

**Guidance Information**  
**New Hampshire GRP Rating Form - FY2003**

**General**

This rating sheet was developed to rate applications in the Grassland Reserve Program for FY 2003.

**Application information**

All rating forms must have the items at the top of the form completed. Each application will have either an estimated annual rental rate or estimated easement cost, but not both.

**Ranking Criteria**

**Threat of conversion to cropland** is assumed to be greatest in areas where the soils could support such a use. Therefore the well-established important farmland soils classification groups (prime farmland, soils of statewide and local importance) will be used for this purpose. The **important farmland soils groups** can be found in the electronic field office technical guide available on the web at (<http://efotg.nrcs.usda.gov>). The soils information is in Section II. Select the County of concern and open the spreadsheet. The farmland soils groups are in a column titled "farmclass". This information is also available using the Soils Data Viewer.

**Land under the greatest threat of development** is available through the American Farmland Trust. This information is available on a map at [http://www.farmland.org/farmingontheedge/map\\_newhampshire.pdf](http://www.farmland.org/farmingontheedge/map_newhampshire.pdf)

**Threat of conversion to forestland** - sites that are not mowed frequently or are selectively grazed (softwoods are left behind) are most likely to become forestland in the near future.

**Proximity to other protected lands** points will be assigned based on information available using the GRANIT Conservation Lands Viewer found at: <http://www.granit.sr.unh.edu> or other documented permanently protected lands. When creating a map with GRANIT, for map display settings, select "protection level". Other documented conservation lands and lands under contract (WHIP, EQIP, etc) for management as grassland can also receive points.

**Habitat for endangered, threatened and at-risk species** points are to be assigned when the parcel is specifically managed to benefit these species. Points are only awarded for actions planned that will protect T&E species according to a plan developed with a biologist. Points can be awarded for State or Federally Listed Species or "At-risk species". It is assumed that these points will be assigned in addition to the 10 points for significant wildlife benefit.

**Estimated operation and maintenance needs** are related to the intensity of management and work required to maintain the production system. Permanent pastures typically require less O&M costs than improved pastures or hayland.