



**CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY**

**E528R**

**CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM**

**Management Intensive Rotational Grazing**

**Conservation Practice 528: Prescribed Grazing**

**APPLICABLE LAND USE: Pasture, Range**

**RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: PLANTS**

**ENHANCEMENT LIFE SPAN: 1 Year**

**Enhancement Description**

Management intensive, multi-paddock grazing system where livestock are regularly and systematically moved to fresh forage to optimize quantity and quality of forage growth, improve manure distribution, improve wildlife cover, and improve soil health.

**Criteria**

- Management-intensive rotational grazing increases harvest efficiency of vegetation with grazing and/or browsing animals through smaller paddock sizes, higher stock density while maintaining plant residue with enough energy reserves to recover quickly when adequate soil moisture is available for regrowth.
- Must develop and implement a written grazing plan that:
  - increases stock density
  - shortens grazing periods
  - enhances plant recovery
  - matches the forage quantity and quality produced with the grazing and / or browsing animal, and

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- increases harvest efficiency and manure distribution by significantly increasing the existing stock density per herd.
- Removal of forage will be in accordance with site production limitations, rate of plant growth, the physiological needs of forage plants and the nutritional needs of the livestock.
- Deferment (non-grazing period less than one year) and / or rest (non-grazing period equal to or greater than one year) will be planned for critical periods of plant needs.
- Manage livestock rotation based on rate of plant growth, available forage, and allowable utilization target.
- Manage livestock rotation to provide adequate ground cover and plant density to decrease soil erosion, reduce runoff and improve infiltration and water holding capacity.
- Minimize concentrated livestock areas to enhance nutrient distribution and improve or maintain ground cover.
- Utilize higher stock density and shorter grazing periods in riparian areas to minimize impact to stream bank or shoreline stability and ensure other sensitive areas such as wetlands, habitats of concern, karst areas do not become degraded.
- Implement and maintain a rotational grazing system using a combination of permanent or temporary division fences and water facilities to serve the management needs of operation.
- Develop and follow contingency plans to deal with drought or flooding or other episodic disturbance events.

Develop and implement a monitoring plan that at a minimum evaluates livestock performance, plant community composition and density, and soil function components such as ground cover, infiltration and aggregate stability.



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## Documentation and Implementation Requirements

### Participant will:

- Prior to implementing, obtain a grazing plan map delineating the existing paddock system, along with a livestock inventory (type, class, average weight, and number) to document the current stocking density and current stocking rate.
- Prior to implementation, acquire a prescribed grazing plan, with a plan narrative delineating the following:
  - The goals and objectives of the plan
  - Map showing the number of paddock subdivisions with water sources, proposed stock densities per paddock associated with different herds in the system.
  - Forage Inventory
  - Forage / Animal Balance
  - A grazing plan narrative describing the basis for when livestock movement or rotation will occur
  - A contingency plan
  - A monitoring plan
- During implementation, keep pasture/ herd in/out records, stock density records and photos of paddock condition and photos of high stock density grazing implementation.
- After implementation, provide the following items for review by NRCS:
  - Written grazing plan with maps showing fencing and water layout and managed stock densities for each herd.
  - Paddock / herd in / out records with actual stock densities documentation.
  - Photos of paddock(s) condition and improved forage utilization and photos of high stock density grazing.
  - Changes made to the grazing management plan.

### NRCS will:

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- As needed, provide technical assistance to participant as requested.
- Prior to implementation, provide and explain NRCS Conservation Practice Standard Prescribed Grazing (Code 528) and supporting documents that are needed to implement this enhancement, such as forage-animal balance forms.
- Prior to implementation, review the existing grazing plan, maps and livestock inventory provided by the participant.
- Review the newly proposed grazing plan fencing and watering layout, associated maps and stock density numbers for each herd.
- After implementation, review the following:
  - Written grazing plan with maps showing fencing and water layout and managed stock densities for each herd.
  - Paddock / herd in / out records with actual stock densities documentation.
  - Photos of paddock(s) condition and improved forage utilization and photos of high stock density grazing.
  - Changes made to the grazing management plan

**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 \_\_\_\_\_



## SOUTH DAKOTA (SD) SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

## CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

### E528R

#### Management Intensive Rotational Grazing

##### **Additional Criteria for SD:**

In addition to the criteria specified in the national job sheet E528R, the following additional criteria apply in SD:

- Management intensive grazing, for the purposes of this enhancement, will be a rotational grazing system that increases harvest efficiency, rest period length through shorter grazing periods, or matches forage quantity or quality with nutrient demand of the livestock present. This can be accomplished by adding/splitting paddocks or combining herds.
- Grazing system will consist of 12 or more paddocks in rotation.
  - One herd will move through this rotation.
- Consult a technical specialist (Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or other) to help provide a management intensive grazing plan.

##### **Requirements for Grazing Management:**

- Maximum 50 percent (%) utilization. Ocular methods on key or representative areas are adequate, but utilization methods such as landscape appearance or key species should be used to calibrate field estimates. Exceptions include dormant season grazing (60% utilization) and grazing prescriptions on rangeland that are designed to alter the present plant community through intensive grazing by livestock (i.e., suppression of invasive species). In these cases, the desired degree of use of management species should be documented within the grazing plan and/or assistance notes.
- Adequate plant recovery periods must be provided. On rangelands provide a minimum of 45 days of growing season recovery between grazing events during the growing season. On pasture provide a minimum of 30 consecutive days of growing season recovery between grazing events. The growing season is approximately April 1 through October 1.
- Alter timing of grazing in each pasture by at least 2 weeks from year to year.
- For additional information, see the SD Prescribed Grazing Standard (528) and the appropriate SD Range Technical Note.



**Additional Documentation Requirements for SD:**

In addition to the documentation requirements specified in the National job sheet E528R, the following additional documentation requirements apply in SD.

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- Complete the SD Grazing Tool (SD-CPA-39 Forage/Animal Inventory, Grazing Schedule using the SD-CPA-15 or similar form, and SD-CPA-16).
- Complete a drought contingency plan using the SD Drought Tool or provide the participant with a copy of the example drought contingency plan located within the SD Prescribed Grazing Technical Note 9 (or available on the NRCS website <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/sd/technical/landuse/pasture/>).