



# Nevada Credit System HQT Developments & Other Design Elements

SEC Meeting - October 1, 2014

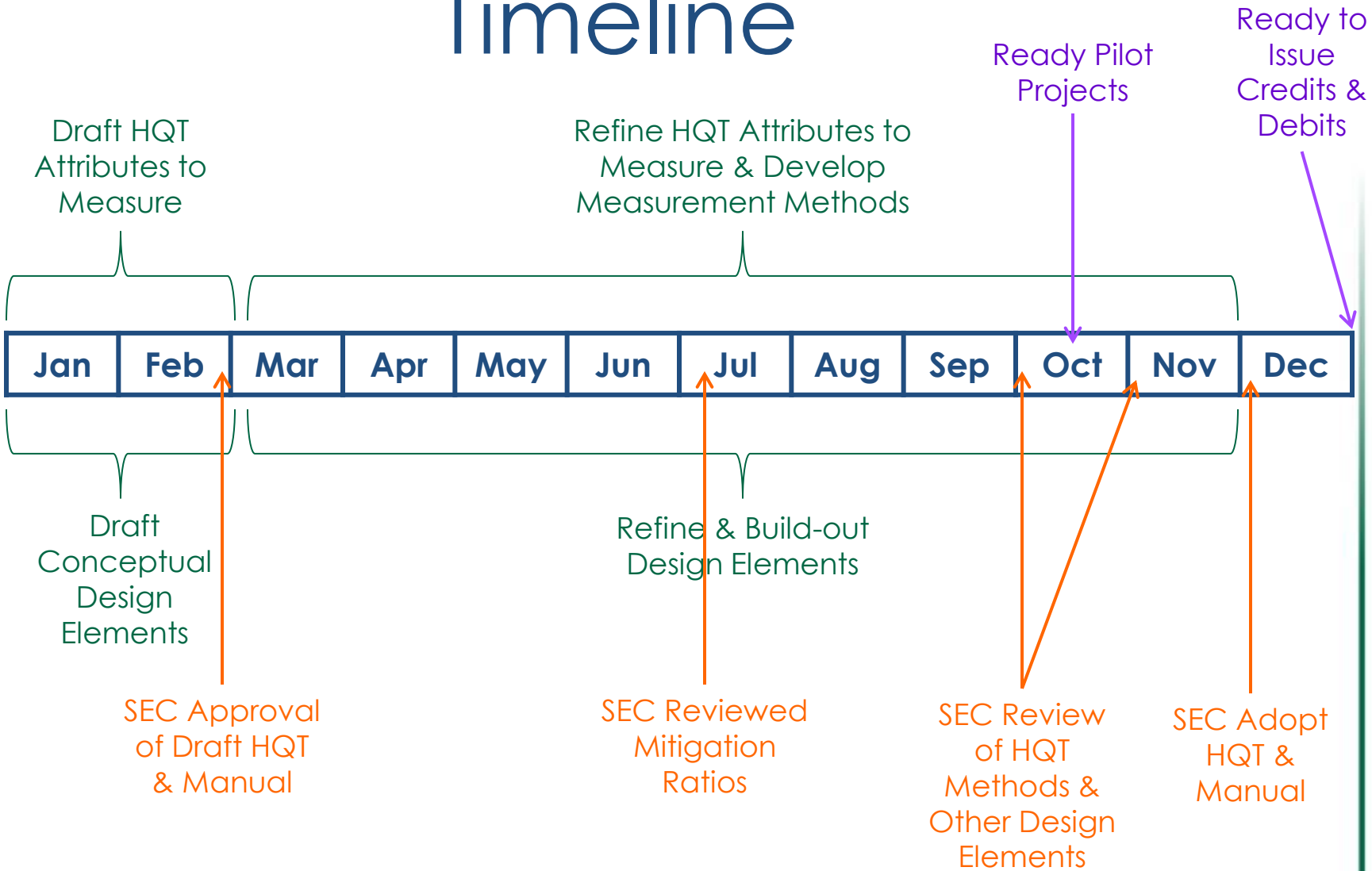
# Objectives

- 1) Gain understanding and input of Credit System timeline
- 2) Gain understanding of HQT scoring approach with proposed measurement methods
- 3) Confirm understanding of “what counts as mitigation”
- 4) Obtain conceptual approval of field data collection timing proposal

