

## 4-H Wildlife Habitat Education Project General Contest Rules and Procedures

### General Information:

- Texas 4-H Wildlife Habitat Education Project (WHEP) contests cover information from within the WHEP Manual. View and download this manual from the Texas 4-H Program website (<http://texas4-h.tamu.edu/projects/wildlife-fisheries/>).
- Contests are based on information found in the WHEP Manual only. This Manual should be used for a study guide to prepare for any WHEP contest. The wildlife, habitat component, and habitat management practices identification activity is based on only the species listed in the manual. Species, habitat components, and habitat management practices photos and characteristics should be studied using various identification resources available on the internet or in hard copy form as well as the written information in the Wildlife Species section in the WHEP Manual.
- Each contest will cover a specific ecoregion listed in the Manual under the Ecoregions section (pg. 28). Contestants should focus their study on the single region for wildlife species and wildlife management practices. Typically the ecoregion will match the location of the contest. The contest will typically cover only one of the ecoregions from the Manual. However, when using the Urban or Wetlands categories, it is common for a contest to also cover the ecoregion which matches the contest location. This information will be stated in a contest's specific Rules and Procedures.
- The annual State Contest will typically be held in a different area of Texas each year. This and other contest locations will be announced.
- The contest rules and procedures listed below supersede those found in the WHEP Manual and are designed for the National Invitational only.
- Each contest may have a variation of the rules and procedures found below. Be sure to refer to the specific Rules and Procedures posted for each contest.
- Contests are open to any current enrolled Texas 4-H member. Texas 4-H WHEP contests include all age divisions.
- Contest registration must be made through 4-H Connect online (texas.4honline.com).
- Coaches and parents will not be allowed in the activity areas during the contests.

### Age Divisions:

As of August 31<sup>st</sup> of the current 4-H year:

- Junior (3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades)
- Intermediate (6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades)
- Senior (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades)

Contestants may compete in the next older age division than their actual grade level but may not compete in a younger age division than their actual grade level.

### Contest Participation:

- **Teams**  
 Contestants participate as part of a 3 or 4 member, age division specific team from their 4-H county.
- **Individual Contestants**  
 Individuals will participate in the entire contest in their age division including Activity IIIA – Written Wildlife Management Plan and IIIB - Oral Reasons for the Wildlife Management Plan. A score will be given for each activity and used to formulate the individual score. Individuals are eligible for High Point Individual awards but not team awards.

## Contest Activities:

- This contest consists of the following activities:
  - Activity I – Wildlife Challenge
  - Activity II – On-site Recommendation of Wildlife Management Practices
  - Activity IIIA – Written Wildlife Management Plan
  - Activity IIIB – Oral Reasons for the Wildlife Management Plan
- Activities I, II, IIIA, and IIIB are further described below under each age division.
- Typically all age divisions will participate in each activity at the same time.
- Activities I, II, and IIIB are all completed individually by each contestant. No communication between team members is allowed during these activities.
- Activity IIIA is a team effort except when a contestant is entered as an Individual in the contest. Individual contestants will develop the plan on their own. Team members work together to develop the management plan.
- *Field Conditions* are objectives and conditions describing the habitat and wildlife species found within a contest site. These are written observations and objectives of the ‘land owners’ that must be considered when evaluating a habitat and prescribing wildlife management practices. *Field Conditions* are typically written but may also be given verbally to the contestants by contest officials.
- Activities II and IIIA are always held outdoors in the habitat regardless of the weather. Contestants must dress appropriately for the weather and appropriately to be in tall grass, brush, woods, etc. Close toed shoes are mandatory at all times. In addition, contestants should be prepared with sunscreen, insect repellent, drinking water, and any other necessary item when outdoors. A contestant may carry a backpack with necessary items to be outdoors such as drinking water, sunscreen, raincoat, binoculars, etc. No electronics will be allowed during the contest.
- Note time allowances given for each activity in the descriptions below.

