

**Activity II is a team effort and is worth 200 points.**

## **Activity II-A: Written Management Plan (140 Points)**

Referring to an identified area, teams make written recommendations based on landowner objectives as stated on a written Field Condition Sheet, which is provided to each team prior to Activity II-A. Each team interprets the objectives, identifies the focal species, recommends WMPs and their intended impact and states how the plan will be evaluated. The “Judges’ Scoring Sheet – Written Management Plan,” shown below, details how plans are judged. All plans must be written using paragraph format. A sample management plan worksheet is also included to help teams prepare for writing management plans.

For the National WHEP Invitational, teams may use **one side** of each of two pieces of paper provided. The team number **must** be written on the blank back side of each sheet. Both sides of one sheet of paper should **NOT** be used to write the management plan. Plans not written in the proper format or correctly identified will not be judged.

Participants will be required to draw a sketch and locate where recommended practices will be implemented. An aerial photo of the area may be provided.

Teams will have two hours to complete this activity.

### **Sample Written Wildlife Management Plan Field Condition Sheet**

The Three Peaks area has long been favored by outdoor enthusiasts. The area is owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Managing the area for multiple user groups is often difficult. Users at Three Peaks include hunters, recreational shooters, hikers, bird watchers, ATV riders and remote control airplane fanatics. BLM requests your assistance in developing a management plan for wildlife on the 4,000 acre tract. The area marked by flags is a representative sample of the vegetation and topography on the 4,000-acre area.

Sage grouse population are not hunted on Three Peaks. University researchers have surveyed the area and determined sage grouse populations are very low. Early indicators suggest a lack of brood rearing cover and nest disturbance by recreational users may be to blame.

Bird watchers and hikers on the area occasionally observe red-tailed hawks pursuing desert cottontails and kangaroo rats. BLM would like to see an increase in the red-tailed hawk population. Some bird watchers have also reported seeing sage thrashers.

Constructing Interstate 15 directly through the mule deer winter migration corridor leading to Three Peaks has had a negative impact on the herd. Biologists have determined this hunted mule deer population is negatively impacted by deer/car collisions and have determined mule deer here have relatively low body weights.

The presence of cheat grass on Three Peaks is a major concern because it is invasive and does not provide adequate cover or forage. Fire is not the preferred method of disturbance on this site because it allows cheat to dominate. If disturbance occurs naturally or by recommendation, efforts should be made to establish native grasses and forbs to avoid this problem.

Prepare a plan to meet BLM’s objectives for mule deer, sage grouse, red-tailed hawk and sage thrasher.

This is a team activity. Use only one side of each of two (2) pages to write your plan. You have two hours to complete this activity.

Good Luck!

### **Sample Written Wildlife Management Plan Worksheet**

This sample worksheet is intended to help you learn the correct format for writing management plans. In a contest, you will be given two blank pieces of paper. You must know the format and what is to be included in each section. You can only use one side of each of two sheets of paper. Learn to write neatly, using small print and short concise sentences. For the total score, in addition to the points listed below, a maximum of 20 points will be given for use of the correct format and inclusion of an accurate sketch of the site. A maximum of 60 points is added for the individual oral presentations for a total of 200 points for Activity II.

## **Part 1: Plan Background (20 Points)**

### ***What are the species to be managed? (10 points)***

The species to be managed are Eastern bluebirds, coyote and American kestrel.

### ***State the management objectives (10 points)***

The management objectives are to increase numbers of Eastern bluebirds, decrease the coyote population, and maintain the number of American kestrels on the property.

## **Part 2: Plan Development (20 Points)**

### ***Species Habitat requirements (10 Points)***

State the basic habitat needs for each species. For example:

Eastern bluebirds are found in early successional areas interspersed with trees and shrubs where they forage on insects. Water is obtained from their diet. Bluebirds nest in cavities when available, but will readily use nesting boxes.

### ***Habitat Assessment (10 points)***

Evaluate the area and state what is present and lacking with respect to the needs of each species. For example:

The area is primarily Stages 5 and 6. Stages 2 and 3 is lacking for Eastern bluebird.

