

2000 Environmental Quality Incentives Program



National Summary

Overview

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides financial, technical and educational assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and other related natural resource concerns on their lands, in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. The purpose of EQIP is to carry out a single program in a manner that maximizes environmental benefits per dollar expended and that provides (1) flexible technical and financial assistance to farmers and ranches that face the most serious natural resource problems (2) assistance to farmers and ranchers in complying with Federal, State and tribal environmental laws, and encourage environmental enhancement (3) assistance to farmers and ranches in making beneficial, cost-effective changes to measures needed to conserve and improve natural resources and (4) for the consolidation and simplification of the conservation planning process. Overall, the program attempts to achieve solutions to local community issues related to farms, ranches, and rural lands by implementation of EQIP structural, vegetative, and land management practices on eligible lands on a voluntary basis.

EQIP program funding are made available through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), as enacted under the 1996 Act. Cost-share payments are available to eligible program participants in an amount not to exceed 75 percent of the cost to implement one or more structural or vegetative practices. Incentive payments are also available in an amount and rate determined by the Secretary to implement one or more land management practices.

Accomplishments

During FY2000, local work groups recommended nearly 1,300 priority areas for approval to State Conservationists. Over 825 of these priority areas were approved. Since the inception of EQIP in 1997, over 2,150 conservation priority areas have been nominated and over 1,350 priority areas have received funding in at least one of the last four years. \$174 million dollars were allocated to States during FY2000. Of this amount, approximately \$137 million were used for financial assistance, \$4 million for educational assistance and \$33 million for technical assistance.

Outlook

We anticipate entering into approximately 6,500 contracts obligating approximately \$137 million. At least 50% of these funds will be used to target natural resource concerns related to animal operations. The remaining balance will be used for irrigation water management, to reduce soil erosion and to improve water quality. We plan to enter into agreements totaling approximately \$4 million for educational activities to assist farmers in installing and managing conservation practices.

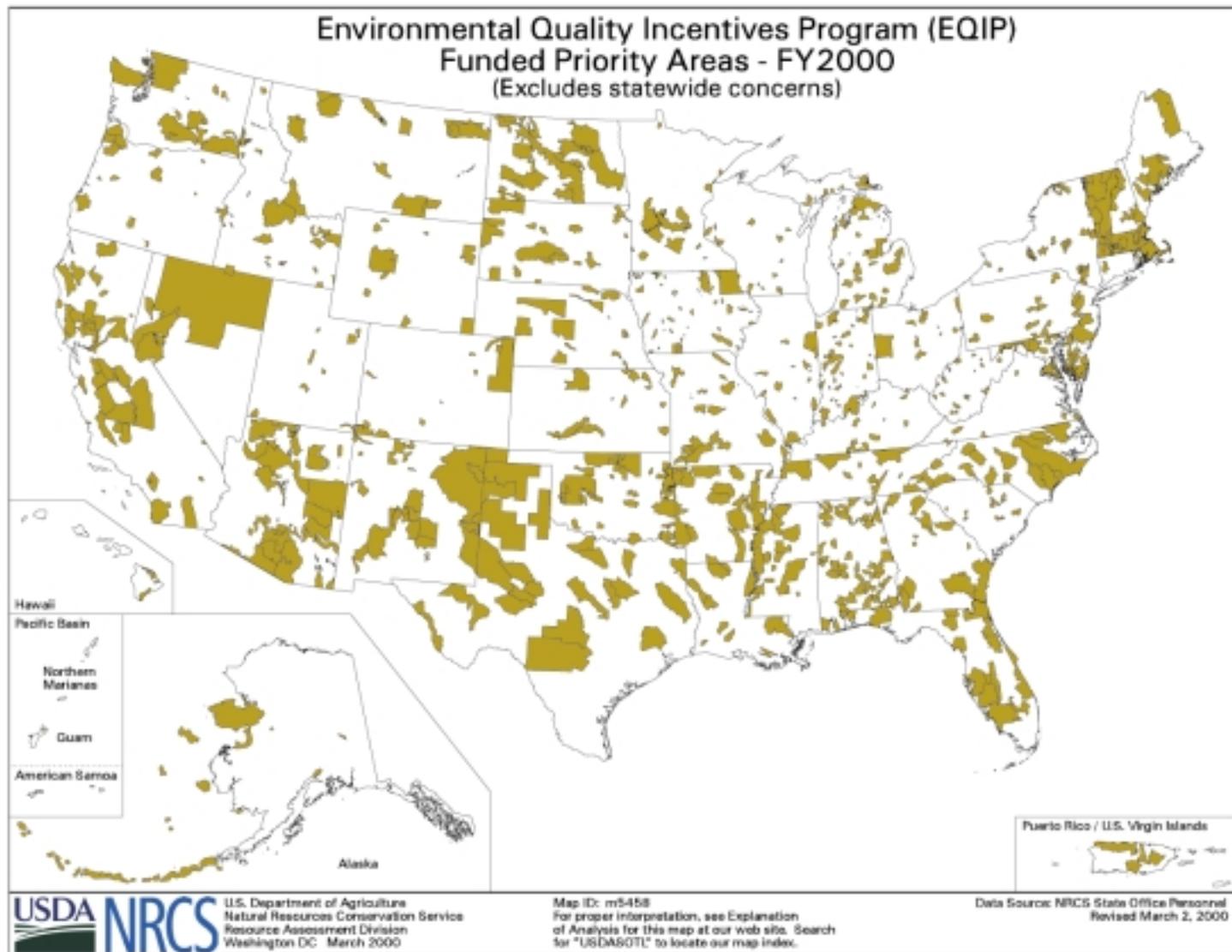
In order to make EQIP the best program possible for customers, a locally led process is. Some states do not use locally-led to the maximum and some District officials are sensitive to this. This allows States and local working groups to direct the program to meet their most serious resource concerns.

National Contact

Anthony Esser, National EQIP Program Manager, USDA-NRCS, P.O. Box 2890, Room 6023 Washington, DC 20250, anthony.esser@usda.gov, 202-720-1834.



National EQIP Priority Areas Within Congressional Districts



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.