2018 WETLAND RESERVE EASEMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL SITE EVALUATION
KENTUCKY

Owner(s) (as listed on deed or POA) Date_____ FSN_____
Tract_____
_____ County_____
_____ Mailing Address: _____
_____ City: _____

Total Acres in Application:_____ State:_____ Zip: _____

*Total Eligible Acres in Application:_____ Phone: (Home)_____(Work)_____

*Eligible areas can include a 300' riparian buffer on 1st order streams and larger when the buffer connects existing or restorable wetland areas that are protected with an easement or will be protected by the WRE easement.

Permanent Offer ☐ 30-year Offer ☐

Latitude_____ Longitude_____Topo Quad Name: _____

Screening Questions

A yes answer to question 1, 2, 3, or 4 below will result in the application being a low priority. Low priority applications will not be ranked unless funding is available after higher priority applications have been considered for funding.

1) Has the boundary been manipulated by the landowner so that the offer cannot be efficiently managed or effectively restored as determine by NRCS? _____
2) Are there existing water control structures located on the easement (that cannot be removed by NRCS) that manage water off the easement (unless landowner agrees to convey a non- revocable flooding easement), or existing water control structures located off of the easement that manage water on the easement? ___
3) Has a previous offer made to the current landowner(s) been refused within the past 18 months? _____ This question can be waived by the state conservationist if the land offered is considered a high priority.
4) Is the offer for a 30-year easement? _____

Ranking Factors — Point Values

I. Local Significance
   1) Special Interest Areas……= _____
   2) Proximity to Protected Areas……= _____
II. Wildlife Habitat
   1) Threatened & Endangered Species……= _____
   2) Wildlife Corridors…..……= _____
   3) Adjacent Forestland……..……..= _____
   4) Easement Size……= _____
III. Water Quality
   1) Cropping History……...= _____
   2) Proximity of Main Stem of River System…….= _____

IV. Hydrology
1) Percentage of the Easement Composed Of PC Land…..…….....= _____
2) Adequate Source of Hydrology……..…= _____
3) Types of Hydrology Restoration Practices……= _____
V. Percent of Total Easement Area that meets identified categories (ACEP Manual 440-528.105) of land eligible for WRE..……..…= _____
VI. Riparian Area……...= _____
VII. Operation, Maintenance and Management Factors
1) Existing Timber Quality…….= _____
2) Contiguous Easement …...…….= _____
VIII. Cost Factor
1) Easement Cost Factor……= _____
2) Restoration Cost Factor……..……= _____

TOTAL POINT VALUE OF RANKING FACTORS……= _____

Point Values of Ranking Factors for Kentucky WRE

Ranking Factor	**Maximum Point Value**	**Approximate % of Total Score**
Local Significance		
Special Interest Areas	15	2
Proximity to Protected Areas	30	5
Wildlife habitat		
T&E species and State Conservation Agreement Species	25	4
Wildlife Corridors	10	1
Adjacent Forestland	20	3
Size of Easement	60	9
Water Quality		
Cropping History	50	8
Proximity to main stem of river system	30	5
Hydrology		
Percentage of the Easement Composed Of PC Land	95	14
Adequate source of Hydrology	95	14
Types of Hydrology Restoration Practices	70	10
Percent of Total Easement Area that meets identified categories of land eligible for WRE	60	9
Riparian Area	10	1
Operation, Maintenance and Management Factors		
Existing Timber Quality	40	6
Contiguous Easement	25	4
Cost Factors		
Easement Cost Factor	20	3
Restoration Cost Factor	20	3
TOTALS	675	~100

I. LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

1) Special Interest Areas

Restoration is in or near one of the special interest areas identified on the attached Special Interest Area map.

Site is in area.....15
Site is within 2 miles of area.....5
Site is not in or within 2 miles of area.....0

15 Points Maximum _____

2) Proximity to Protected Areas

Proximity of easement area to permanently protected conservation area (federal/state wildlife refuges, nature conservancy lands, and other permanently protected areas (i.e., WRE) with management objectives similar to the easement area).

Distance	Points
Adjacent	30
Within 1 mile	20
> 1 - 5 miles	10
>5 miles	0

30 Points Maximum _____

II. WILDLIFE HABITAT

1) Benefits To Threatened & Endangered Species

This question applies to any contribution to protection/recovery of federally listed threatened, endangered or candidate species or the copperbelly water snake. Benefits to these species will be determined and documented by the KY Interagency Coordination Tool (KICT). Species benefited are identified in section I of the KICT report. Potential benefits are described in section IV of the report. (NOTE: Benefits are contingent upon application of any avoidance measures described within the report.) Points shall be awarded for the highest category that applies. If points are awarded for benefits, attach the supporting KICT report.

