Conservation Planning Process
9-Step Planning Process

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Step 1: Identifying Concerns and Opportunities

The conservation planning process begins when the producer identifies a concern or opportunity

- Soil erosion
- Poor irrigation efficiency
- Inadequate water for livestock
- Dust problems
- Energy use
Step 2: Determine Goals and Objectives

Description of Operation
- General location
- Size of grazing pastures
- Products / Produce

Goals
- Economic
- Ecological
- Social

Objectives
- Measurable steps needed to achieve conservation plan goals
Step 3: Inventory Resources

- Soil erosion
- Water
- Air
- Plant
- Animal
- Energy resources
Develop a Benchmark Inventory Map

- Existing fields and pastures
- Location of existing structural practices
- Show direction of water flow
Additional Inventory Items

- Crop rotation
- Planting dates
- Yields
- Nutrient management
- Soil testing
- Pest management
- Irrigation management
- Economics
- Grazing system used
- Forage production
- Forage demand
- Wildlife habitat
- T&E species
- Cultural resources
Step 4: Analyze Resource Data

Compare the benchmark conditions with quality criteria to identify resource concern

Compare the benchmark system with your goals
Step 5: Formulate the RMS Alternative

RMS – Resource Management System

Identify all the goals and resource concerns that need to be addressed

Identify all the conservation practices needed to achieve the goals and address all the resource concerns
Step 6: Evaluate Alternatives

- Understand the cause of the problems
- If the cause is not clear, return to Phase I to gather and analyze additional information
- Develop conservation management system alternatives
- Include environmental, economic, and social considerations in the evaluation process
Step 7: Make Decisions

Document your decisions in your conservation plan:

- Goals and objectives, including resource concerns to be addressed
- Practice schedule showing planned practices and time of installation
- Narratives for each planned practice that describes the purpose and plan
Develop the Conservation Plan Map

- Planned field and pastures
- Existing structures and treatment
- Planned structural practices
- Planned vegetative or management practices
Step 8: Implement the Plan
Step 9: Evaluate the Plan

- Sustainability is the basic goal of conservation

- Clearly stated goals and objectives provide the framework for what to monitor, where to monitor, and how often

- Monitoring provides decision makers with information about changes over time
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