods	Less than 2 weeks, or continuous season-long grazing	↔
Fertility – Annual Based on soil test and/or recommendation	No fertilizer applied on an annual basis	↔
Frequency of cultural practices (mowing, spring tooth harrowing, dragging, or clipping) applied in a year	Never	
Multiply Header rank by the number of circles in each column:		
Total Score (sum of calculations above):		

Indicator Evaluation Categories:

Circle the description which best fits the site. When all categories are evaluated, total the number of circles in each column on the line at the bottom of that column. On the next line, multiply the totals in each column by the points at the top of every column. The final score is the sum of the last line.

Part 1 of 2

Screening Tool for EASTERN Washington

Washington Natural Resources Conservation Service



Score (for each indicator, circle the block which most closely describes the field, scores of 2 & 4 can also be used)		
3	4	5
2-4 inches	↔	>4 inches
Grass seed heads are obvious and stubble height > 6 inches on 10-25% of the pasture	↔	Concentrated grazing gives “mown lawn” look with stubble height > 6 inches on < 10%
Stubble height less than 2 inches over 10-25% of the pasture	↔	Stubble height less than 2 inches on <10% of the pasture
>25%	↔	<10%
>25%	↔	<10%
Quackgrass, meadow foxtail, reed canarygrass	↔	Orchardgrass, Tall fescue, smooth brome, perennial ryegrass, Regar brome
5% - 15% or 30% - 50%	↔	15% - 30%
Regrowth periods not adequate to achieve > 6" forage height, or is too long and plants > 12" tall @ turn-in	↔	Regrowth @ next turn-in > 6" tall and < 12" tall
One application of fertilizer	↔	Split application of fertilizer
After about half of the grazing periods		After each grazing period

Categories with a low rating are the ones which will respond the quickest (and generally the most economically) to positive changes in management, resulting in improvement in pasture condition. Even if reseeding is a decision, improvement in low-rated management factors will improve the success of the new stand.

Part 2 of 2