Individual Point Values	Team Point Values
50	150
50	150
125	125
25	75

## Contestant Requirements:

Beyond the age and eligibility requirements, the following apply to all contestants:

- Contestants must dress appropriately for the weather and appropriately to be in tall grass, brush, woods, etc. Close toed shoes are mandatory at all times. In addition, contestants should be prepared with sunscreen, insect repellent, drinking water, and any other necessary item when outdoors. A contestant may carry a backpack with necessary items to be outdoors such as drinking water, sunscreen, raincoat, binoculars, etc.
- No electronics will be allowed during the contest.
- Contestants must carry a clipboard, two or more sharpened #2 pencils, colored map pencils, and a small ruler or straight edge to help them align rows on the score sheets. No extra paper is allowed.
- Coaches or contestants should contact the State 4-H Natural Resources Office in advance to request any individual special needs necessary to participate on contest day. Coaches or contestants should also inform this office in advance of any individual contestant medical needs, conditions, or pharmaceuticals necessary to be used or carried on contest day.

## Junior Division Activities –

### I: Wildlife Challenge (1.5 hour allowance; indoors or outdoors or combination)

This activity includes wildlife identification, habitat management practice identification, habitat component identification, and general knowledge of those. Contestants will rotate through a **designated number of** stations, each with a two part challenge; part one identification of a wildlife species, a habitat management practice, or a habitat feature (ex: ‘edge’) and part two answering a question related to part one. Answers will be in multiple choice format (A-D) or ‘yes or no’ format. Wildlife species may be represented as photos, full or partial mounts, various external body parts (wing, pelt, feet, antler, etc.), tracks, scat, or calls/sounds. Wildlife species may be shown as male or female, juvenile or adult. The objective is to demonstrate knowledge of wildlife and habitat component identification, ecoregion specifics, biology and ecology of specific wildlife species, concepts of wildlife management, and wildlife management practices.

Information for this activity will be taken from the following sections in the Manual:

Wildlife Management Concepts and Terms (pg. 17), the specific ecoregion designated for the contest, Wildlife Species listed in the designated ecoregion, Wildlife Management Practices listed in the designated ecoregion, *Definitions of Food Groups* (pg. 249), and *Glossary* (pg. 251).

**II: On Site Recommendations of Wildlife Management Practices** (1 hour, in the field)

Contestants will select the Wildlife Management Practices (WMP) given in multiple choice format for four species named at the contest. Contestants will move around to **ten (10)** staked stations within a habitat and answer the multiple choice WMP question pertaining to the habitat and particular species at each stake. This activity covers species and WMPs in the designated ecoregion only. (see sample question in *Appendix A* of this document)

**IIIA: Written Wildlife Management Plan** (2 hours, in the field)

Contestants will develop a wildlife management plan for the wildlife species to be managed as requested in the *Field Conditions* and for the habitat in its current condition on the contest site. Use the provided answer sheets containing the plan outline (see *Appendix A* of this document). Using colored map pencils, create a labeled sketch of the habitat and a key showing management practices prescribed. The score will be compiled from the sketch and information contained in the sketch and the completed plan outline (see *Appendix A* in this document for *Junior Division Judges' Score Sheet*).

**IIIB: Oral Reasons for the Wildlife Management Plan** (approximately 10 minutes per contestant)

Contestants will participate in a discussion individually, while sitting with a judge, using the sketch from IIIA to answer the judge's questions and informally explain the management practices and plan. The original team sketch will be used by each individual from the same team during this activity. Contestants will be scored on whether or not they participate in this activity (see *Appendix A* in this document for *Junior Division Judges' Score Sheet*).

## ***Intermediate Division Activities –***

**I: Wildlife Challenge** (1.5 hour; indoors or outdoors or combination)

This activity includes wildlife identification, habitat management practice identification, habitat component identification, and general knowledge of those. Contestants will rotate through **a designated number of** stations, each with a two part challenge; part one identification of a wildlife species, a habitat management practice, or a habitat feature (ex: 'edge') and part two answering a question related to part one. Answers will be in multiple choice format (A-D) or 'yes or no' format. Wildlife species may be represented as photos, full or partial mounts, various external body parts (wing, pelt, feet, antler, etc.), tracks, scat, or calls/sounds. Wildlife species may be shown as male or female, juvenile or adult. The objective is to demonstrate knowledge of wildlife and habitat component identification, ecoregion specifics, biology and ecology of specific wildlife species, concepts of wildlife management, and wildlife management practices.

