



## CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

### E528S

## Soil Health Improvements on Pasture

### Conservation Practice 528: Prescribed Grazing

**APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture**

**RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Soil**

**ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 1 Year**

#### Enhancement Description

Use of soil health assessment to evaluate impact of planned grazing in addressing organic matter depletion, soil organism habitat and aggregate instability. Laboratory soil health tests will be completed in year 1 and year 4 of the contract. Planned modifications to the pasture forages and/or management system will be made to the benchmark grazing system to address concerns from the assessments. During sample collection, Pasture Condition Score (PCS) or Determining Indicators of Pasture Health (DIPH) assessment will be completed for the sample area.

#### Criteria

- Utilizing the benchmark PCS or DIPH, the participant will plan improvements to at least one of the indicators. The benchmark PCS or DIPH will be less than one year old.
- A primary assessment will be completed in Year 1 that includes completing the PCS or DIPH and sampling soil that will be analyzed by a soil health testing laboratory. Follow guidance from Technical Note No. 450-03 to select indicators (soil organic carbon, aggregation, bioavailable nitrogen, respiration, and/or active carbon) and for sampling procedure. Record weather factors and most recent grazing event on the PCS or DIPH. Soil sample collection and PCS or DIPH will be completed on the same day and in the same location.

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- During Year 4, a follow-up assessment will be completed using the same methods that were utilized in year 1. The assessment will be in the same season, comparable conditions and key area as completed in year 1.

### **Documentation and Implementation Requirements**

#### **Participant will:**

- Prior to implementation:
  - Provide NRCS with the benchmark grazing information.
  - Develop a prescribed grazing plan.
  - Select the laboratory soil health test and provider based on your soil health objectives.
- During implementation:
  - Complete PCS or DIPH or work with someone qualified to complete the pasture assessment when soil samples are collected.
  - Collect soil samples and georeferenced sampling locations in years 1 and 4 of the contract and send them to a reputable soil testing lab that completes soil health testing. Year 1 and year 4 soil samples will be tested by the same laboratory.
  - Make changes to the grazing management plan based on results of PCS or DIPH and soil health test to benefit organic matter depletion, soil organism habitat and/or aggregate instability.
- After implementation provide the following items for review by NRCS:
  - PCS or DIPH score sheets with all field notes and locations.
  - Both Soil Health Assessment results to NRCS.
  - Changes made to the grazing management plan for the year.

#### **NRCS will:**

- As needed, provide any technical assistance to participant as requested.
- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribed Grazing (CPS 528) as it relates to implementing this enhancement.
- Prior to implementation, and as requested from the participant, develop a Prescribed Grazing plan for each year of this enhancement.



- During implementation, assist the producer with locating the key area for the PCS or DIPH and soil samples to be collected.
- During implementation, as requested work with the producer to complete PCS or DIPH and collect the soil samples.
- After implementation, review all PCS or DIPH and all soil health laboratory testing results.
- After implementation, verify implementation of changes made to the grazing management plan to address organic matter depletion, soil organism habitat and/or aggregate instability and other identified indicators from the PCS or DIPH by reviewing grazing herd in and out records or implementation of additional activities.

**NRCS Documentation Review:**

I have reviewed all required participant documentation and have determined the participant has implemented the enhancement and met all criteria and requirements.

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_ Contract Number \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Applied \_\_\_\_\_ Fiscal Year Completed \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NRCS Technical Adequacy Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date