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**June 3, 2004**

**WEST VIRGINIA BULLETIN NO: WV300-4-9**

**SUBJECT: LTP- Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)**

**Purpose: To provide NRCS and FSA employees with a program overview, WV Policy and FY-2004 Ranking Criteria.**

**Expiration Date: September 30, 2004**

**ACTION REQUESTED BY: June 18, 2004**

**The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) is authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer the program, in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service. NRCS and FSA will accept sign ups and rank applications received before June 18, 2004 for FY-04 funding.**

**We will hold a joint teleconference Monday, June 7, 2004 at 1:00 PM for District Conservationist and County Executive Directors to review the program. Call in information will be sent separately.**

**This bulletin transmits West Virginia Policy and documents the State Conservationist and State Executive Director Decision for FY-04. The Interim Final Rule, draft 2003 GRP Manual and Joint GRP Letter from the NRCS Chief and FSA Administrator, will be utilized for program guidance.**

**The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, states “the Secretary shall enroll in the program from a willing owner not less than 40 contiguous acres of land ...” This Act continues to state “The Secretary may enroll in the program such parcels of land that are less than 40 acres as the Secretary determines are appropriate to achieve the purposes of the program.” As part of West Virginia Policy, the State Conservationist will consider a waiver for applications of parcels of land that are 20 to 40 acres on a case by case basis. The criteria for consideration of a waiver by the State Conservationist are listed on the Grassland Reserve Program 2004 Ranking Criteria Worksheet.**

**Priority will be included in the ranking criteria for grazing operation of non-recreational livestock and areas established by West Virginia Department of Natural Resources that are bird habitat areas of concern. Areas enrolled in GRP will be maintained to the Resource Management System level for forage management.**

**The approved FY-04 Environmental Quality Incentive Program cost lists by Local Work Groups (LWG) will be used in determining practice cost. The cost share rate for all restoration agreements will be the same as the LWG EQIP rates. The cost for practices 595 and 314 is a flat rate of \$30.00 per acre of treatment. The treatment area is the amount of the offer area that actually requires treatment. The treatment acres will be determined by field.**

**The approved practices available for cost share in restoration contracts are:**

- 528 – Prescribed Grazing**
- 512 – Pasture Hayland Planting**
- 314 – Brush Management**
- 342 – Critical Area Planting**
- 595 – Pest Management**
- Fencing practices offered in EQIP**
- Watering Practices offered in EQIP**

**Other practices approved by the program manager and SRC.**

**Fields that have received cost share for any of the above practices under other USDA programs are not eligible to receive GRP cost sharing for that practice.**

**Please refer to the attachments for a WV Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) Overview, 2004 Ranking Criteria, Bird Concern Maps, WV GRP Worksheet-01, and GRP Timeline to assist with the sign up and ranking, also located on the WV Web Page at <http://www.wv.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/grp/grp.html>. Additional Fact Sheets, Question and Answers, and Key Points are located on the web at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/GRP/index.html>.**

**For applications to receive consideration, please send by fax to 304-255-1250 the requested items (1 thru 5) from the Application Submission Check List on the WV GRP Worksheet to Jerry Brackenrich, Resource Conservationist in the Beckley Area Office no later than Tuesday, June 18, 2004.**

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact your Area Grassland Specialist, Kelley Sponaugle, ASTC-FO at (304) 255-9225 ext. 130 or Kevin Hinkle, Program Specialist at 304-284-4805.

/s/

/s/ John C. Pettit, Acting for

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LILLIAN V. WOODS  
State Conservationist

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JOHN B. RADER  
Executive Director

**Attachments:**

- **GRP Timeline**
- [WV Grassland Reserve Program \(GRP\) Overview](#)
- [2004 Ranking Criteria](#)
- [Bird Concern Maps](#)
- [WV GRP Worksheet-01](#)

**DIST:**

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**County Executive Directors**

**District Directors**

**Kevin Hinkle, Ag. Program Specialist, Morgantown, WV**

**Jerry Brackenrich, Res. Cons., Beckley, WV**

**Barbara Greenleaf, Area Grassland Specialist, Parkersburg AO**

**Gary Redden, Area Grassland Specialist, Beckley AO**

**Ray Cragar, Area Grassland Specialist, Philippi AO**

**Herb Andrick, RC, Morgantown, WV**

**Butch Woodson, RC, Morgantown, WV**

**2004  
Grassland Reserve Program  
Timeline**

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Information on WV NRCS website	6/2/04
CED/DC Statewide Teleconference	6/7/04
Cut-off Ranking Period for FY-04	6/15/04
Ranking completed by Field Offices	6/18/04
Applications Selected by STC/SED	6/22/04
Letter of “Intent to Proceed” signed	6/30/04
Rental Agreement Approved	6/30/04