Information for this activity will be taken from the following sections in the Manual:

Wildlife Management Concepts and Terms (pg. 17), the designated ecoregion, Wildlife Species listed in the designated ecoregion, Wildlife Management Practices listed in the designated ecoregion, *Definitions of Food Groups* (pg. 249), and *Glossary* (pg. 251).

**II: On Site Recommendations of Wildlife Management Practices** (1 hour, in the field)

Contestants will select the appropriate Wildlife Management Practices (WMP) for each of the species provided in the *Field Conditions* after evaluating the designated habitat on the contest site. This activity uses wildlife species and WMPs from the designated ecoregion only.

**IIIA: Written Wildlife Management Plan** (2 hours, in the field)

Contestants will develop a wildlife management plan in outline format for the wildlife species to be managed as requested in the *Field Conditions* and for the habitat in its current condition at the contest site. Answer sheets containing the plan outline will be provided (see *Appendix B* of this document). Using colored map pencils, create a labeled sketch of the habitat and a key showing management practices prescribed. Notes for the Oral Reasons activity should be made during this time. Paper will be provided for the plan, the sketch, and the notes. No extra

paper will be allowed. Refer to Judges Score Sheet to determine the criteria by which each contestant will be judged (see *Appendix C* of this document).

**IIIB: Oral Reasons for the Wildlife Management Plan** (approximately 10 minutes per contestant)

Contestants will participate individually answering questions from a panel of judges. Contestants will be allowed to carry their plan notes and refer to them while speaking to the judges. Refer to Judges Score Sheet to determine the criteria by which each contestant will be judged (see *Appendix D* of this document).

**Senior Division Activities –**

**I: Wildlife Challenge** (1.5 hour; indoors or outdoors or combination)

This activity includes wildlife identification, habitat management practice identification, habitat component identification, and general knowledge of those. Contestants will rotate through a **designated number of** stations, each with a two part challenge; part one identification of a wildlife species, a habitat management practice, or a habitat feature (ex: 'edge') and part two answering a question related to part one. Answers will be in multiple choice format (A-D) or 'yes or no' format. Wildlife species may be represented as photos, full or partial mounts, various external body parts (wing, pelt, feet, antler, etc.), tracks, scat, or calls/sounds. Wildlife species may be shown as male or female, juvenile or adult. The objective is to demonstrate knowledge of wildlife and habitat component identification, ecoregion specifics, biology and ecology of specific wildlife species, concepts of wildlife management, and wildlife management practices.

Information for this activity will be taken from the following sections in the Manual:

Wildlife Management Concepts and Terms (pg. 17), the designated ecoregion, Wildlife Species listed in the designated ecoregion, Wildlife Management Practices listed in the designated ecoregion, *Definitions of Food Groups* (pg. 249), and *Glossary* (pg. 251).

**II: On Site Recommendations of Wildlife Management Practices** (1 hour, in the field)

Contestants will select the appropriate Wildlife Management Practices (WMP) for each of the species provided in the Field Conditions after evaluating the designated habitat on the contest site. This activity uses wildlife species and WMPs from the designated ecoregion only.

**IIIA: Written Wildlife Management Plan** (2 hours, in the field)

Contestants will develop a wildlife management plan in outline format for the wildlife species to be managed as requested in the Field Conditions and for the habitat in its current condition at the contest site. Answer sheets containing the plan outline will be provided (see *Appendix B* of this document). Using colored map pencils, create a labeled sketch of the habitat and a key showing management practices prescribed. Notes for the Oral Reasons activity should be made during this time. Paper will be provided for the plan, the sketch, and the notes. No extra paper will be allowed. Refer to Judges Score Sheet to determine the criteria by which each contestant will be judged (see *Appendix C* of this document).

**IIIB: Oral Reasons for the Wildlife Management Plan** (approximately 10 minutes per contestant)

Contestants will participate individually answering questions from a panel of judges. Contestants will be allowed to carry their plan notes and refer to them while speaking to the judges. Refer to Judges Score Sheet to determine the criteria by which each contestant will be judged (see *Appendix D* of this document).

**Scoring and Tie Breakers:**

All contestants are eligible for an overall individual placing. All activities will be used for the individual score and the team score. Scores from Activity IIIA: Written Wildlife Management Plan will be used for both individual placings and team placings.

Ties will be broken for individuals and teams by using the highest score on Activity IIIA: Written Wildlife Management Plan for those contestants or teams in question. In the case of a tie score on Activity IIIA, ties will be further broken

using highest team/individual score from Activity II, then Activity I, in that order. Further tie breaks will be made by means at the discretion of the contest officials.

**National WHEP Invitational:**

The First Place Senior Team from the annual State Contest will be eligible to represent Texas 4-H by participating in the National WHEP Invitational to be held in late summer at the location named by the National committee (contest held in a different state each year). Participation in the National WHEP Invitational is not mandatory by the First Place Senior Team however the decision must be made on the day of the State Contest.

Contestants who have previously participated in a National WHEP Invitational are not eligible to participate a second time. However, those contestants are eligible to participate in the State Contest but as Individuals only and not as members of a team.

## **APPENDICES**

A: Junior Division Formats, Answer Sheets, and Judges' Score Sheets – Activities II, IIIA, and IIIB

B: Intermediate and Senior Divisions Answer Sheets – Activity IIIA

C: Intermediate and Senior Divisions Judges' Score Sheet – Activity IIIA

D: Intermediate and Senior Divisions Judges' Score Sheet – Activity IIIB

The appendices on the following pages should be used to understand the procedures of the contest. These procedures and documents differ from the WHEP Manual so that all age divisions can be accommodated in this contest. The differences represented within the appendices take precedence over information and procedures found in the WHEP Manual.

### **Appendix A: Junior Division Formats, Answer Sheets, and Judges' Score Sheets**

#### **Activity II**

##### **On Site Recommendations of Wildlife Management Practices**

##### **Junior Division Format**

This activity for the Junior Division is set up as a series of ten (10) multiple choice questions concerning wildlife species specific management practices related to the actual habitat in which the contestants are standing.

Example:

**If you manage for wood ducks on this property, what practice can you identify as a need?**

- A. Control Nonnative Invasive Vegetation**
- B. Create snags**
- C. Plant shrubs**
- D. Water developments for wildlife**

Each question will be posted separately within the habitat. Contestants will record their answer on a provided answer sheet.

#### **Activity IIIA**

##### **Wildlife Management Plan**

##### **Junior Division Answer Sheet and Format**

**Note:**

*This is the information the Junior Division contestants will be given for this activity to use in developing a wildlife management plan and sketch in accordance to the Field Conditions to be provided at the contest. The information in the outline and in the sketch will be scored.*

*Field Conditions are objectives and conditions describing the habitat and wildlife species found within a contest site. These are written observations and objectives of the 'land owners' that must be considered when evaluating a habitat and prescribing wildlife management practices. Field Conditions are typically written but may be given verbally to the contestants as well.*

*(Space shown here for each section does not reflect the amount of space given during the contest)*

**Instructions:**

Complete the outline below to develop your wildlife management plan for the species listed with the land owners' objectives in the Field Conditions below. Draw a sketch on the back of this page to illustrate your plan. Be sure to label the sketch with your information from the outline below and develop a key.

**Field Conditions:**

Develop a management plan for this property to be presented to the landowners as an outline and a sketch. **The following outline must be completed in bullet statement format. The information written in the outline will be scored.**

**Plan Background**

List the wildlife species the landowner wants managed.

**Plan Implementation**

List the management practices you will use in your plan.

Describe how each practice will affect the habitat.

Describe how each practice will affect the species to be managed.

