**alliance practice worksheet**

VIRGINIA

PRESCRIBED GRAZING (528)

*The conditions and specifications below are adapted from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Producers who are installing these practices under the Alliance will use the conditions and implementation guides below but are exempt from NRCS verification and certification. Completing the Purposes and Practice Specifications on this document is sufficient to self-verify practice installation and completion.*

# Farm Info

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Producer Name |  |
| County (Farm Location) |  |
| FSA Farm Number |  |
| FSA Field Number(s) |  |
| FSA Tract Number(s) |  |
| Practice Status:*If a practice has not yet been implemented, select Planned**If a practice has been implemented, select Applied* | [ ]  Planned | [ ]  Applied |
| Planned Date of IMPLEMENTATION: | Date Practice was APPLIED: |

# PRACTICE: PRESCRIBED GRAZING (528)

**DEFINITION**: Managing the harvest of vegetation with grazing and/or browsing animals with the intent to achieve specific ecological, economic, and management objectives.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESCRIBED GRAZING (528):**

<https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/api/CPSFile/547/528_VA_CPS_Prescribed_Grazing_2017>

**EXPECTATIONS:**

To qualify for 528 Prescribed Grazing for the Alliance, your stocking rate must be within an acceptable range, which will vary depending on your soil type and rotation schedule. You must already have the necessary fencing infrastructure in place. In order to be able to meet the requirements of 528 Prescribed Grazing, you must be able to rotate animals through multiple paddocks on your farm This infrastructure may include permanent fencing, temporary fencing (e.g. polywire or poly rope), or a combination thereof.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO QUALIFY FOR THE ALLIANCE:**

MINIMUM PADDOCK AMOUNT: 4

MINIMUM STOCKING RATE: 2 ACRES PER ANIMAL UNIT (AU)

**PRODUCERS WILL BE EXPECTED TO WORK TOWARDS:**

* Minimum rest period per paddock: 30-days
* Minimum grazing heights: 3-4”
* Stocking rate: 2 ½ — 3 acres per AU
* Improve grazing rotation to improve pasture regrowth and productivity
* Adjust stocking rate to an appropriate rate if needed

***Please Note:***

*If you do not have your infrastructure in place at the time of your CSC Application, there are other State cost-share programs that may be able to assist you. Please contact your SWCD to learn about permanent fencing options for stream exclusion and division fences, and if you want guidance on how to optimally set up your fences for your rotational grazing system.*

# GENERAL CRITERIA APPLICABLE TO ALL PURPOSES

* Manage stocking rates and grazing periods to adjust the intensity, frequency, timing, duration, and distribution of grazing and/or browsing to meet the planned objectives for the plant communities, and the associated resources, including the grazing and/or browsing animals.
* Remove forage in accordance with site production limitations, rate of plant growth, the physiological needs of forage plants, and the nutritional needs of the animals.
* Provide desired grazed/browsed plants sufficient recovery time from grazing/browsing to meet planned objectives. The recovery period can be provided for part or all of the growing season of key plants. Deferment and/or rest will be planned for critical periods of plant or animal needs.
* Manage livestock movements based on rate of plant growth, available forage, and identified objectives such as utilization, plant height or standing biomass, residual dry matter, and/or animal performance.
* Manage grazing and/or browsing animals to maintain adequate vegetative cover on sensitive areas (i.e., riparian, wetland, habitats of concern, and karst areas)
* Provide adequate quantity and quality of drinking water during the occupancy period.
* Develop contingency plans to deal with expected episodic disturbance events (e.g., drought, wildfire, insect infestation, etc.).
* Develop monitoring plans that directly support adaptive management decisions based upon identified ecologic triggers and thresholds to optimize the conservation outcome for the selected purposes.
* Conform to all applicable Federal, State, Tribal and local laws. Seek measures to avoid adverse effects to endangered, threatened, and candidate species and their habitats.

# RECOMMENDED OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Adjustments will be made as needed to ensure that the goals and objectives of the prescribed grazing strategy are met.

