ATTACHMENT TO PRESCRIBED GRAZING CHECKLIST

EQIP 528 PRACTICE GUIDELINES: Prescribed Grazing PLUS PCS Incentive

EQIP FY 2008 Cost list item: 528--Prescribed Grazing—*Pre PCS (0-24) $50/acre; Pre PCS (25-44) $30/acre*

Name/EQIP Contract Number:_____

Practice Description: The prescribed grazing plus Pastureland Condition Score (PCS) incentive is an incremental increase in financial assistance for implementing a prescribed grazing system that will improve pastureland condition to an 'excellent' level using the (PCS) system of pasture evaluation.

Purposes of incentive practice:

- To meet all practice objectives set forth by the 528 NC NRCS prescribed grazing standard (use of 528 prescribed grazing checklist required)
- To enhance grazing nutritional values and diminish supplemental feeding through diverse mixes of desirable forage vegetation
- To reduce erosion, surface runoff of nutrients, and soil compaction through maintaining satisfactory vegetative canopy and residue
- To improve uniform distribution of livestock waste
- To encourage the use of legumes in grazing systems to reduce inorganic fertilizer inputs
- To reduce or eliminate the need for permanent heavy use feeding areas
- To improve use of forages through implementation of a rotational grazing system that maintains suitable grazing heights and stocking rates that do not exceed pasture forage production capacity

DC Initials

Conditions for practice eligibility: To be eligible for this practice, pastureland must have been permanent grasses and/or legumes in a grazing system for at least 3 years. A producer must be willing to implement a basic prescribed grazing plan on acres that are a part the grazing operation, but not enrolled in the PCS incentive. Conservation planners should ensure that the producer's grazing land and current or proposed stocking rate are compatible with prescribed grazing standard and incentive requirements

Practice requirements:

- Prescribed grazing checklist must be completed and certified
- Producer must demonstrate annual progress by improving PCS by one category level—{Example: "fair (25-35)" to "good (35-44)"} to remain eligible for EQIP payment until "Excellent (45-50)" level is reached.

Benchmark PCS

- Pasture condition scorecard must be used to establish a benchmark pasture evaluation that is the basis for level of EQIP incentive assistance
- Pasture condition scorecard must be used to document pasture evaluation and progress toward incentive objective
- Prescribed grazing plan must be developed and implemented for the entire grazing operation. Acres not included in the PCS incentive must meet requirements for basic prescribed grazing.

Considerations for improving Pasture Condition Score:

- Incorporation of legumes and/or other forage mixtures if needed to establish a grazing balance of forage needs and forage availability
- Annual fertilization or addition of soil amendments per realistic yields and soil test results

- Manage weeds/undesirable vegetation through mechanical, biological or chemical means

- Implementation of additional rotational grazing paddocks that increases effective use of watering facilities

- "Stockpiling" forage for winter grazing through limited fall supplemental feeding

- Management of a stocking rate that does not exceed pastureland forage production capacity as described in the grazing plan such that at least 80% of herd nutrition needs are met through grazing

- Rotate supplemental feeding sites

- Repair critically eroding areas (sheet, rill, gully, or streambank)

Incentive Quick Facts:

- If PCS is 0-24 in benchmark evaluation, then producer is eligible for $50/acre incentive
- If PCS is 25-44 in benchmark evaluation, then producer is eligible for $30/acre incentive
- If pastures are of a similar condition (as determined by the conservation planner), then a representative PCS score for all pastureland may be used. If there are significant differences in pasture conditions or forage type, then separate PCS scoring may be completed. If separate PCS scoring is completed, then producer is eligible for incentive level that is indicated by PCS score on respective pasture acres
- PCS evaluations of enrolled pastures should take place during primary grazing seasons (ie spring/fall for fescue, late spring/summer for Bermuda)
- Prescribed grazing plus PCS incentives are capped at a maximum of $15,000 for contract period
- Only perennial pasture is eligible for inclusion in PCS incentive

Certification Checklist of Practice Outcomes:

❑ Prescribed grazing system is implemented (see attached prescribed grazing checklist) on entire operation

❑ Enrolled pastureland system has improved at least one PCS category (see PCS scorecard)
Year 1_____ Year 2_____ Year 3_____ Year 4_____

❑ Enrolled pastureland system has reached "EXCELLENT" level documented by PCS scorecard (check only when this incentive level has been reached)

(Year 1) I certify that the prescribed grazing plus PCS incentive has been completed per practice guidelines and the NRCS prescribed grazing standard.

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Designated Conservationist Date

Year 2 certification	Year 3 certification	Year 4 certification