**Plan Evaluation**

List what will be done to determine if the plan worked.

**Activities IIIA & IIIB  
Wildlife Management Plan  
Junior Division Judges' Score Sheet**

**Activity IIIA: Written Management Plan**

**Scale for Scoring**

**Information provided was: 0=not provided 2=poor 4=fair 6=good 8=excellent 10=outstanding**

**Plan Background**

The wildlife species to be managed were indicated on the plan outline and sketch.

0                    2                    4                    6                    8                    10                    \_\_\_\_\_

**Plan Implementation**

Appropriate management practices for each wildlife species were included on the plan outline and sketch.

0                    2                    4                    6                    8                    10                    \_\_\_\_\_

The effect each practice will have on the habitat was included in the plan outline.

0                    2                    4                    6                    8                    10                    \_\_\_\_\_

The effect each practice will have on the wildlife species was included in the plan outline.

0                    2                    4                    6                    8                    10                    \_\_\_\_\_

**Plan Evaluation**

An understanding of how to evaluate a management plan was demonstrated in the plan outline.

0                    2                    4                    6                    8                    10                    \_\_\_\_\_

**IIIA Total (50 pts max) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Activity IIIB: Oral Reasons**

**(0 = did not participate, 20 = participated)**

**Team Member 1 or Individual Contestant                    0                    or                    20                    \_\_\_\_\_**

**Team Member 2                    0                    or                    20                    \_\_\_\_\_**

**Team Member 3                    0                    or                    20                    \_\_\_\_\_**

**Team Member 4                    0                    or                    20                    \_\_\_\_\_**

**IIIB Total (top 3 scores; 60 pts. max) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Activity III Grand Total (IIIA + IIIB=110 pts. max. per team; 70 pts. max. per individual) \_\_\_\_\_**

**Activity IIIB**  
**Wildlife Management Plan Oral Reasons**  
**Junior Division Format**

Junior contestants will be asked to sit down individually with a judge to answer questions and explain their team's sketch of their wildlife management plan. This activity is designed to encourage the contestant to talk about the thoughts and decisions made to develop the plan and give them an experience to practice communication skills. The contestant is scored solely on whether or not they participate in this part of the activity. No other criteria will be used to judge and develop a score.

**Appendix B: Activity IIIA Intermediate and Senior Divisions Answer Sheets**

**Activity IIIA: Written Wildlife Management Plan**  
**Intermediate and Senior Division Answer Sheets**

**Note:** Additional pages will be provided with each set of answer sheets for the sketch and notes for Oral Reasons. **No additional paper is allowed on contestants' clipboards.**

Field Conditions are objectives and conditions describing the habitat and wildlife species found within a contest site. These are written observations and objectives of the 'land owners' that must be considered when evaluating a habitat and prescribing wildlife management practices. Field Conditions are typically written but may be given verbally to the contestants as well.

**Activity IIIA**  
**Written Wildlife Management Plan**  
**Intermediate and Senior Divisions Answer Sheet**

**Note:** Space shown here for each section does not reflect the amount of space given during the contest. This outline will be provided to guide in developing the plan. Multiple pages will be used for this answer sheet. The plan should be written in bullet statement format within this outline.

**Plan Background**

- A. List the wildlife species to be managed.
- B. List the management objectives of the landowners.

**Plan Development**

- A. List the habitat requirements for each wildlife species to be managed.
- B. Evaluate the habitat and list what is adequate and what is lacking for each of the wildlife species to be managed.

**Plan Implementation**

State which management practices to use for each of the wildlife species in this habitat at its current state to reach the management objectives listed above. Include how, when, and where each management practice will be implemented. State the effect each practice will have on the habitat.  
State the effect each practice will have on the wildlife species to be managed.

**Plan Evaluation**

State what will be done to determine if the plan worked.

**Note:** Refer to Appendix C: Intermediate and Senior Divisions Judges' Score Sheet for Activity IIIA to understand the criteria used to judge the wildlife management plans in both age divisions.



