

2000 Environmental Quality Incentives Program



Customer Focus—

USDA's EQIP program helped the Fond du Lac Indian Reservation, in Northeast Minnesota, restore water levels in five ancestral wild rice producing lakes. During the 1920's, a massive government-sponsored ditching program attempted to convert thousands of acres of wooded wetlands and marsh into cropland. The failed conversion resulted in partially draining the lakes and altering their hydrology to make native rice crops a shadow of what they once were.

Four structures for water control have been constructed to restore water conditions and historic rice beds that provide an important traditional food for tribal members. EQIP funding helped pay for structure construction and control of nuisance exotic vegetation. Minnesota NRCS engineers and hydrologists are training and providing technical assistance to tribal resource managers on how to manage lake levels for optimum rice production. This effort is also providing major wildlife benefits as wild rice is a critical food source for migratory waterfowl of the Mississippi flyway.

Minnesota Summary

Overview

Minnesota's landowners once again expressed an extra ordinary interest in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Nearly 500 applications were received for over \$10 million in requested conservation practice implementation. About 250 applications were funded, allocating the total of Minnesota's approximately \$4 million. In addition, over \$200,000 was allocated towards EQIP education assistance efforts. Major partners included the Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College and the University of Minnesota Extension Service.

Accomplishments

Within the 19 Conservation Priority Areas (CPAs), 66 percent, or \$2.6 million, was allocated to producer contracts. These locally led projects focus EQIP dollars to priority natural resource concerns within defined areas. The remaining \$1.3 million funded producer contracts that treat statewide natural resource concerns. Traditional structural conservation practices and newly developed incentive practices are part of all these contracts. Of the total financial allocation, 64 percent was to producers with livestock related concerns. Three contracts were entered into with Tribal governments and an individual American Indian. This funded 100 percent of the priority American Indian requests. Educational assistance was funded for the third year and included:

- Cooperative agreement with the Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College to allocate and manage environmental education efforts with four Northeast Minnesota tribal governments
- Continued efforts with the Minnesota Extension Service yielded education programs focused on producer education on grazing management, nutrient management, and crop residue use.

Outlook

Producer demand has exceeded allocations by 3 to 1 over the past 4 years and is expected to only increase. Federal and State efforts aimed at agricultural waste pollution prevention/solutions will increase the demand for EQIP. Continued funding of existing CPA's and local work group future CPA proposals will also increase the demand. As outreach efforts continue to expand, more applications for EQIP by American Indian and other underserved clients are expected.

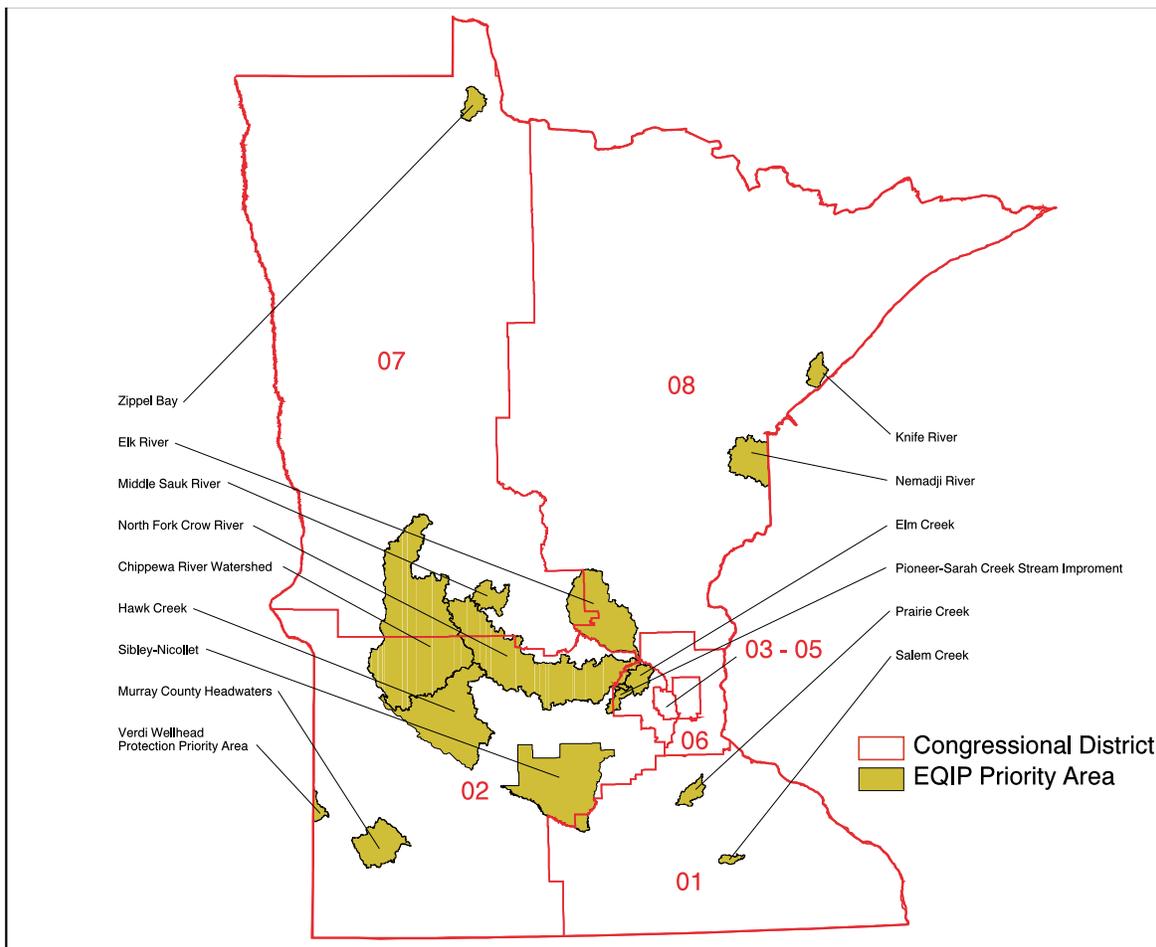
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EQIP helped pay for water control structures

Minnesota EQIP Priority Areas Within Congressional Districts



Minnesota EQIP Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2000		Cumulative Total (97-00)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 0	\$1,221,783	113	\$5,237,843	387
District 1	548,618	35	5,078,390	240
District 2	1,215,354	57	3,732,160	209
District 3	3,574	2	170,264	17
District 6	33,946	9	153,583	22
District 7	378,412	15	3,015,564	118
District 8	107,208	5	883,592	39
State Totals	\$3,508,895	236	\$18,271,396	1,032

Note: EQIP contracts for each Congressional District are estimated from Conservation Priority Areas which may include more than one district. Congressional District 0 = EQIP Contracts for Statewide Natural Resource Concerns which can be in any Congressional District in the state.

Source: FSA Recordset type01, data through 4th quarter FY2000

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