

Pasture Condition Score Sheet

Operator:				Date:		
Evaluator:				Pasture ID:		
Soil(s), ESD(s) and or FSG(s):			Livestock type:			
Current Year's Precipitation (check one)			Above Normal <input type="checkbox"/>	Normal <input type="checkbox"/>	Below Normal <input type="checkbox"/>	
Last 2-Week Temperature Trend (check one)			Above Normal <input type="checkbox"/>	Normal <input type="checkbox"/>	Below Normal <input type="checkbox"/>	
Evaluate the site and rate each indicator based upon your observations. Scores for each indicator may range from 1 to 5. Sum the indicator scores to determine overall pasture condition score.						Score
Indicator	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	5 Points	Points
Percent Desirable Plants* (Dry Weight by Livestock Type)	Desirable species <20% of stand.	Desirable species 20–40% of stand.	Desirable species 40–60% of stand.	Desirable species 60–80% of stand.	Desirable species exceed 80% of stand.	
Percent Legume by Dry Weight	<5% OR >50% bloating legumes.	5-10% legumes OR >40% bloating legumes.	10-20% all legumes	20-30% all legumes.	30-40% all legumes. No grass loss; grass may be increasing.	
Live or Dormant Plant Cover (Desirable and Intermediates)	Less than 40% is live leaf canopy. Remaining is either dead standing material, undesirable, or bare ground.	40-65% is live leaf canopy. Remaining is either dead standing material, undesirable, or bare ground.	65-80% live leaf canopy. Remaining is either dead standing material, undesirable, or bare ground.	80-95% live leaf canopy. Remaining is either dead standing material, undesirable, or bare ground.	More than 95% live (nondormant) leaf canopy. Remaining is either dead standing material, undesirable, or bare ground.	
Plant Diversity by Dry Weight (*See footnote at bottom of page)	Diversity: Very low	Diversity: Low	Diversity: Moderate	Diversity: High	Diversity: Very high	
	<50% desirable species OR 1 dominant desirable species in 1 functional group OR No dominant desirable species and all minor species in each functional group totaling <15%	2 dominant desirable species in 1 functional group OR 2 functional groups each represented by minor species totaling ≥15%	3 dominant desirable species in 1 functional group OR 2-3 dominant desirable species in 2 functional groups OR 3 functional groups each represented by minor species totaling ≥15%	4 dominant desirable species in 2 functional groups OR 3 dominant desirable species in 3 functional groups OR 3 dominant desirable species in 2 functional groups AND 1 additional functional group represented by minor species totaling ≥15%	4 dominant desirable species in 3 functional groups OR 4 dominant desirable species in 2 functional groups AND 1 additional functional group represented by minor species totaling ≥15%	
Plant Residue as Soil Cover <i>(Pull back canopy)</i>	Bare soil is very easily seen. Less than 20% residue is present on the soil surface.	Openings of bare soil can be seen fairly easily. Soil is 20-40% covered by residue on the soil surface.	Small openings of bare soil can be seen, but minimal. Soil is 40-60% covered by residue on the soil surface.	No bare soil is easily seen. Soil is 60-80% covered by residue on the soil surface.	No bare soil is seen. Soil is > 80% covered by residue on soil surface.	
Use Efficiency and Severity	Pasture is overgrazed throughout.	Pasture consists primarily of overgrazed and/or refuted areas (former dung areas, older plants, undesired plants)	Pastures show uneven grazing throughout with heavier grazing near water or feeding areas, or distinct zone grazing.	Pasture grazed evenly throughout with minimal overgrazing with some under grazed small areas and heavier use near water sources.	Pasture grazed evenly throughout with no overgrazing.	

*Use NRCS plant list for livestock species. Functional groups are as appropriate for your State (cool-season grasses, legumes, warm-season grasses, nonleguminous forbs). **Any time there are more undesirables than desirables, it will be 1 point. Desirable species must total more than 50% of the total biomass. Dominant species are ≥15%. Functional groups must be ≥15% of stand to be counted.**

Indicator	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	5 Points	Pts.
Livestock Concentration Areas (If < 1 Acre, use 10%)	Livestock concentration areas, including trails, cover > 0.10 acre, and within 100 feet or are a direct conveyance to surface water.	Livestock concentration areas, including trails, cover < 0.10 acre, some are within 100 feet or are a direct conveyance to surface water.	Livestock concentration areas, including trails, cover > 0.10 acre, but none are within 100 feet or are a direct conveyance to surface water.	Livestock concentration areas, including trails, cover < 0.10 acre, none are within 100 feet or are a direct conveyance to surface water.	Livestock concentration areas, including trails, are not present.	
Soil Compaction and Soil Regenerative Features (**See footnote at bottom of page)	Roots: Dominantly horizontal; most shallow and/or sparse;	Roots: Numerous horizontal; moderate amount of shallow and/or sparse;	Roots: Some horizontal with increasing downward;	Roots: Few horizontal, more downward;	Roots: Abundant growth primarily downward;	
	Compaction: Dense or thick platy layer easily visible;	Compaction: Dense or platy layer evident;	Compaction: Thin dense or platy layer still present;	Compaction: Minor dense or platy layer; good aggregates common (crumbly soil);	Compaction: No dense or platy layers; crumbly soil throughout;	
	Color: Surface horizon same as subsoil;		Color: Surface horizon moderately darker than subsoil;		Color: Surface horizon dramatically darker than subsoil;	
	Soil Life: Few or no signs.	Soil Life: Signs scattered in surface layer.	Soil Life: Signs scattered throughout.	Soil Life: Signs numerous throughout.	Soil Life: Signs abundant throughout.	
Plant Vigor	No plant recovery after grazing/harvest. Pale, yellow or brown, or severe stunting of desirable forage.	Some recovery. Yellowish green forage, or moderately or slight stunting of desirable forage.	Adequate recovery of desirable forage. Yellowish and dark green areas due to manure and urine patches.	Good recovery of desirable forage. Light green and dark green forage present.	Rapid recovery of desirable forage. All healthy green forage.	
Erosion (Rate the most adverse erosion type; circle all that apply)	Sheet and Rill: Plant density is insufficient to stop runoff, and poor infiltration. Erosion easily visible throughout pasture;	Sheet and Rill: Plant density slows runoff. Erosion present and easily seen on steeper terrain;	Sheet and Rill: Plant density good and runoff moderate. If present, erosion concentrated on heavily used areas;	Sheet and Rill: Plant density high, runoff low, good infiltration. May have evidence of past erosion if present;	Sheet and Rill: Plant density high, no runoff, good infiltration. No evidence of present or past erosion;	
	Wind: Severe scoured areas and deposition throughout;	Wind: Scoured areas common, deposition effecting plants;	Wind: Occasional scoured areas, litter windrolled;	Wind: Minimal soil exposed, some detached vegetation windrolled, minor plant damage;	Wind: No exposed soil;	
	Streambank and/or Shoreline: Banks bare, major sloughing, no bank vegetation;	Streambank and/or Shoreline: Bank vegetation trampled, sloughing; some vegetation remains;	Streambank and/or Shoreline: Only eroding at crossings/entrances, mostly vegetated;	Streambank and/or Shoreline: Vegetation is stable, crossings disturbed, average vegetation stand;	Streambank and/or Shoreline: Vegetation intact and stable, hardened crossings and alternative water sources used;	
	Gully: Very large mass movement, caving sides.	Gully: Advancing upslope, increasing fingering extensions.	Gully: Not all active but extensions present.	Gully: Stable with vegetative cover.	Gully: None, drainage ways vegetative.	

**Use a shovel. Root and compaction subindicators are primary and should be considered first. Soil color and soil life are secondary subindicators, which can be considered where applicable.

Overall Pasture Condition Score	Individual Indicator Score	Management Change Suggested
45 to 50	5	No changes in management needed at this time.
35 to 45	4	Minor changes would enhance, do most beneficial first.
25 to 35	3	Improvements would benefit productivity and/or environment.
15 to 25	2	Needs immediate management changes, high return likely.
10 to 15	1	Major effort required in time, management, and expense.

Overall Pasture Condition Score =

Comments/Notes: