



DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITY

Grazing Management

DEFINITION

Manage the harvest of vegetation with grazing and/or browsing animals with the intent to achieve specific ecological, economic and management objectives. Plan prescribed grazing to accomplish one or more purposes described in the conservation practice following general criteria, considerations and operation and maintenance.

A Grazing Management Design and Implementation Activity (DIA) is a site-specific plan developed for a client who wishes to plan and implement decisions on land where grazing related activities or practices will be planned and applied.

A Grazing Management DIA:

- Meets Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) quality criteria for soil erosion control, water quality, fish and wildlife, rangeland/pasture/grazed woodland health and productivity, and other identified resource concerns.
- Will be developed following the principles primarily provided in Subpart D of the National Range and Pasture Handbook.
- Comply with federal, state, tribal, and local laws, regulations, and permit requirements.
- Meet the client's objectives.

CRITERIA

General Requirements

A DIA is the planning and designing of a single practice or any combination of structural, vegetative, or land management practices and management activities to treat one or more resource concerns.

The DIA documents the verification of the client's conservation plan, and the development of the implementation requirements or plans and specifications for each planned conservation practice.

The TSP will maintain an ongoing record of DIA related discussions with the client. The TSP will document on a conservation assistance notes form (CPA-6) or other format that includes all components of the CPA-6 (client objectives, dates of assistance, all parties present, notes of significant information, alternatives considered, and decisions reached). Any correspondence between the TSP and the client related to the development of the DIA will be included in the record.

The TSP may use any of the Conservation Practice Documents, such as implementation requirements, templates, Standard Detail Drawings, etc. located in the state's Field Office Technical Guide.

The activity will meet the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) planning criteria for one or more of the plant, animal, water, air, and soil resource concerns.

The activity will meet the state adopted NRCS Conservation Practice Standards (CPS) and Statements of Work (SOW) included in the client's conservation plan or EQIP Contract and include at least one of following:

Code	Practice Name
314	Brush Management
315	Herbaceous Weed Control
511	Forage Harvest Management
512	Pasture and Hay Planting
528	Prescribed Grazing
548	Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment
550	Range Planting
338	Prescribed Burning
382	Fence

DELIVERABLES

Two copies (hardcopy or electronic) of the plan must be developed—one for the client and one for the NRCS field office. At the client's request, Technical Service Provider (TSP) can deliver NRCS's copy to the NRCS Field Office. The client's copy must include the implementation requirements or plans, specifications, operation and maintenance, and quality assurance plan. The NRCS copy must include all items identified herein. An additional electronic copy of the plan should also be uploaded on NRCS Registry.

1. Cover Page

Cover page reporting the technical services provided by the TSP. Cover page(s) must include the following:

- a. Client information: Name, farm bill program, contract number, and contract item number.
- b. TSP information: name, address, phone number, email, TSP number, TSP expiration date; and county of service.
- c. Farm identification:
 - i. Farm name, owner name, street address, and county/state.
 - ii. Primary phone number of the client.
 - iii. List of all practice and/or scenario designs included in this plan.**
- d. Statement by TSP that services provided:
 - i. Comply with all applicable Federal, State, Tribal, and local laws and requirements.
 - ii. Meet applicable NRCS standards, specifications, and program requirements.
 - iii. Are consistent with the conservation program goals and objectives for which

- the program contract was entered into by the client.
- iv. Incorporate alternatives that are both cost effective and appropriate to address the resource issues.
- e. TSP certification statement: signature and date.
- f. Client acceptance statement:
 - i. A statement that the plans and specifications adequately represent existing conditions and the selected preliminary design alternatives, and the client understands and will abide with the operation and maintenance plans.
 - ii. Signature of the client and date the client received the plans.
- g. Block for NRCS reviewer acceptance (to be completed by NRCS).

2. Conservation Assistance Notes and Correspondence

- a. Conservation Assistance Notes (NRCS-CPA-6) or other format that includes all components of the CPA-6.
 - i. Document the client's objectives.
 - ii. Document each interaction with the client, include notes and results of that interaction, date, and initials of the TSP.
 - iii. Document each site visit, activity in the field, results of each site visit, all parties present, date, and initials of the TSP.
- b. Any correspondence between the TSP and the client relating to the development of the DIA.

3. Maps

- a. Maps to include, but not be limited to:
 - i. General location map of the implementation areas
 - ii. Conservation Plan map (this may consist of several maps to account for the entire implementation area). This map will specifically include:
 - 1. Boundary lines for the Planning Land Units (PLUs) with labels (name, number, or both). A PLU is a unique geographic area, defined by a polygon, that has common land use and is owned, operated, or managed by the same client or clients. The PLU is the minimum unit for planning.
 - 2. Acreage of each PLU.
 - 3. Land uses (noting management activities associated with each land use).
 - 4. Delineation of vegetation communities present onsite.
 - 5. Soils map and appropriate soil descriptions for each ecological site, if available.
 - 6. Fields, pastures, streams, surface waters, wetlands, other features.
 - 7. Fences, watering facilities, and other structures.
 - 8. Location of planned and applied conservation practices, using NRCS map symbols.
 - 9. Resource maps of the PLU
 - a. Soils maps, and other resource maps as applicable.
 - b. Resource assessment results that may have been identified in the PCS and/or IIRH assessments and/or Riparian Proper Functioning Condition assessments or Stream Visual Assessment.
 - c. An existing wetland delineation map, if any.
 - iii. Other maps, as needed, with appropriate interpretations.
- b. At a minimum, all maps developed for the DIA will include:

- i. Title block showing:
 - Map title.
 - Client's name (individual or business).
 - Prepared with assistance from USDA – NRCS.
 - Assisted By [TSP planner's name].
 - Name of applicable conservation district, county, and State.
 - Date prepared.
- ii. Map scale.
- iii. Information needed to locate the implementation area, such as geographic coordinates, public land survey coordinates, etc.
- iv. North arrow.
- v. Appropriate map symbols and a map symbol legend on the map or as an attachment.

4. Planning

- a. Include and update, when needed, the client's conservation plan.
- b. Document client objectives such as:
 - i. Improve forage yield, quality, diversity, and persistence
 - ii. Meet livestock nutritional needs
 - iii. Maximize browse, forage and roughage yields
 - iv. Improve production cost efficiency
 - v. Maintain or Improve wildlife habitat
 - vi. Maintain or Improve water quality
 - vii. Prevent or reduce erosion
 - viii. Improve soil health
- c. Detail description of existing conditions and practices applied accompanied by a brief description of the history of the land and ownership including length of current ownership, past management activities and surrounding environment (whether property is developed, private woods, public forests, etc.). This information can be based on personal knowledge, property records and local information sources as well as evidence seen on the ground.
- d. Resource Inventory identifying existing conditions:
 - ii. Consult ecological site descriptions (ESDs) as reference condition
 - iii. Assess vegetative species diversity and condition by land use, ecological site and forage suitability group by using pasture condition score (PSC) or interpreting indicators of rangeland health (IRRH) or determining indicators of pasture health (DIPH) for each alternative developed.
 - iv. Animal Inventory and acres available for grazing
 - v. Waste handling and storage (if dairy)
 - vi. Watering facilities and fencing
 - vii. Documentation of existing practices/history/grazing records (if available)
 - viii. Current forage and roughage condition
 - ix. Balance current animal demand to available forage and feed
 - x. Identify all relevant soil, water, air, plant and animal resource concerns
- e. Provide a landscape setting explaining how surrounding management affects the property as well as how the landowner's actions impact their neighbors. Consider aesthetic quality, privacy, wildlife movement and habitat, noxious weeds, urban encroachment, wildland fire interface, if applicable.

- f. Results of the riparian habitat assessments conducted (such as a Proper Function Condition for Lentic or Lotic areas, or the Stream Visual Assessment Protocol), documenting both existing and planned condition for each alternative developed.
- g. Desired future conditions/goals
- h. A record of the alternatives developed (a minimum of two alternatives must be developed).
- i. A record of the preferred alternative which includes:
 - i. PLU label (name, number, or both).
 - ii. Client objectives and desired future habitat condition.
 - iii. NRCS practice name and code.
 - iv. Amount to be applied.
 - v. Brief description of the planned practice (practice narrative).
 - vi. Date the planned practice is scheduled to be implemented.
 - vii. As needed, applicable "Conservation Practice Overview" sheets or other prepared material.
 - viii. Operation and maintenance agreements and procedures.
 - ix. Available maps, sketches, and designs resulting from the planning process that will be useful to the client in implementing the plan.

5. Documentation

- a. Provide documentation of the following:
 - i. Site-level resource inventory and assessment data and analysis used to formulate management alternatives.
 - ii. Reference to assessment information incorporated from a grazing management plan.
 - iii. List of all Federal candidate, proposed, threatened and endangered species with the potential to occur onsite.
- b. Quality assurance activities that are required during the installation to ensure the materials and installations meet the CPS purpose, function properly and can be certified as meeting the plans and specifications.
- c. Other information as required in the CPS State of Work, including but not limited to, practice purpose, list of permits, facilitating practices, and state required items that affect safety and other environmental concerns.

6. Implementation Requirements

- a. Develop written Implementation Requirements for each planned (non-engineering) conservation practice included in the preferred alternative, including facilitating practices
 - i. Include, as a minimum, all items listed in each CPS "Plans and Specifications" section
 - ii. Include both visual / photographic and narrative descriptions of the work. Provide descriptive information on the quality of the completed work and the quantities of all materials and labor required for completion of the work.
 - iii. A location map, plan view and written information are required. These items may be included in a single document where all specification information is included

on the plans, or in multiple documents where the specifications are independent of the plans.

- b. Prepare an operation and maintenance plan for each design that the client will use after implementation of the practices are complete.
 - i. Include, as a minimum, all items listed in each CPS “Operation and Maintenance” section.

REFERENCES

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. National Planning Procedures Handbook.
<https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=44407>

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Field Office Technical Guide.
<https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/>

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. National Range and Pasture Handbook.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Cultural Resources Handbook.
<https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=42752>

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. National TSP Website.
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/technical/tsp/>

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. National TSP Resources.
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/technical/tsp/?cid=nrcseprd1417414>

EDIT Database

Web Soil Survey (WSS)

Pasture Condition Score (PCS)

Determining Indicators of Pasture Health (DIPH)

Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health (IIRH)