

SITE RANKING CRITERIA FOR WIND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Each proposed wind development project would be scored based on the following:

- Spatial pattern analysis to quantify landscape structure
 - Area metrics: area size, percentage of landscape, etc.
 - Edge metrics
 - Patch density, patch size and variability metrics
 - Shape metrics
 - Core area metrics
 - Nearest neighbor metrics
 - Contagion and interspersion metrics
- Site Condition
 - Level of existing development
 - Oil & gas production
 - Residential
 - Roads & transmission lines
 - Habitat Scores
 - Habitat type
 - Habitat structure
 - Floristic richness
 - Woody encroachment and invasive species
- Site features
 - T&E species (state & federal)
 - Rare and declining species
 - Unique features
 - Lekking areas (currently used and potential)
 - Springs, wetlands, etc.
- Site vulnerability - imminent threats (within next 5 to 10 years); e.g., urban sprawl, highway projects, etc.
- Adjacency of existing protected sites (public lands, easements, preserves, etc.)

Using the above criteria, potential development sites would be ranked within four categories:

- **Level One** - Very High Conservation Priority Area (can not be mitigated to improve ranking) - e.g., more intact areas of the Flint Hills; sand-sage prairies
- **Level Two** - High Priority Conservation Priority Area (high level of mitigation required to offset lost habitat due to fragmentation)
- **Level Three** - Moderate Conservation Priority Area (moderate level of mitigation)
- **Level Four** - Low Conservation Priority Area (low level of mitigation required)
- **Level Five** - Not identified as having high biological significance (no mitigation required)

A level Two site could be upgraded as a "Green" project (level five) by providing a high degree of mitigation; that is, the area of intact prairie would need to be compensated with enough funds to purchase conservation easements for triple (3X) the acreage impacted by the development project. A level three project could be re-ranked as a level five project by 2X mitigation (funds to purchase conservation easements). And a level four project could be mitigated to achieve a Green ranking with 1X mitigation. Funds to purchase conservation easements could be used only on properties that ranked as a Level 1 or 2 site.