## Appendix C: Intermediate and Senior Divisions Judges' Score Sheet for Activity IIIA

### Activity IIIA Written Wildlife Management Plan Intermediate and Senior Divisions Judges' Score Sheet

Scale for Scoring

Information provided was: 0=not provided 2=poor 4=fair 6=good 8=excellent 10=outstanding

<p><b>Part 1: Plan Background (20 points maximum)</b></p> <p>The plan accurately identified the wildlife species to be managed.</p> <p>The plan accurately identified the management objectives as given in the Field Conditions.</p>	<p>0   2   4   6   8   10</p> <p>0   2   4   6   8   10</p> <p><b>Part 1: Plan Background Subtotal</b> _____</p>
<p><b>Part 2: Plan Development (20 points maximum)</b></p> <p>The plan demonstrated an understanding of the habitat needs of each wildlife species.</p> <p>The plan accurately evaluated the existing habitat (what is adequate and what is lacking) based on management objectives and each wildlife species' needs.</p>	<p>0   2   4   6   8   10</p> <p>0   2   4   6   8   10</p> <p><b>Part 2: Plan Development Subtotal</b> _____</p>
<p><b>Part 3: Plan Implementation (40 points maximum)</b></p> <p>The plan included the appropriate management practices and if necessary 'how' a practice will be implemented (ex.: "set back succession by prescribed fire").</p> <p>The plan fully explained when and where each practice will be implemented.</p> <p>The plan demonstrated knowledge of the effects of each practice on the existing habitat.</p> <p>The plan demonstrated knowledge of the effects of each practice on each wildlife species to be managed.</p>	<p>0   2   4   6   8   10</p> <p>0   2   4   6   8   10</p> <p>0   2   4   6   8   10</p> <p>0   2   4   6   8   10</p> <p><b>Part 3: Plan Implementation Subtotal</b> _____</p>
<p><b>Part 4: Plan Evaluation (10 points maximum)</b></p> <p>The plan presented a realistic method for monitoring the success of each objective and practice implemented.</p>	<p>0   2   4   6   8   10</p> <p><b>Part 4: Plan Evaluation Subtotal</b> _____</p>
<p><b>Part 5: Content (10 points maximum)</b></p> <p>The plan included a sketch of the area that accurately illustrated and labeled the management practices to be implemented.</p>	<p>0   2   4   6   8   10</p> <p><b>Part 5: Content Subtotal</b> _____</p> <p><b>Activity IIA Total</b></p> <p><b>(100 pts. max)</b> _____</p>

# Appendix D: Intermediate and Senior Divisions Judges' Score Sheet for Activity IIIB

## Activity IIIB Written Wildlife Management Plan Oral Reasons Intermediate and Senior Divisions Judges' Score Sheet

Scale for Scoring: 0 = no demonstration 2 = poor 4 = fair 6 = good 8 = excellent 10 = outstanding

**Note: One score sheet per contestant**

<b>Part 1: Subject Matter (40 points maximum)</b>	
Understanding of wildlife species biology and management	0   2   4   6   8   10
Understanding of wildlife species habitat requirements	0   2   4   6   8   10
Understanding of wildlife management practices and their implementation	0   2   4   6   8   10
Knowledge of concepts and terms (succession, edge, interspersion, etc)	0   2   4   6   8   10
<b>Part 1: Subject Matter Subtotal _____</b>	
<b>Part 2: Contestant (40 points maximum)</b>	
Poise (calm, confident)	0   2   4   6   8   10
Voice (appropriate volume, clarity, enunciation)	0   2   4   6   8   10
Grammar	0   2   4   6   8   10
Body language (eye contact, hand gestures and other movements)	0   2   4   6   8   10
<b>Part 2: Contestant Subtotal _____</b>	
<b>Part 3: Response to Questions (10 points maximum)</b>	
Logic, reasoning, and organization	0   2   4   6   8   10
<b>Part 3: Response to Questions Subtotal _____</b>	
<b>Comments:</b>	<b>TOTAL SCORE:</b>  Contestant's Total Score (90 points max) _____

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