# PROJECT UPDATE

# Timeline

Habitat Quantification  
Policy & Operations



**Future Expected Needs:**

- FWS and BLM agreements
- HQT, policy and operational adjustments based on pilot projects
- Tools usable by project proponents



# PROPOSED HABITAT QUANTIFICATION TOOL (HQT) SCORING APPROACH

# Functional-Acre = Quantity x Quality

1<sup>st</sup>  
Order

×

2<sup>nd</sup>  
Order

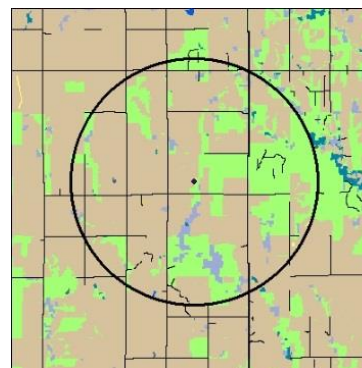
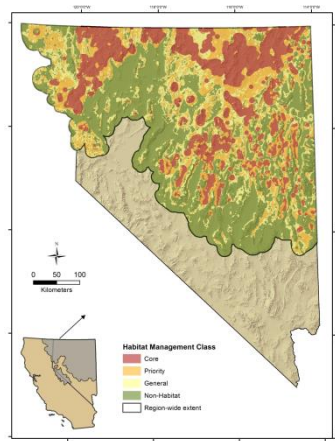
×

3<sup>rd</sup>  
Order

×

4<sup>th</sup>  
Order

Framework



Parameter

- GrSG Habitat

- Habitat Importance
- Limiting Seasonal Habitat
- Proximity (debits)

- Sagebrush cover
- Conifer cover
- Anthropogenic Impact

- Vegetation attributes

Method

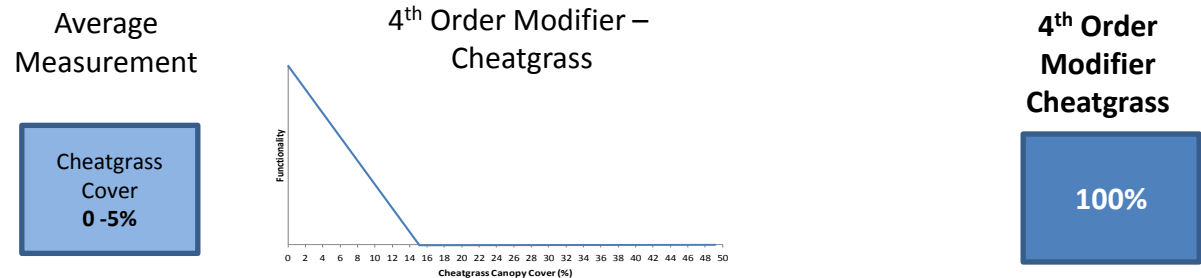
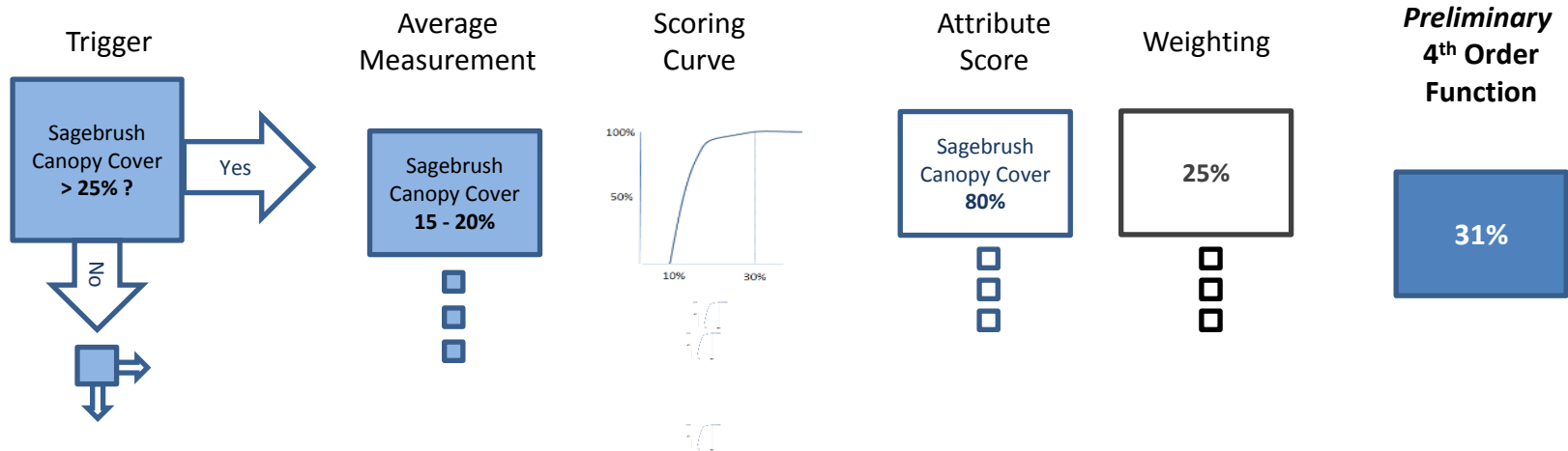
- Nevada GrSG Management Area Map

