

Technical Note: 470-24-1

Date: 3/25/2024

Subject: SH–Request for Evaluation of the Rangeland In-Field
Soil Health Assessment Tool

Action Requested by: April 18, 2024

Purpose: This national bulletin requests states to test and evaluate the Rangeland In-Field Soil Health Assessment (RIFSHA) tool.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2024.

Background: The Soil Health Division, in collaboration with internal and external partners, has developed the RIFSHA tool for making soil health assessments on rangeland. The assessment is a qualitative tool to help conservation planners determine and document soil health resource concerns on rangeland. It uses indicators to evaluate biological and physical components within a rangeland ecosystem. Information on reference conditions (from ecological site descriptions or other sources) will be useful in using the tool.

Explanation: To further refine the tool, the Soil Health Division is requesting states to perform in-field testing and evaluation of the tool within a variety of rangeland ecosystems and give feedback on its performance and utility. Feedback should focus on how well the tool identifies soil health resource concerns in the state. The testing period is April 1 through July 1, 2024.

States interested in testing and providing feedback on the RIFSHA tool should email Johanna Pate, range management specialist, at Johanna.pate@usda.gov by April 18, 2024. Please include “Rangeland In-Field Soil Health Assessment – test” in the subject and provide a technical contact within your state. The assessment tool and guidance for evaluating the tool will be provided to the states before the start of the testing period.

Contact: For more information, contact Loretta Metz, national program coordinator, at loretta.metz@usda.gov or 520-686-9524.