Move livestock to a designated sacrifice area in times of drought or very wet soil conditions to protect the integrity of the pasture sod.

Soil tests all pastures and hay fields (minimum every 3 years) and maintain adequate nutrient and pH levels based on soil test results to achieve expected forage productivity and persistence.

*Note: This summary does not address all requirements and considerations in the VA Prescribed Grazing Conservation Practice Standard (VA-528). Consult the Conservation Practice Standard for further detail*

# PRODUCER PURPOSE(S)

* Improve or maintain desired species composition and vigor of plant communities.
* Improve or maintain quantity and/or quality of forage for grazing and browsing animals’ health and productivity.
* Improve or maintain surface and/or subsurface water quality and quantity.
* Improve or maintain riparian and watershed function.
* Reduce soil erosion and maintain or improve soil health.
* Improve or maintain the quantity, quality, or connectivity of food and/or cover available for wildlife.

# PRACTICE SPECIFICATIONS

*The following components must be included in the grazing management plan where applicable:*

1. A brief description of the benchmark forage/livestock system is included in the grazing plan:

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

1. Producer goals outlined in grazing plan:

[ ]  Yes

[ ]  No

# BENCHMARK FORAGE AND LIVESTOCK INFORMATION

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total grazeable acres: |  |
| Number of existing paddocks |  |
| Number of herds managed separately in system |  |
| Overall stocking rate |  | *acres/animal units* |
| **ESTIMATED AVERAGE GRAZING PERIOD AND EFFICIENCY** |
| Continuous (select one): | [ ]  Heavy | [ ]  Lax |
| Rotational (select one): | [ ]  1 — 4 days | [ ]  5 — 14 days | [ ]  15 — 21 days |
| Forage-livestock balance |  |
| Forage D.M. produced |  | *tons/ac* |
| Forage D.M. required |  | *tons/ac* |
| Amount of supplemental hay or feed needed to meet herd requirement: |  | *D.M. Tons* |

# Final FORAGE AND LIVESTOCK INFORMATION

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Total grazeable acres: |  |
| Number of existing paddocks |  |
| Number of herds managed separately in system |  |
| Overall stocking rate |  | *acres/animal units* |
| **ESTIMATED AVERAGE GRAZING PERIOD AND EFFICIENCY** |
| Continuous (select one): | [ ]  Heavy | [ ]  Lax |
| Rotational (select one): | [ ]  1 — 4 days | [ ]  5 — 14 days | [ ]  15 — 21 days |
| Forage-livestock balance |  |
| Forage dry matter (D.M.) produced |  | *tons/ac* |
| Forage dry matter (D.M.) required |  | *tons/ac* |
| Amount of supplemental hay or feed needed to meet herd requirement: |  | *D.M. Tons* |
| Grazing plan narrative includes minimum grazing heights and suggested deferment/rest periods based on forage species? | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| Contingency plan included in grazing plan? | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| Updated grazing plan map included with grazing plan?*Including farm, tract and field number(s), grazing unit layout, acres, fencing, water system, and sacrifice area.* | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |
| Monitoring plan requirements included in the grazing plan? | [ ]  Yes | [ ]  No |

|  |
| --- |
| Notes: |

# PRODUCER SELF-CERTIFICATION

By signing below, I certify that I have reviewed all required documentation, and the information outlined above meet all criteria and requirements as defined in the Natural Resources Conservation Service **PRESCRIBED GRAZING (528)** standard and specifications for the identified acres or animal units.

Further, I agree that:

[ ]  I have not received a payment for this conservation practice on these fields and acres from another USDA Conservation Program or another USDA Partnership for Climate-Smart Commodities grant partner.

[ ]  I will retain all practice documentation to support this certification for up to 12 months following practice adoption and will provide this documentation to the Alliance if selected for a spot check. *(Up to 10% of enrolled Alliance participants will be randomly selected for spot checks).*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Producer Name:** |  |
| **Date:** |  |