



USDA-NRCS—Salt Lake City, Utah

Colorado River Salinity Control Program—Wildlife Screening Criteria, Ranking Tool Questions and Instructions

Note to all users: The official Ranking Tools are located in Protracts.

2008-Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Screening Criteria

Participant Name: _____ Protracts ID # _____

NRCS Employee Screening Application: _____ Date: _____

General Requirements

The project must reside within a designated USDA-Salinity Control Program Project Area at the time of ranking:

1. **Uintah Basin** – Designated Parts of Duchesne and Uintah Counties, Utah
2. **Price – San Rafael** – Designated Parts of Carbon and Emery Counties, Utah
3. **Muddy Creek** – Designated Part of Emery County, Utah
4. **Manila-Washam** – Designated Part of Daggett County, Utah and Part of Sweetwater County, Wyoming

Basis of ranking in large part determined by the projects potential to **replace wildlife habit values forgone** from implementation of the Colorado River Salinity Control projects as monitored in each salinity area.

Questions on the use of the ranking tool should be directed through Gary Roeder, Area Programs Specialist to Julie Nelson, State Economist.

A. Has applicant / participant provided adequate evidence of control of the operating unit for the required contract period.

Yes _____ No _____

B. Has applicant / participant agreed to obtain permission from Canal Company for any modifications to their delivery system. water share validations for water development or habitat improvement.?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A _____

C. Has applicant / participant provided adequate information for NRCS to determine benchmark resource conditions to determine project ranking?

Yes _____ No _____

D. Has applicant / participant made resource decisions necessary for NRCS to adequately determine resource benefits of their proposed project and to start construction within one year of contract approval?

Yes _____ No _____

E. If applicant is part of a group project, is there an agreement in place for the Operation and Maintenance of that part of the project?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A _____

F. Have all existing and previous EQIP/Basin States Parallel Program contracts been kept on schedule with all contract items being satisfactorily completed?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A _____

G. Will the planned practices result in an increased Wildlife Habitat improvement index greater than .5 after plan implementation?

Yes _____ No _____

** If answered no, do not proceed with ranking) See Business Rule Number 1.*

Applicant Signature: _____

QR Date: _____ Initials: _____

Explanatory Notes:

Completing Item G, Screening Tool

1. If **no** is answered to **Question G** in the screening tool, **do not proceed to ranking**.
2. The Salinity Wildlife Habitat Fund Pool was established to implement quality projects for the development, protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat in Salinity Control areas.
3. A wildlife habitat index improvement of .5 is determined to be the threshold requirement for fund pool eligibility. However, the producer **may be eligible for other EQIP fund pools or programs** that do not require this minimum criterion for funding.

Screening Ranking Protocol

1. If **no** is answered to any question A-F of the screening tool, **NRCS will not complete ranking of this application at this time**.
2. Applications that result in a **yes or NA** (Not Applicable) answer for questions A-F of the screening tool and **meet the minimum criteria in Question G** will be ranked during the appropriate batching period based upon the date of the application.
3. Applications received after **June 1, 2007** may be accepted for consideration in subsequent Fiscal Year 2008 batching periods as announced by the agency.

EQIP National Priorities

1. *Reduction of nonpoint source pollution, such as nutrients, sediment, pesticides, or excess salinity in impaired watersheds consistent with TMDLs where available as well as the reduction of groundwater contamination and reduction of point sources such as contamination from confined animal feeding operations;*
2. *Conservation of ground and surface water resources;*
3. *Reduction of emissions, such as particulate matter, nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds, and ozone precursors and depleters that contribute to air quality impairment violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards;*
4. *Reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation from unacceptable levels on agricultural land; and*
5. *Promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation.*

- Access Road (560)
- Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface (443)
- Alley Cropping (311)
- Irrigation Water Management (449)
- Amendments for the Treatment of Agricultural Waste (591)
- Mulching (484)
- Anaerobic Digester, Controlled Temperature (366)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Animal Mortality Facility (316)
- Pasture and Hay Planting (512)
- Anionic Polyacrylamide (PAM) Erosion Control (450)
- Pest Management (595)
- Atmospheric Resource Quality Management (370)
- Prescribed Burning (338)
- Closure of Waste Impoundment (360)
- Prescribed Grazing (528)
- Composting Facility (317)
- Pumping Plant (533)
- Conservation Cover (327)
- Range Planting (550)
- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Recreation Area Improvement (562)
- Constructed Wetland (656)
- Recreation Land Grading and Shaping (566)
- Contour Buffer Strips (332)
- Recreation Trail and Walkway (568)
- Contour Farming (330)
- Residue Management, Seasonal (344)
- Contour Orchard and Other Fruit Area (331)
- Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (643)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390)
- Cross Wind Ridges (589A)
- Rock Barrier (555)
- Cross Wind Trap Strips (589C)
- Practices continued on Pg.4

NATIONAL Priority Issues

Question 1: Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in considerable reductions of non-point source pollution, such as nutrients, sediment, pesticides, excess salinity in impaired watersheds consistent with TMDL's where available as well as the reduction of groundwater contamination or point source such as contamination from confined animal feeding operations?

- **To claim these points, the proposed project must be expected to meet quality criteria for all applicable NRCS Water Quality criteria**

Question 2: Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the conservation of a considerable amount of ground or surface water resources?

- **To claim these points, the proposed project must be expected to meet quality criteria for all applicable NRCS Water Quantity criteria.**

Question 3: Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction of emissions, such as particulate matter, nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds, and ozone precursors and depleters that contribute to air quality impairment violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards?

- **To claim these points, the proposed project must include one or more of the conservation practices on pages 3 and 4.**

Question 4: Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation from unacceptable levels on agricultural land?

- **To claim these points, soil erosion must go from above T, to T, or below T as a result of the proposed project OR Quality criteria for Soil Condition; Rangeland Site Stability must be met as a result of implementing the proposed project**

Question 5: Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?

- **To claim these points, the project must be expected to meet quality criteria for one or more of the four national at-risk species resource concerns, which are:**

• **Plant Condition; Threatened and Endangered Plant Species**

• **Plant Condition; T&E Plant Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern**

• **Fish and Wildlife; Threatened and Endangered Fish and Wildlife Species**

• **Fish and Wildlife; T&E Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern**

At-risk **plant** species are in Appendix C. - Rare Plant Species by Habitat Type

At-risk **animal** species are in Appendix A. - Utah CWCS Tier I, II, and III Species List.

See Utah-NRCS Website— Programs-EQIP tab.

STATE Priority Issues

Question 1. Does the cooperator have a current RMS plan on the CTU for the EQIP project?

- **To claim these points, the applicant must have an RMS plan which addresses all resource concerns on the Conservation Treatment Unit (CTU) being offered for EQIP funding. (NPPH Amendments 3,600.6-4)**

Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
 Deep Tillage (324)
 Stream bank and Shoreline Protection (580)
 Drainage Water Management (554)
 Strip-cropping (585)
 Feed Management (592)
 Surface Roughening (609)
 Field Border (386)
 Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
 Filter Strip (393)
 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
 Firebreak (394)
 Use Exclusion (472)
 Forest Site Preparation (490)
 Vegetative Barrier (601)
 Forest Stand Improvement (666)
 Waste Facility Cover (367)
 Fuel Break (383)
 Waste Storage Facility (313)
 Grassed Waterway (412)
 Waste Treatment Lagoon (359)
 Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment (548)
 Waste Utilization (633)
 Heavy Use Area Protection (561)
 Wastewater Treatment Strip (635)
 Hedgerow Planting (422)
 Wetland Creation (658)
 Herbaceous Wind Barriers (603)
 Wetland Enhancement (659)
 Irrigation Canal or Lateral (320)
 Wetland Restoration (657)
 Irrigation Field Ditch (388)
 Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
 Irrigation System, Micro irrigation (441)
 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)
 Irrigation System, Sprinkler (442)
 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation (650)

STATE Priority Issues, continued

Question 2: Does the plan address control of an invasive species identified by a state, county, or local government or by a local Cooperative Weed Management Area as being a noxious species?

- Identify if the target species identified by the applicant is listed as noxious and/or invasive. Control of these species must be addressed THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE PRACTICES in the contract if answered yes.

Question 3: Is the project in an area that is covered by an approved area wide plan as defined by the National Planning Procedures Handbook?

- Is the planned project in an approved area wide plan as defined by the National Planning Procedures Handbook, and been designated as such by the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations? In order to answer yes to this question all of these REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET.

Question 4: Does the cooperator have one or more active contracts that are behind schedule?

- Review 440-CPM,512 and CCC-1200 Appendix signed by participant. Behind schedule is defined as an unapplied practice scheduled to have been installed prior to date of ranking.

Question 5: Does the applicant have one or more contracts that have been cancelled, or terminated (or are currently in the process of being cancelled/terminated)?

- Answer as appropriate.

Questions 6-8: A determination must be made about the primary purpose of the project. The NRCS employee ranking the application must determine if the primary objective of the project is to improve wetland riparian habitat, herbaceous habitat, or woody habitat.

Only 1 primary purpose question is answered among the three questions.

6. Will the project primarily improve wetland/riparian habitat?
7. Will the project primarily improve herbaceous habitat?
8. Will the project primarily improve woody habitat?

Questions 9-11: Utilizing the appropriate Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide. A qualitative increase in habitat must be determined for the project existing condition and after plan implementation. The NRCS employee ranking the application must complete the appropriate WHEG, and apply the appropriate result to one of the three questions. Points are allowed for only one response for this set of questions.

9. Using the appropriate WHEG, will the qualitative increase in habitat improvement consist of an existing condition of <.30 and after plan implementation >.70?
10. Using the appropriate WHEG, will the qualitative increase in habitat improvement consist of an existing condition of <.30 and after plan implementation >.60?
11. Using the appropriate WHEG, will the qualitative increase in habitat improvement consist of an existing condition of <.30 and after plan implementation >.50?

Questions 12-13: MAINTENANCE REQUIRED. The NRCS employee ranking the application must determine the approximate number of days per year that the participant would be required to maintain the planned practices. If the estimated maintenance of the practices is one day per year, select the response for question 1. If the estimated maintenance required is greater than 1 day and less than 12 days per year, select question #2. **Answer "yes" to only one.**

12. Is the number of days of maintenance required per year equal to a maximum of 1 day?
 13. Is the number of days of maintenance required per year between 2 and 12?

Questions 14-18: NUMBER OF RESOURCE CONCERNS. The NRCS employee ranking the application must determine if the project sufficiently benefits 1 to 5 additional resource concerns over and above wildlife habitat concerns.

14. In addition to wildlife, will the project benefit at least 5 more resource concerns?
 15. In addition to wildlife, will the project benefit 4 more resource concerns?
 16. In addition to wildlife, will the project benefit 3 more resource concerns?
 17. In addition to wildlife, will the project benefit 2 more resource concerns?
 18. In addition to wildlife, will the project benefit 1 more resource concern?

Other eligible resource concerns that the project may benefit are limited to:

Check all that apply:

- Air Quality
 Domestic Animals
 Plant Condition
 Soil Condition
 Soil Erosion
 Water Quality
 Water Quantity

Utilize Section V of the local FOTG to determine if the planned practices physical effects CPPE show positive benefits (results) for the above resource concerns.

Answer only 1 question of the 5 eligible responses.