

Ranking Tool Summary

for FY2008 - WHIP FA

(Released 02/07/2008)

Description:

Ranking Tool for the 2008 Nebraska Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). This tool is a combination of the the 2007 WHIP ranking and the 2008 Legacy Project Special Initiative. The 2008 WHIP is designed to address the specific needs and opportunities of habitats among all landscapes and not limited to the 40 Biologically Unique Landscapes (BUL) identified within the Nebraska Natural Legacy Project. A more restrictive practice list also applies as incentive payments are not eligible. Practices included in the 2007 WHIP are also available in 2008. Be aware the \$30,000 contract limit is in effect again for 2008. Due to the focused nature of this effort, the concurrence of a wildlife biologist from NRCS (including the Farm Bill Wildlife Biologists and Wetland Biologist), Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, or a Coordinating Wildlife Biologist assigned to BUL is required for the application and conservation plan. A maximum of 3 resource concerns can be identified for each practice selected.

Land Uses:

Crop, Forest, Grazed Range, Hay, Headquarters, Native/Naturalized Pasture, Pasture, Watershed Protection, Wildlife

Efficiency Score:

Scoring Multiplier: 600.00

Optional Notes:

National Priorities:

Scoring Multiplier: 0.90

Questions:

Number	Question	Points
1	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the restoration, development or enhancement of declining or important native wildlife habitats, such as brush, grass, forbs, or waterways?	24
2	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the protection, restoration, development or enhancement of wildlife habitat for at-risk species which can include candidate species and State listed threatened and endangered species, such as habitat for sage grouse?	63
3	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the protection, restoration, development or enhancement of wildlife habitat for Federally listed threatened and endangered wildlife species?	15
4	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the reduction of invasive species on wildlife habitats, such as trees, brush, or aquatic plant species?	77
5	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the protection, restoration, development or enhancement of declining or important aquatic wildlife species' habitats such as stream habitat improvement, removal of impairments on waterways, etc?	21
	Total Points	200

State Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 0.90

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
	1	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the restoration of declining or important native wildlife habitats in the Central Loess Hills, Loess Canyons, Lower Niobrara River, Middle Niobrara River Valley, Oglala Grasslands, Pine Ridge, Sandstone Prairies, Southeast Prairies, Wildcat Hills (including Wildcate Hills South), or Verdigre-Bazile Creek biologically unique landscapes (BUL's) from the Nebraska Natural Legacy Project?	18
	2	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the protection, restoration, development or enhancement of wildlife habitat for Federally listed threatened and endangered wildlife or plant species?	17
	3	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the protection, restoration, development or enhancement of a imperiled plant community ranked as S1 or S2 within the Terrestrial Natural Communities of Nebraska document?	16
	4	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the significant reduction of invasive species on native habitats (rangeland, prairie, riparian, wetland, forestland) using appropriate Brush Management or Pest Management practices?	34
	5	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the ecological improvement to grasslands that will include all three of the following management techniques: 1) prescribed burning; 2) prescribed grazing; and 3) rest from grazing on a portion (minimum of 20%) of the enrolled acres for a 12 month period?	39
	6	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the ecological improvement to grasslands that will include only two of the following management techniques: 1) Prescribed Burning; 2) Prescribed Grazing; and 3) Rest from grazing on a portion (minimum of 20%) of the enrolled acres for a 12 month period?	16
	7	Will the prescribed grazing treatment you intend to implement using WHIP include a planned grazing system that does not exceed 50% utilization and does not graze more than 20% of the acres more than once during the growing season?	19
	8	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the ecological improvement to grasslands that will include any of the following additional management techniques: 1) interseeding of native grasses and forbs/legumes into existing grasslands to improve diversity; 2) conversion of cropland to native grassland habitat (minimum of 10 acres); or 3) site specific herbicide treatments to reduce non-native species and protect or maintain native plant composition?	17
	9	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the ecological improvement to riparian areas adjacent to streams that will include all three of the following enhancement methods: 1) structural practices to reconstitute natural stream course including reconnecting oxbows and backwaters and removal/modification of barriers such as culverts and diversions; 2) vegetative development in buffer zone including planting of herbaceous and woody species as well as removal of non-native species such as Russian olive, saltcedar, phragmites, etc.; and 3) vegetative management in buffer zone including prescribed burning and grazing management using fencing and off-site water development?	39
	10	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the ecological improvement to riparian areas adjacent to streams that will include only two of the following enhancement methods: 1) structural practices to reconstitute natural stream course including reconnecting oxbows and backwaters and removal/modification of barriers such as culverts and diversions; 2) vegetative development in buffer zone including planting of herbaceous and woody species as well as removal of non-native species such as Russian olive, saltcedar, phragmites, etc.; and 3) vegetative management in buffer zone including prescribed burning and grazing management using fencing and off-site water development?	16
	11	Does the riparian area being improved support an at-risk aquatic species or is it classified as a cold-water stream?	12
	12	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the ecological improvement to wetlands that will include at least three of the following management techniques: 1) prescribed burning; 2) prescribed grazing; and 3)	39

		tillage; 4) site-specific herbicide application; 5) water level management; or 6) minor hydrology enhancements (ditch plug, dike, sediment removal, etc.)?	
	13	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the ecological improvement to wetlands that will include at least two of the following management techniques: 1) prescribed burning; 2) prescribed grazing; and 3) tillage; 4) site-specific herbicide application; 5) water level management; or 6) minor hydrology enhancements (ditch plug, dike, sediment removal, etc.)?	19
	14	Is the wetland being improved one of the following types of wetlands: (Rainwater Basin playa, Central Platte floodplain or riverine, Eastern Saline wetland, Missouri River floodplain or riverine, Todd Valley playa, or fen)?	12
	15	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the ecological improvement to native woodlands that will include at least three of the following management techniques: 1) prescribed burning; 2) prescribed grazing with a minimum of 20% of the enrolled area receiving rest for a 12 month period; 3) selective thinning for forest stand improvement; 4) inter-planting of desired native species to improve diversity; 5) development of micro-habitat components such as snags, brush piles, and forest openings?	39
	16	Will the treatment you intend to implement using WHIP result in the ecological improvement to native woodlands that will include at least two of the following management techniques: 1) prescribed burning; 2) prescribed grazing with a minimum of 20% of the enrolled area receiving rest for a 12 month period; 3) selective thinning for forest stand improvement; 4) inter-planting of desired native species to improve diversity; 5) development of micro-habitat components such as snags, brush piles, and forest openings?	9
	17	Are other conservation partners assisting with the WHIP project to implement objectives of Nebraska's Natural Legacy Project by providing financial assistance?	6
	18	Will the treatment(s) implemented in this WHIP project be available for demonstration purposes to local groups (schools, 4-H clubs, landowner tours, extensions specialists)?	8
	19	Will the treatment(s) implemented in this WHIP project be available for research or evaluation efforts to quantify the benefits of WHIP activities?	8
	20	Is the applicant who is applying for WHIP funding a Limited Resource or Beginning Farmer/Rancher?	17
		Maximum Points: Total Points	400