



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 the selected laboratory 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.
- 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.

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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 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



WASHINGTON SUPPLEMENT TO CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

References for Washington Conservation Practice 528 (Prescribed Grazing) Enhancements

To meet criteria for the Prescribed Grazing Enhancements utilize one or more of the below references or Technical Notes:

- A list of **Certified Range Management Consultants** can be found on the Society for Range Management’s website under the Education Tab. <http://rangelands.org/>
- **NRCS Prescribed Grazing Conservation Practice Standard 528** can be found in FOTG Section 4, Practice Standards and Supporting Documents/Prescribed Grazing (AC) (528) folder, <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/details>
- **National Range and Pasture Handbook**. Location: eDirectives,Handbooks,Title 190 – Ecological Sciences,Part 645 National Range and Pasture Handbook.
- **Ecological Site Descriptions** and **Forage Suitability Groups** can be found in the **NRCS Field Office Technical Guide** <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/details> in Section 2. For planning unit ecological sites and forage suitability groups see bullet below.
- **Soils, Ecological Sites** and **Forage Suitability Groups** for planning unit can be found by using the **Web Soil Survey** <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>
- **Pasture Condition Scoring** documents can be found in **NRCS Field Office Technical Guide**: in Section 1/Reference Lists/Technical Notes by Discipline/Pasture folder. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/details> The accompanying Pasture Condition Scoresheet is located in the same folder.
- Pasture Technical Note No. 105. **The Western Oregon and Washington Pasture Calendar**, A Pacific Northwest Extension Publication PNW 699. Oregon State University, University of Idaho, Washington State University. <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/pnw699.pdf>



CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

- **Prescribed Grazing (528) Design Worksheet/s.**
This document has several usefull worksheets for developing grazing plans. It can be found in the **NRCS Field Office Technical Guide** Section 4 Practice Standards and Supporting Documents/Prescribed Grazing (528) folder.
<https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/>
- Other **Prescribed Grazing (528) documents** (e.g. *Utilization Monitoring Worksheets, Implementation Requirements, IR's, Planning Guides, etc.*) can also be found in the **NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG)** , in Section 4 Practice Standards and Supporting Documents /Prescribed Grazing (528) folder.
<https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/details>
- To find laboratories that test for soil health properties go to **WSU Extension's Soils and Laboratory Testing, Soil Management** webpage or the **Oregon State University Soil Health Lab** webpage.
- **Pasture and Grazing Management in the Northwest PNW 614.** 2010. Glenn E. Shewmaker, Mylen Bohle. <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/pnw614>