

THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS, INC.

**PROCEDURE FOR APPROVING
MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT LEASES**

Recommended by Land Protection Committee: July 6, 2011

Adopted by TPE Board: May 16, 2012

1. A Management Agreement or a Conservation Lease shall be initiated at the Chapter level. The Chapter will evaluate the project based on the Criteria for Ranking and Pursuing Management Agreements and Management Leases. A copy of the Criteria is attached as Appendix A. The Chapter will complete the Land Management Projects Ranking Criteria Score Sheet. A copy of the Score Sheet is attached as Appendix B.
2. When the project has been approved and a Management Agreement or Conservation Lease prepared by the Chapter, it will be submitted to the Land Protection Committee for review, together with the Ranking Criteria Score Sheet and the proposed Management Agreement or Conservation Lease. This will be reviewed by the Land Protection Committee.
3. The Land Protection Committee shall submit its recommendation to TPE Board after review.
4. The TPE Board may then approve the Management Agreement or Conservation Lease.
5. The document shall be signed by the Chapter representative and by the President of TPE.
6. The agreement or lease shall be signed by the landowners.

APPENDIX A

THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS, INC.

Criteria for Ranking and Pursuing Management Agreements and Management Leases

POLICY

Recommended by Land Protection Committee: July 6, 2011 and March 6, 2012

Adopted by TPE Board: May 16, 2012

Before The Prairie Enthusiasts, Inc., (TPE) can accept the responsibility of assuming the fiscal and labor demands of managing a parcel of real estate, TPE must find that it fits TPE's mission. If it does not meet the criteria, the project will not proceed. Our mission is the perpetuation and recovery of prairie, oak savanna and other associated ecosystems of the Upper Midwest through protection, management, restoration and education. To accomplish this mission we strive to work openly and cooperatively with private landowners and other private and public conservation groups.

A point system is set forth in the procedures to allow TPE to evaluate potential projects. The local chapter will complete the form jointly with TPE Land Protection Committee. It will then be reviewed by the full board at the time the proposal is presented to the board.

PROCEDURES

The principal value of the ranking system is to establish the relative weight of the factors set forth in the procedures. To proceed, a project must fit TPE's mission, conservation goals, capacity and current priorities.

- 1) Fits TPE mission? The site must have (or have great potential for reestablishment of) plant communities of fire-derived native ecosystems. This includes prairie, the wettest variant sedge meadow, oak savanna, pine barrens and oak woodland. Embedded patchy habitats may be included in these large types, such as fens, streams, cliffs/ledges, ephemeral wetlands, marsh, etc. Recovery or restoration should only be considered if the community type was present on site prior to European settlement or has become well established since that time on its own. [Yes/No]
- 2) Funding and volunteers for management through the local chapter? What type of management is necessary at this time – brush clearing, burning, seeding? What is the calculated financial need to manage the property? Is there a land management fund or other plan to fund the management objectives on the property? Does the chapter have enough volunteers, equipment, and time to manage this property

given the chapter's prior commitments? If so, please explain what resources the chapter has to accomplish necessary management. Point range 0-15.

- 3) Natural area quality? This is the degree of intactness of the native plant community's composition in terms of closeness to pre-settlement state (as best we know) or having a high floristic quality index, and a scarcity of non-native and invasive native species. If the site is included in TPE Inventory of Remnants, or a state agency Inventory of Remnants, what relative ranking has been given in this inventory? Point range 0-40. [0-10 little to no pre-settlement and low floristic quality, 10-20 some floristic quality, 21-30 high, 31-40 highest quality.]
- 4) Critical habitat for rare and declining species? This is the presence of, and quality of habitat for, state and federally listed species and species in significant and rapid decline that are associated with the ecosystems in Criteria 1. Make reference to the Species of Greatest Conservation Need as identified in applicable State Wildlife Action Plans. Point range 0-10.
- 5) Environmental gradients? The more diversity of soils, substrates, soil moist regimes, slope and aspects, the higher the points. Point range 0-5.
- 6) The landscape context? This takes into account the size of the target parcel, compatibility of adjacent land uses and vegetation cover, potential of preserve expansion and buffering, proximity to other remnant communities and their size (genetic flow and population viability issues).
 - a. What is the size of the parcel? [Larger parcels are seen as important for biological integrity.] Point range: 5 points for 0-10 acres; 7 points for 11-20 acres; 10 points for 21-40 acres; 15 points for greater than 40 acres.
 - b. Are the adjacent land uses compatible with the conservation of this land? Does the property abut or is it within one quarter of a mile from abutting prairie remnants or other nature areas. Point range 0-5 points.
- 7) Assist with Education and Outreach? Will the management of this parcel help raise awareness and appreciation of TPE and natural areas? Will it help children, families and future generations appreciate the experience of natural areas and TPE's conservation programs? Please explain. Point range 0-10 points.
- 8) Conservation Potential? Does the property have a conservation easement on it protecting the area to be managed? Has the landowner agreed to a conservation easement in the future? Is the landowner interested in conserving the property through a conservation easement or a donation of the property? Is the landowner committed to maintaining the property as prairie or oak savanna? Point range 0-10.
- 9) Is TPE the best entity to manage this property? Would consulting with the landowner suffice? Who has been managing the property? Is there another

organization that could take on the management of this property with TPE consulting? Point range 0-5.

- 10) Is there any other reason TPE should manage this property? If so, please explain. Point range 0-5 points.

A project could achieve a total of 120 points. The project must reach at least 80 points before TPE can take it on.

Even if the scoring above does reach the minimum score of 80, TPE Board may elect not to take on the project if one or more of the following problems exist. In making its recommendation to the Board, the Land Protection Committee shall advise the Board of any of the following problems of which they are aware.

1. Difficulty of management or enforcement. The land or easement would be unusually difficult to manage.
2. Limitations in conservation easement. There are provisions in a conservation easement that TPE believes would diminish the property's conservation values or TPE's ability to manage the property.
3. Contamination. The land is irreparably contaminated or the cost of eliminating the contamination is more than TPE could afford.
4. Insufficient size. The land is not sufficient in size to be significant for its purpose.
5. Ethical or public relations issues. There is a potential for either ethical or public relation problems, or possible conflict of interest, that exist in association with the acceptance of the project.

APPENDIX B

Land Management Projects Ranking Criteria Score Sheet

Site:

Category	Score range	Score	Comments
1) Fits TPE mission?	yes/no		
2) Funding and volunteers for management through the local chapter?	0-15		
3) Natural area quality?	0-40		
4) Critical habitat for rare and declining species?	0-10		
5) Environmental gradients?	0-5		
6) Landscape context			
a. Parcel size?	5-15		
b. Adjacentland uses compatible and proximity to other natural areas?	0-5		
7) Assist with Education & outreach?	0-10		
8) Conservation Potential?	0-10		
9) Is TPE the best entity to manage this property?	0-5		
10) Other considerations?	0-5		
Total	120 max		

Prepared by:

Date: