

Wild Turkey Habitat Evaluation

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Landowner: _____

Date: _____

Completed by: _____

Location: _____

The aspiring wild turkey manager must be able to visually assess the suitability of a given piece of land as turkey habitat. The habitat components to be evaluated include:

Interspersion (the arrangement or mixing of habitat types) - Turkeys need an arrangement or mix of wooded areas and open areas to provide for their habitat needs. These areas are often in excess of 1,000 acres to obtain enough useable space to sustain a healthy turkey population.

Roosting Cover- Turkeys require roosting cover year round. These are usually wooded areas of larger hardwood trees that allow the turkeys to roost high enough, and with limbs large enough to support the turkeys. These trees protect the turkeys from ground dwelling predators and allows for a vantage point to detect approaching predators as well.

Nesting Cover- Turkeys nest on the ground within clumps of grass, leaf litter, brush piles, or understory vegetation. ≥ 18 inches of nesting cover height is optimal for nesting success. Patches of nesting cover with increased density and structure will aid in nesting success. It has also been noted that nest sites are generally located within close proximity to available water $\approx 1/4$ mile.

Food- Turkey diets consist of green foliage (grasses and forbs), invertebrates, mast and forbs during the year depending on availability.

Water- Turkeys need access to permanent water, preferably one water source within a square mile.

Interspersion:

Rate the area of management as it contains a well interspersed mosaic of wooded and open areas.	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
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Roosting Cover:

Wooded areas make up at least 10-15% of the land area.	Yes or No
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Potential roosting locations are at least 10-15 acres in size.	Yes or No
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Average roost tree diameter at breast height is ≥ 17 inches.	Yes or No
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*See attached instructions

Basal area of roosting location is between 75-120ft ² /acre.	Yes or No
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*See attached instructions

Canopy cover in roosting area $\geq 50\%$.	Yes or No
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Roost areas contain preferred tree species from attached TABLE 1 .	Yes or No
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Average roost tree height is >35 ft.	Yes or No
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Woody understory (≤ 6 ft) within roosting area is low to moderate.	Yes or No
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They prefer more open understory areas.

Roosting Cover Overall Rating:

Excellent Good Fair Poor

Nesting Cover:

Habitat provides a mix of wooded, shrubby, and herbaceous cover, that provides ≥18 inches of good visual obstruction. Nesting habitat should be at least 10 acres per 100 acres of management area.

Excellent
Good
Fair
Poor

Food:

A diverse array of region specific food items are available from attached list (table ?) that are available seasonally. Use 21'x21' plot (.01 acre) for inventory area
**Insects cumulatively count as one species

Excellent- >10 species
Good- 8-10 species
Fair- 5-7 species
Poor- <5 species

Water:

A permanent water source is available at ≤1 source per square mile.

Yes or No

List species present during Inventory that were present on **TABLE 2:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Based on Evaluation what is the limiting factor(s) for turkey habitat?

Interspersion Roosting Cover Nesting Cover Food Water

Notes and Habitat Management Recommendations: _____

Based on this evaluation, the overall habitat rating is:

Excellent Good Fair Poor

TABLE 1: Roost Tree Species

American elm	Bald cypress
Black willow	Blackjack oak
Cedar elm	Eastern cottonwood
Emory oak	Honey mesquite
Juniper	Live oak
Netleaf hackberry	Pecan
Plains cottonwood	Post oak
Sugar hackberry	Sycamore
Texas oak	Texas walnut
Western soapberry	

TABLE 2: Food Plants for Rolling Plains, Edwards Plateau and South Texas Plains Ecoregions

Algerita	Gaura	Old man's beard	Snow on the mountain
Beggar-tick	Giant ragweed	Palafoxia	Squirreltail grass
Bladderpod	Grama grasses	Panic grass	Switchgrass
Bristlegrass	Granjeno	Paspalum sp.	Stiffstem flax
Broomweed	Grape	Pecan	Tasajillo
Buffel grass	Ground-cherry	Pigeonberry	Texas bullnettle
Bumelia	Groundsel	Pinnate tansy mustard	Texas cupgrass
Catnip Noseburn	Hackberry	Plantain	Texas wintergrass
Condalia	Indian mallow	Prairie parsley	Tobosa grass
Coreopsis	Juniper	Prickly pear	Vine mesquite
Crabgrass	Lantana	Rescue grass	Walnut
Croton	Lime prickly ash	Sand dropseed	Western ragweed
Dropseed sp.	Little barley	Sida	White tridens
Ephedra	Little leaf sumac	Signal grass	Wild mercury
Evening primrose	Lotebush	Silverleaf nightshade	Wild onion
False dandelion	Milk pea	Skunkbush sumac	Wild tobacco
Filaree	Milk vetch	Slim tridens	Windmill grass
Flat sedge	Oak (Acorns)	Smallflower corydalis	Yellow wood sorrel

****Insects cumulatively count as 1 food species**