## **Part 3: Plan Implementation (70 Points)**

This section should indicate the team has an understanding of the appropriate WMPs that should be implemented and the effects of those practices on the habitat and other species managed. For example:

Forest regeneration and chainsawing will open the Stage 6 forest and provide more usable space for bluebirds. Native grasses and forbs should be established to provide suitable foraging areas. Although a few cavity trees are available and should be retained when implementing forest regeneration and chainsaw work, additional nesting cover is desirable and nest boxes should be put in place.

## **Part 4: Plan Evaluation (10 Points)**

State what you will do to determine if your plan worked. For example:

Spring counts and nest box checks will be conducted to determine presence of bluebirds. Vegetation surveys will evaluate if establishment techniques for native grasses and forbs were successful.

# Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Program

## Judges' Scoring Sheet – Written Management Plan Activity II

Scale for Scoring:      0 = not at all                      6 = good or fairly well                      Team Number \_\_\_\_\_  
                                          2 = poor or poorly                      8 = excellent or very well                      Room Number \_\_\_\_\_  
                                          4 = fair or slightly well                      10 = outstanding                      Judge's initials \_\_\_\_\_

### Part 1: Plan Background (20 points maximum)

The plan accurately identified the wildlife species to be managed	0	2	4	6	8	10
The plan accurately identified the management objectives	0	2	4	6	8	10

**Part 1: Plan Background Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

### Part 2: Plan Development (20 points maximum)

The team demonstrated understanding of the habitat needs of each species	0	2	4	6	8	10
The team accurately evaluated the existing habitat (what is present and what is lacking) based on management objectives and species to be managed	0	2	4	6	8	10

**Part 2: Plan Development Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

### Part 3: Plan Implementation (70 points maximum)

The team included the <b>appropriate management practices</b>	0	2	4	6	8	10
The team fully explained <b>when and where</b> each practice should be implemented	0	4	8	12	16	20
The team demonstrated knowledge of practices effects on existing habitat and benefits to each species	0	4	8	12	16	20
The team used the appropriate native plant species in their plan and/or recognized invasive species	0	2	4	6	8	10
The team recognized the management compromises necessary to meet the needs of each species and showed understanding of the mutual benefits of implementing certain WMPs	0	2	4	6	8	10

**Part 3: Plan Implementation Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

### Part 4: Plan Evaluation (10 points maximum)

The team presented a realistic plan for monitoring the success of their plan	0	2	4	6	8	10
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**Part 4: Plan Evaluation Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

### Part 5: Content (20 points maximum)

The team presented the plan in the appropriate narrative format	0	2	4	6	8	10
The team included a sketch of the area that accurately reflected the management practices to be implemented.	0	2	4	6	8	10

**Part 5: Content Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Activity II-B: Oral Defense of Written Plan (60 points)**

*(only the top three scores are counted)*

To be successful and score well in Activity II-B, it is important that all team members actively participate in Activity II-A. Comprehensive knowledge of the written plan is necessary to successfully orally respond to judges questions about the team's plan. After completing the written wildlife management plan, each team member will be expected to be able to demonstrate their understanding of the plan. Team members are called individually into a room of two or three judges where they are asked a series of questions to test the individual's knowledge of the team's plan. For example, team members may be asked to explain a certain part of the plan such as the background or the implementation; or they may be asked to further explain certain management practices recommended within the plan. They may be asked to explain the habitat needs of the focal species. Questions can cover anything related to the plan, the focal species and/or management practices recommended.

Each team member will be scored individually. The top three scores will be added together and combined with the written plan score for the total score for Activity II.

For the oral defense portion of Activity II, each team member is required to individually face a panel of judges and answer a series of questions related to their written plan (Activity II-A). The questions may cover anything related to the appropriate species and WMPs. Following are some sample questions. It is important for each team member to participate in developing the written plan, to understand the habitat needs of each species considered and be able to discuss why any WMP should or should not be implemented.

### **Sample questions and requests:**

- Explain the WMPs your team implemented for dickcissel.
- Two of the four species in your plan had very different habitat requirements. Identify those species and explain the compromises you made to accommodate those species.
- The Eastern bluebird requires Stages 2 and 3. Explain the techniques your team chose to manipulate succession and why they were recommended.
- In assessing habitat on this site, what do you consider the most limiting factor for grasshopper sparrow?
- Explain two methods you would use to determine the effectiveness of your team's plan.