- Nevada GrSG Management Category Map
- **Limiting Habitat Approach (draft)**
- PMU/WAFWA zones

- **Habitat Suitability Index**
- Distance-decay curves

- Field data collection
- Scoring Curves and Tables

# 4<sup>th</sup> Order Calculation – Nesting ONLY



| 4 <sup>th</sup> Order                      |   | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Order |                      | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Order     |                           |                           | Functional Acres |                  |
|--|---|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Preliminary 4 <sup>th</sup> Order Function | 4 <sup>th</sup> Order Modifier Cheatgrass | HSI                   | Anthropogenic Impact | Limiting Habitat Function | Habitat Importance Factor | Proximity Factor (Debits) | Map Unit Acres   | Map Unit F-Acres |
| 31%  | 100%                                      | %                     | %                    | %                         | %                         | %                         | 72.1             | #                |

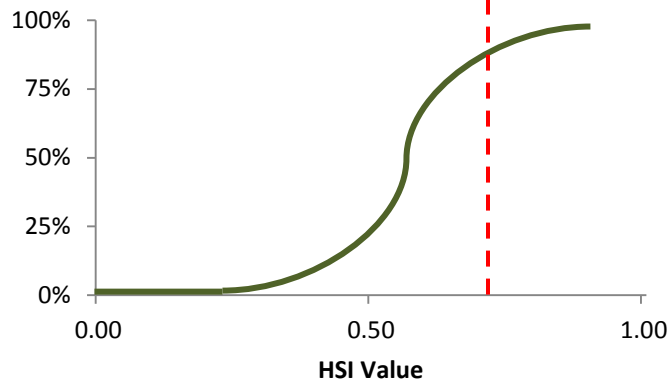
# 3<sup>rd</sup> Order Calculation

Average Measurement

Average HSI Value

0.75

Scoring Curve

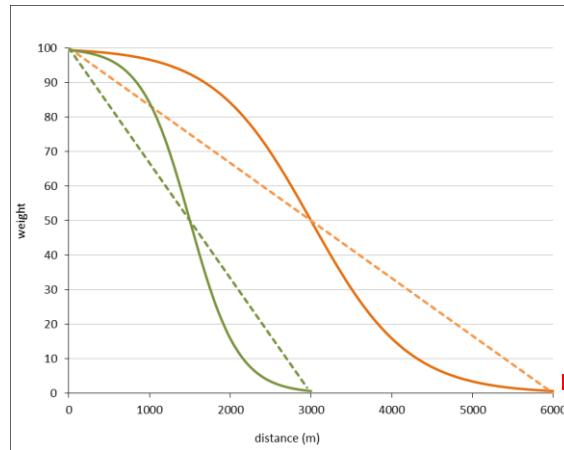


3<sup>rd</sup> Order Modifiers

HSI Score  
85%

Distance to Disturbance

> 6 km



100%  
Function

4<sup>th</sup> Order

3<sup>rd</sup> Order

2<sup>nd</sup> Order

Functional Acres

Preliminary 4<sup>th</sup> Order Function

31%

4<sup>th</sup> Order Modifier Cheatgrass

100%

HSI

85%

Anthropogenic Impact

100%

Limiting Habitat Function

%

Habitat Importance Factor

%

Proximity Factor (Debits)