Practices planned benefit no species	0 pts
Practices planned benefit two species (i.e. NLEB and IBAT)	5 pts
Practices planned benefit species of concern (copperbelly watersnake)	10 pts
Practices planned benefit NLEB and IBAT and occur within 5 miles of hibernacula	15 pts
Practices planned benefit NLEB and IBAT and occur within 2.5 miles of maternity colony	20 pts
Practices planned benefit three or more species (excluding hibernacula and maternity colonies)	25 pts

25 Points Maximum _____

2) Wildlife Corridors

Will the easement area provide a wooded corridor at least 100' wide that connects existing blocks of forested areas of at least 20 acres in size considered quality habitat? (To receive points the forested block must be at least 500' in width somewhere along its length.)

Yes 10
No 0

10 Points Maximum ____

3) Proximity of Large Blocks of Forestland

Adjacent to >500 acres of forestland or planned forestland.....20
Adjacent to >300 acres of forestland or planned forestland.....15
Adjacent to >100 acres of forestland or planned forestland.....5
(To receive points for planned forestland, the acreage must be covered by a CRP or WRE/WRP contract or conservation easement.)

20 Points Maximum _____

4) Total easement acres offered.

Acres	Points
>300	60
150-300	40
80-149	20
20-79	10
<20	0

60 Points Maximum _____

III. WATER QUALITY

1) Cropping History

Cropping history will be used to assign a point value for the amount of non-point source pollution reduced as a result of wetland restoration on the easement area. The existing crop or last crop grown will be used for this factor. Offering must have had a crop grown within the last 5 years to receive points. CRP Acreage will be considered as cropland for this question. Grassland must have been mowed or grazed in the last 5 years to receive points. Points will be assigned by a weighted average calculated as follows:

CROP	POINTS	ACRES	WEIGHTED AVERAGE POINTS
Row Crop	50 x	( )	=_____
Grassland	25 x	( )	=_____
Forestland, wetland and/or No Crop or Hay Produced in the last 5 years	0 x	( )	=_____

Ranking Point Value = Sum of Weighted Average Points/Total Acres Offered

50 Points Maximum _____

2) Proximity to main stem of river system

Offered easement is part of a floodplain area adjacent to the main stem of a fifth order or larger stream. (National Hydrography Dataset shall be used for this determination)

30 Points Maximum _____

IV. HYDROLOGY RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

1) Percentage of the Easement Composed Of Prior Converted Cropland (PC)

Percent of the easement area composed of PC land. Farmed Wetland will not receive points for this question. In the absence of a determination, hydric and somewhat poorly drained hydric inclusion soils that are cleared and drained and not FW may be used to estimate the amount of PC.

Acres Of PC_____/ Total Easement Acres_____*100 = _____%

Between 76-100% of the easement acres composed of PC 95
Between 51-75% of the easement acres composed of PC 65
Between 26-50% of the easement acres composed of PC 35
Between 0-25% of the easement acres composed of PC 0

95 Points Maximum _____

2) Adequate Source of Hydrology

Location of easement area ensures a source of hydrology adequate to maintain wetland functions and values.

a) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage will receive annual flooding from over bankflows 95
b) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage will receive frequent (at least 3 of 5 years) overbank flow 65
c) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage within a ponded, depressional area 35
d) Majority (>50%) of easement acreage historically contained saturated soils due to groundwater or water table conditions.....15

95 Points Maximum _____

3) Award points for each of the following practices that will be completed as part of the hydrology restoration plan.

Tile Break(18 Points)……..._____
Ditch Plug (18 Points) *Points may be awarded for ditch plug if an embankment will be used to control flow in a ditch that leaves the easement...*……...…....._____
Levee Break (17 Points)…….._____
Wetland Microtopography Restoration (17 Points)…….._____

70 Points Maximum _____

V. PERCENT OF TOTAL EASEMENT AREA THAT MEETS IDENTIFIED CATEGORIES (440-528.105) OF LAND ELIGIBLE FOR WRE

WRE provisions allow for the enrollment of "adjacent lands" that will contribute significantly to the functions and values of the restored wetland ecosystem as long as the "adjacent lands" do not exceed 50%* of the total easement area. However, the primary emphasis of WRE is on wetland restoration. Those intentions offering a lower percentage of "adjacent lands" will receive the highest rating for this factor. Lands eligible for WRE and not considered adjacent lands are defined in the ACEP Manual 440-528.105.

- ≥ 90% of the easement area 60
- 80% - 89% of the easement area 40
- 70% - 79% of the easement area 20
- 60% - 69% of the easement area 10
- less than 60% of the easement area 0

60 Points Maximum _____

VI. RIPARIAN AREA

Easement area includes riparian areas adjacent to a stream that will be restored or enhanced according to the NRCS riparian buffer standard 10

10 Points Maximum _____

VII. EASEMENT, OPERATION, MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT FACTOR

1) Management of Timber Quality:

a) **NO** timber harvested from the offered acres in the last 3 years 40
b) Timber **HAS** been harvested from the offered acres within the last 3 years 0

40 Points Maximum _____

2) Easement Configuration - If more than one of the following applies, use the one that provides for the least points:

a) The easement is made up of a contiguous block of land and existing water control structures that manage easement water are located on the easement 25
b) The easement offer is divided by non-eligible acres, a road right-of-way, non-eligible CRP, or other non-easement area that is beyond the control of the landowner 10
c) The boundary has been manipulated by the landowner so that the offer is cut-up, divided by eligible acres, or separated by non-easement area (block of non-easement area has been cut out of the middle or a long strip extends into the easement)… 0
d) Existing water control structures located on the easement (that cannot be removed by NRCS) manage water off the easement (unless landowner agrees to convey a non-revocable flooding easement), or existing water control structures located off of the easement manage water on the easement 0

25 Points Maximum _____

NOTE: The easement offer must be of sufficient size and properly configured boundaries that allow for the efficient management of the easement.

VIII. COST FACTORS

1) Easement Cost Factor

Landowner offer is ≤90% of the easement compensation value 20

Landowner offer is ≤95% of the easement compensation value 10

Landowner offer is >95% of the easement compensation value 0

20 Points Maximum _____

2) Restoration Cost Factor

Total average restoration cost/Total RESTORED Acres≤$500/acre.....20
Total average restoration cost/Total RESTORED Acres>$500/acre 0

20 Points Maximum _____

Are there existing easements on the application property? (answer yes or no, there are no points assigned to this question) _____

TOTAL RANKING CRITERIA POINTS ☐

WRE Team Leader (Planning Conservationist) Date

Supervisory Natural Resources Manager Date

Biologist Date

Engineer Date

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Date

Restoration Responsibility

Landowner intends to complete hydrology restoration	YES	☐	NO	☐
Landowner intends to complete reforestation	YES	☐	NO	☐

***I (we) have reviewed this evaluation, preliminary plan worksheet, Hydrology Restoration Table, and the Vegetative Restoration Table. I (we) also understand that practice units and cost estimates are approximate on the preliminary plan worksheet and attached tables.* (A detailed plan with estimated practice units and costs will be developed if your application is accepted into the Wetland Reserve Easement.)**

Applicant Date

Applicant Date

Applicant Date

Preliminary Plan Worksheet

Is the intention eligible?_____ Discuss issues of concern. _____

_____

Eligible Acres

Total Eligible Acres that meet identified categories of land eligible for WRE (excluding adjacent land and problem soils)_____Acres

*Eligible areas can include a 300' riparian buffer on 1st order streams and larger when eligible soils are included in the offer.

Other Acres

Upland_____Acres Wetland Forestland_____Acres

Emergent Freshwater Wetlands_____Acres

Water supply adequatefor restoration objectives? Yes_____ No_____

Water supply adequate for enhancement objectives? Yes_____ No_____

Estimated Hydrology Restoration	Current	Projected
Flooding extent (ac)		
Ponding extent (ac)		
Water Table Extent (ac)		
Flooding duration (wk+, mo+)		
Season of flooding (W, S, SU, F)		
Ponding duration (wk+, mo+)		
Season of ponding (W, S, SU, F)		

Table 1. WR-1, Hydrology Restoration.

Approximate location of all hydrologic practices should be documented on an attached aerial photograph.

Practice	Field Nos.	Estimated Amounts (units)	Cost Basis	Cost Share Rate	Total Cost
Water Control Structure					
Ditch Plug					
Dike					
Levee Break					
Tile Break					
List Others:					
Total Cost					

See attached map for approximate placement of hydrology restoration practices.

Table 2. WR-2, Vegetative Restoration

Practice	Field Nos.	Estimated Amounts (Units)	Cost Basis	Cost Share Rate	Total Cost
Tree Planting Seedlings					
Tree Planting Direct Seeded					
Potted Trees					
Natural Regeneration					
Native Grass Planting					
Levee Planting					
List Others:					

See attached map for placement of vegetative practices.

Riparian Areas (land within 300 feet of a water body, stream, or river is considered to be riparian)
Existing Acres_____ Restorable Acres _____

Restoration Plan Comments:_____

_____

Sketch preliminary plan or attach map showing planned extent