



## Required Conservation Measures for Enrolled Conservation Properties

WAFWA's Oil and Gas Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances for the lesser prairie-chicken (CCAA)

Conservation measures aim to conserve and enhance the survival of the lesser prairie-chicken (LPC) and its habitat. The following measures are required under the terms of the CCAA Section XII for enrollment in the conservation program. These measures are incorporated into the participant's Certificate of Participation (the agreement) and associated conservation plan.

### *The following conservation measures apply to all enrolled lands:*

**Grazing.** Where livestock will be present on enrolled lands, a prescribed grazing plan will be required which supports conserving and enhancing the survival of the LPC and its habitat. Specifically, the plan will result in an average 33% annual forage utilization rate or less across the enrollment (i.e., 16.5% harvest efficiency). The plan is developed by the participant with assistance from a WAFWA Technical Service Provider (if requested) and approved by WAFWA. Annual reporting of grazing activities to WAFWA is required, and installation of grazing exclusion cages may be required as a monitoring component of the grazing plan.

**New Land Conversion.** Conversion of enrolled lands to other land uses is prohibited for the duration of the agreement, including but not limited to, conversion to crop or petroleum/urban/energy development (i.e., oil/gas pads, transmission lines, wind turbines, or buildings), unless it is outside the control of the participant or under special circumstance pre-approved by WAFWA. In all cases, the participant must notify WAFWA. Land conversion will impact (lower) the annual payment and may affect continued eligibility.

**Travel Restrictions.** During the LPC breeding season (March 1 - July 15), minimize vehicle and recreational vehicle (ATV, dirt bike etc.) traffic volume, lower vehicle speed, and avoid off-road travel to reduce disturbances to nesting birds.

**Avoid Lek/Nesting Disturbance.** Avoid human activities during the breeding season (March 1 - July 15) within 1.25 mile of a known active lek<sup>1</sup> whenever possible, including construction or maintenance of grazing infrastructure, prescribed burning etc. When it can't be avoided, restrict activities between the hours of 3:00 am to 10:00 am (peak lekking activity) and minimize activities and noise.

**Stock Tank Ramps.** Install WAFWA approved<sup>2</sup> wildlife escape ramps in all stock tanks located on enrolled lands to reduce potential of wildlife drowning. Annual maintenance to replace missing or damaged ramps is required.

**Fence Markers.** Install WAFWA approved<sup>2</sup> fence markings along permanent fences within one quarter (0.25) mile of a known active lek<sup>1</sup> to reduce potential of wildlife fence collisions. Annual maintenance to replace missing or damaged markers is required.

**New Fences.** Construction of new, permanent fences must be designed and installed in accordance with the NRCS practice standard, including the following conservation measures: (1) consider alternatives to fencing (e.g., by placement of water or minerals, use of prescribed burning, etc.), (2) consider use of temporary electric fencing as an alternative, (3) route fences away from known breeding areas and avoid, whenever possible, bisecting known lek areas, and (4) remove unused fences whenever possible.

**New Water Wells.** Construction of new water wells and associated infrastructure (pipelines, pumping facilities, and tanks) will be designed and installed in accordance with NRCS practice standards, including the following conservation measures: (1) place new structures as close as possible to existing structures, (2) avoid or minimize disturbance to vegetation during installation, (3) install low profile pumping devices/housings and use solar pumps with low-mounted panels whenever practicable, and (5) minimize noise levels of any fuel-powered pumping systems to less than 40dba.

**New Windmills.** Installation of windmills for pumping or power generation is prohibited for the duration of the agreement unless pre-approved by WAFWA in consultation with the USFWS. New windmills will impact (lower) the annual payment.

**New Electric Lines.** Bury new electric distribution lines whenever possible, otherwise justification must be provided to, and approval obtained from WAFWA prior to construction. New, unburied lines will impact (lower) the annual payment.

**Herbicide Use.** Where practical and applicable, utilize an herbicide that is targeted for specific use and apply as spot treatments, as opposed to a broadband herbicide and broadcast treatments. In all cases, apply herbicide in conditions that minimize drift. No chemical treatment of LPC beneficial shrubs (sand sagebrush or shinnery oak) is permitted without WAFWA prior approval.

**Brush Management.** No treatment of sand sagebrush or shinnery oak is permitted without WAFWA prior approval.

**Prescribed Burning.** Notify WAFWA of any planned burning of rangeland and ensure all other conservation measures are incorporated (i.e., defer within 1.25 miles to known leks from March 1 - July 15 whenever possible).

**Report LPC Mortality/Injury.** Notify WAFWA of any LPC mortality or injury including location of sighting. If future occurrences can be prevented, they will be built into the habitat management plan (i.e., placing visual fence markers in known collision areas).

<sup>1</sup> Known Active Lek. Lesser prairie-chicken lek (mating courtship area) that has been active at least once within the previous five years. Visit <https://www.sgpchat.org/> for an interactive map of active leks. The participant's conservation plan will include a detailed location of the known leks occurring onsite or nearby the conservation enrollment.

<sup>2</sup> WAFWA Approved Practices. Guidance sheets on how to build and install practices are provided at <https://wafwa.org/ccaa/#conservation>