%

Map Unit Acres

72.1

Map Unit F-Acres

#



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Order Calculation

Proportion  
Late Brood-  
Rearing  
**9%**

Proportion  
Winter  
**65%**

Scoring Table

| Seasonal Habitat Scarcity                   |                     |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|
| Proportion of area<br><i>nesting/winter</i> | Percent<br>function | Proportion of area<br><i>late brood rearing</i> | Percent<br>function |
| >40%  | 100%                | >10%  | 100%                |
| 35 – 40%                                    | 75%                 | 8 – 10%   | 75%                 |
| 30 – 35%                                    | 50%                 | 5 – 8%  | 50%                 |
| 25 – 30%                                    | 25%                 | 2 – 5%  | 25%                 |
| <25%  | 0%                  | <2%   | 0%                  |

\*Select lowest of two values for complementary types

Attribute  
Score

Limiting  
Habitat  
Function  
**75%**

2<sup>nd</sup> Order  
Modifier

**75%**

Scoring Table

| Management Importance Factor |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Debit Site Factor            |     |
| CORE                         | 2.0 |
| PRIORITY                     | 1.5 |
| GENERAL                      | 1.0 |
| Credit Site Factor           |     |
| CORE                         | 0.8 |
| PRIORITY                     | 0.6 |
| GENERAL                      | 0.0 |

Management  
Importance  
Category  
**Core**

Attribute  
Score

Management  
Importance  
Factor  
**0.8**

2<sup>nd</sup> Order  
Modifier

**80%**

4<sup>th</sup> Order

3<sup>rd</sup> Order

2<sup>nd</sup> Order

Functional Acres

Preliminary  
4<sup>th</sup> Order  
Function

**31%**

4<sup>th</sup> Order  
Modifier  
Cheatgrass

**100%**

HSI  
**85%**

**85%**

Anthropogenic  
Impact

**100%**

Limiting  
Habitat  
Function

**75%**

Habitat  
Importance  
Factor

**80%**

Proximity  
Factor  
(Debits)

**n/a**

Map Unit  
Acres

**72.1**

Map Unit  
F-Acres

**11.39**

# **“WHAT COUNTS AS MITIGATION?”**

# What is a Credit?

Credit = Functional-Acre =  
Habitat Quantity (Acres)  
X Habitat Quality (%) Above Baseline

## Performance assurances

- Contract to maintain habitat quality
- Customized management plan to fulfill required actions specific to the project
- Financial assurances to ensure durability

# How are different actions *currently* related to Credit Projects?

| Action                   | Directly Influences HQT Score | Required BMP – No Influence on HQT Score | Not Required – No Influence on HQT Score |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Preservation             | X                             |  |  |
| PJ Removal               | X                             |  |  |
| Road/Disturbance Removal | X                             |  |  |
| Meadow Restoration       | X                             |  |  |
| Fence Flagging           |                               | X  |  |
| Grazing                  |                               |  | X <sup>1</sup>                           |
| Fire Prevention          |                               | X  |  |
| Pre-suppression          |                               |  | X <sup>2</sup>                           |
| Research                 |                               |  | X  |

<sup>1</sup>Grazing practices are not directed by the Credit System, however expected practices appropriate to maintaining habitat function are documented in the CMP

<sup>2</sup>Potential approaches to incentivize pre-suppression actions such as a reduced reserve account contribution are being evaluated.

# FIELD DATA COLLECTION TIMING

# Objectives

- 1) Quantify habitat function accurately
- 2) Facilitate expedient credit and debit project approval

# Key Considerations

- Forb and grass cover and richness are critical for quantifying habitat function
- Growing season for forbs and grasses is limited
- GrSG use seasonal habitat types during specific times of the year

# Proposal

- Project proponents must collect field data within permissible windows to issue credits/debits based on functional acre scores
  - Nesting: April through June 15<sup>th</sup>
  - Late brood-rearing: July through September 15<sup>th</sup>
  - Winter: anytime
- Project proponents may request written verification from Administrator that field work is scheduled within permissible windows
- Project proponents may collect data outside of permissible windows and request review from the Administrator for *strictly* planning purposes