

# Saskatchewan Grassland Range Health Assessment – Field Worksheet

Plot \_\_\_\_\_ Observer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Photo # \_\_\_\_\_

Legal Location \_\_\_\_\_

GPS Coordinates (NAD 83)

Latitude \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude \_\_\_\_\_ Easting \_\_\_\_\_ Northing \_\_\_\_\_

Ecoregion \_\_\_\_\_ Ecosite \_\_\_\_\_ Soil Map Unit \_\_\_\_\_

## DOMINANT PLANT COMMUNITY SPECIES

Grasses & Grasslikes	Dry Weight (%)	Forbs	Dry Weight (%)	Shrubs	Cover (%)	Trees	Cover (%)

## VEGETATION STATUS

<b>Question 1. What is the plant community?</b>		
Plant community composition closely resembles the reference plant community for the site and alteration of the plant community by disturbances is minimal. <i>Example: Dry Mixed Prairie, Loam Ecosite, northern wheatgrass – needle-and-thread (Reference plant community).</i>	40	
Compared to the reference plant community, the plant community shows minor alteration in plant species composition due to disturbances. Disturbance impact is light to moderate. <i>Example: Dry Mixed Prairie, Loam Ecosite, Needle-and-thread - June Grass - Pasture Sage - blue grama.</i>	30	
Compared to the reference plant community, the plant community shows moderate alteration due to disturbances. Disturbance impact on plant community composition is moderate to heavy. <i>Example: Dry Mixed Prairie, Loam Ecosite, blue grama -needle-and-thread – sedge- western wheatgrass.</i>	15	
Compared to the reference plant community, the plant community shows significant alterations due to disturbances. Disturbance impact is heavy to very heavy. Plants are mostly native. Some tall-growing, non-native plants may be present. <i>Example 1: Dry Mixed Prairie, Loam Ecosite, Blue grama – pasture sage – June grass Example 2: Kentucky bluegrass</i>	7	
Compared to the reference plant community, the plant community shows extreme to severe alterations due to disturbances. Disturbance impact is severe to very severe. Production is mostly from low-growing, non-native, disturbance induced plants. <i>Example: Dandelion – Plantain</i>	0	
<b>Score</b>		
<b>Question 2. Are the expected vegetation layers present?</b>		
The life form layers closely resemble the reference plant community.	10	
Compared to the reference, 1 life form layer is absent or considerably reduced.	7	
Compared to the reference, 2 life form layers are absent or considerably reduced.	3	
Compared to the reference, 3 life form layers are absent or considerably reduced.	0	
<b>Score</b>		
<b>Question 3. Are Invasive/Noxious species present? Y or N</b>		
Which species? _____		
<b>Question 3.1 What is the cover of Invasive/Noxious species?</b>		
No invasive/noxious species	5	
Invasive/noxious species present but less than 1% cover	3	
Invasive/noxious weeds present with a total canopy cover over 1%	0	
<b>Score</b>		
<b>Question 3.2 What is the distribution of Invasive/Noxious species?</b>		
No invasive/noxious species on the site	5	
Invasive/noxious species are present at a low level (density distribution class 1)	3	
Invasive/noxious species are present at a moderate to high level (density distribution classes 2 to 13)	0	
<b>Score</b>		
<b>(A) TOTAL SCORE FOR VEGETATION STATUS</b>		

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## HYDROLOGIC FUNCTION & SOIL PROTECTION

<b>Question 4.1</b> Is there more <b>soil erosion</b> than expected for this site? Y or N		
No signs of soil erosion or not beyond the natural extent* for the site *Note: see workbook for information on erosion features	10	
Some evidence of soil erosion	7	
Moderate amounts of soil erosion	3	
Extreme amounts of soil erosion	0	
<b>Score</b>		
<b>Question 4.2.</b> Is there more <b>bare soil</b> than expected for this site? Y or N		
10% or less of exposed soil is human-caused	5	
Greater than 10 and up to 20% of exposed soil is human-caused	3	
Greater than 20 and up to 50% of exposed soil is human-caused.	2	
Greater than 50% of exposed soil is human-caused.	0	
<b>Actual</b> ____ % <b>less Expected</b> ____% = ____% <b>Human Caused</b> <b>Club Moss</b> ____ %		
<b>Score</b>		
<b>Question 5.</b> Is the expected amount of <b>litter</b> present?		
Litter amounts are more or less uniform across site litter standing crop (lb./ac.) is in the range of 65 to 100% of expected amounts under moderate disturbance.	25	
Litter amounts are somewhat patchy across the site and litter standing crop (lb./ac.) is in the range of 35 to 65% of expected amounts under moderate disturbance.	13	
The distribution of litter is not uniform across the site. Litter standing crop (lb./ac.) is in the range of less than 35% of amounts expected under moderate disturbance.	0	
<b>Score</b>		
<b>(B) TOTAL SCORE FOR HYDROLOGIC FUNCTION &amp; SOIL PROTECTION</b>		

## Range Health Scores

(A) Vegetation status (out of 60)

(B) Hydrologic function & soil protection (out of 40)

Overall score (out of 100)


**Healthy 75%-100% ---- Healthy with Problems 50%-74% --- Unhealthy < 50%**

Class	Abundance of species in polygon	Distribution	Score
0	None		5
1	Rare	.	3
2	A few sporadically occurring individual plants	. . .	0
3	A single patch	. . .	
4	A single patch plus a few sporadically occurring plants	. . . .	
5	Several sporadically occurring plants	. . . . .	
6	A single patch plus several sporadically occurring plants	. . . . .	
7	Several well-spaced patches	. . . . .	
8	A few patches plus several sporadically occurring plants	. . . . .	
9	Several well-spaced patches	. . . . .	
10	Continuous uniform occurrences of well-spaced plants	. . . . .	
11	Continuous occurrence of plants with a few gaps in distribution	. . . . .	
12	Continuous dense occurrence of plants	. . . . .	
13	Continuous occurrence of plants	. . . . .	

**NOTES:**