Conservation Measurement Tool
Conservation Performance Scoring for 2014-1

Overview

The Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT) evaluates CSP applications using a point based system to measure a relative environmental benefit. The CMT evaluates existing and proposed new activities to calculate conservation performance points that will be used for ranking and payment purposes. The CMT is size neutral. Each operation is evaluated based on the operations merits. Similar operations, despite the size of each operation, have the same potential to accrue a similar number of points.

All scoring for the relative environmental benefit impact is measured by question, enhancement and/or conservation practice responses. Each measure is rooted in Conservation Practice Physical Effects (CPPE) scoring tables using the -5 to +5 scoring system. Points for twenty-eight identified micro resource concerns and eight macro resource concerns have been established nationally for each question and additional activity.

Each land use is evaluated independently to determine: program stewardship eligibility requirements met, land use annual payments, and/or supplemental payment (where applicable). The ranking score evaluation is an aggregate reflection of activities on all land uses.

Meeting Stewardship Eligibility Requirements

Stewardship requirements are calculated by resource concern for each land use by dividing the ranking Existing Activity Points (rEAP) by the potential Existing Activity Points (pEAP) and multiplying by 100 (EAP). These products are compared to established stewardship threshold values by land use for each resource concern to determine if minimum stewardship eligibility requirements are met.

Annual Payments – Conservation Performance Payment Points

Conservation performance payment points for each land use are the sum of the actual Existing Activity Points (aEAP) and the sum of the actual Additional Activity Points (aAAP). Both aEAP and aAAP are factored by resource concern for each land use.

If a resource-conserving crop rotation is scheduled, the points associated with this activity are subtracted from the cropland aAAP payment points.

Conservation Performance Ranking Score

The conservation performance ranking score is used to determine the priority of funding for an applicant. Applicants will be funded starting with the highest score and working down the list until acres are exhausted.

The conservation performance ranking score is based on 5 factors:

1. **The level of conservation treatment on all applicable priority resource concerns at the time of application.**
2. **The degree to which the proposed conservation activities effectively increase conservation performance.**
3. **The number of applicable priority resource concerns proposed to be treated to meet or exceed stewardship thresholds by the end of the contract.**
4. **The extent to which other priority resource concerns will be addressed to meet or exceed stewardship thresholds by the end of the contract.**
5. **The extent to which priority resource concerns will be addressed when transitioning from CRP to agricultural production.**

Each factor is multiplied by a weighting factor. The final ranking score is the sum of the five weighted factors.