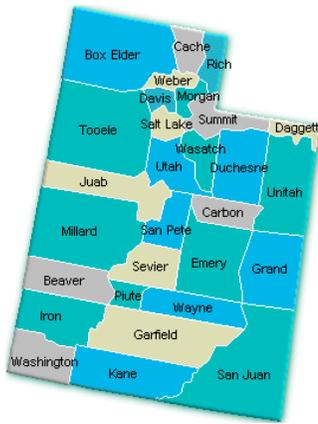


Watershed Improvement—Rangeland Ranking Tool Questions and Instructions



USDA-NRCS—Salt Lake City, Utah

2007-Environmental Quality Incentives Program

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

National Priority Issues

In order to answer yes to the National issues/priority questions you must have adequate documentation that the practice(s) will conserve the priority issue. This documentation can be in the form of a list of Threatened and Endangered species that will be impacted by the practices on the UT-CPA-52 or in the Tech Notes. See the species of concern list. Talk with your Area or partner biologist for more information on these species.

References:

- ◆ Utah Fish and Wildlife Plan
- ◆ 2007 EQIP Ranking Calculators Spreadsheet
- ◆ Rangeland Health Scoresheet
- ◆ EFDTG
- ◆ CWMA plans, other
- ◆ CPM 440—Part 512 CPC Manual
- ◆ CPM 440-Part 515 EQIP Manual
- ◆ TMDL or Listed Watersheds
- ◆ National Planning Procedures Handbook
- ◆ UT Bulletin 300-07-04
- ◆ Area Specialists
- ◆ Questions on the use of the ranking tool should be directed through Area Programs Specialists to Julie Nelson, State Economist.

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 page 5.

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 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:



National At-Risk Species Resource Concerns

- 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

Questions 1-3: What type of plan does the producer have? An RMS level plan where all resource concerns are addressed, a progressive plan where only one or two resource concerns are addressed or is it only in the inventory (identified the land uses, fields, tract soils etc. and the producer has not made any decisions) phase of the planning process.

Answer yes to only one of the following:

1. *Is the type of plan the cooperator has on the Pastureland CTU for the EQIP project an RMS plan?*
2. *Is the type of plan the cooperator has on the Pastureland CTU for the EQIP project a Progressive plan?*
3. *Is the type of plan the cooperator has on the Pastureland CTU for the EQIP project an Inventory?*

Questions 4-6: All of the management practices identified take place on the identified tract and field of the application. The management practices are scheduled to occur in the contract period, i.e. prescribed grazing is planned for 3 years in the grazing rotation. Does the grazing schedule fall within the contract period? This is a must. We can not pay for management practices that are not on the same tract and field that is contracted OR if the application of that practice falls out side of the contracting period. In other words the 3 years of prescribed grazing must be scheduled for that tract and field within the contracting period.

Answer yes to only one of the following:

4. *Will a management incentive practice be applied to 100% of the acres directly benefitted by the structural practices, and will the management practice be applied for only 1 year?*
5. *Will a management incentive practice be applied to 100% of the acres directly benefitted by the structural practices, and will the management practice be applied for only 2 years?*
6. *Will a management incentive practice be applied to 100% of the acres directly benefitted by the structural practices, and will the management practice be applied for 3 years?*

Question 7: Answer **yes** to this question **only if financial assistance (cash or in-kind) from partners has been obligated in writing to the practices in the contract.**

7. *Are any partners (UDWR, USFWS, Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited) contributing financial assistance to the project?*

Question 8: Answer **yes** to this question **only if technical assistance (planning, design, etc.) from partners has been given to the practices in the contract.**

8. *Are any partners contributing technical assistance to the project?*

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 (NO_x), 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.

STATE Priority Issues, continued

Question 9-11: Answer yes to only one of these questions. The list of species is found in the Utah Wildlife Plan at <ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/UT/EQIP/2006/UTFishWildlifePlan.pdf>. Table 1 on page 11 lists the species. See page 5 of these instructions.

9. Will the project benefit multiple Priority 1 Species and multiple Priority 2 Species?
10. Will the project benefit at least one Priority 1 Species?
11. Will the project benefit any Priority 2 Species?

Question 12-14: Answer yes to only one of these questions. The list of habitats is found in the Utah Wildlife Plan at <ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/UT/EQIP/2006/UTFishWildlifePlan.pdf>. Table 1 on page 11 lists the habitats. See page 5 of these instructions.

12. Will the project positively affect 3 or more targeted habitat types?
13. Will the project positively affect 2 targeted habitat types?
14. Will the project positively affect 1 targeted habitat type?

Question 15: Is the applicant addressing invasive Species as identified by the State, County, or Local government or the local Cooperative Weed Management Area as an invasive species of concern or a noxious weed? You will need to coordinate with your local weed supervisor or county agent to identify if the target species is of concern. These species must be addressed THROUGH THE APPROPRIATE PRACTICES in the contract if answered yes.

15. 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?

Question 16: Is the planned project in an approved area wide plan as defined by the National Planning Procedures Handbook, UT Bulletin 300-7-04 and been designated as such by the Assistant for Field Operations? In order to answer yes to this question all of these REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET.

16. Is this project in an area that is covered by an approved areawide plan as defined by the National Planning Procedures Handbook ?

LOCAL Priority Issues

Question 1: Answer Yes to this question only if the project is within a TMDL watershed identified by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality AND the project addresses one of the water quality impairments identified in the TMDL. Reference: UDEQ-TMDL

1. Does this project address an identified water quality impairment within an approved TMDL?

Local Priority Issues continued on page 4>>>

Explanatory Notes:

Local Priority Issues

Questions 2-6: Look up the [Rangeland Health Scoresheet](#) in the conservation plan. Make sure the scoresheet used represents the majority of the rangeland acres in the contract. Predict the changes that will result from implementing the practices in the contract. Use the [2007 EQIP Ranking Calculators spreadsheet](#) to calculate the Rangeland Health points, below.

Answer **yes to only one** of the following questions:

2. Is the change in the Rangeland Health score, as calculated using the designated Rangeland Health scoreheet for EQIP, between 1 and 5?
3. Is the change in the Rangeland Health score, as calculated using the designated Rangeland Health scoreheet for EQIP, between 6 and 10?
4. Is the change in the Rangeland Health score, as calculated using the designated Rangeland Health scoreheet for EQIP, between 11 and 15?
5. Is the change in the Rangeland Health score, as calculated using the designated Rangeland Health scoreheet for EQIP, between 16 and 20?
6. Is the change in the Rangeland Health score, as calculated using the designated Rangeland Health scoreheet for EQIP, greater than 20?

Rangeland Health									
	E	M-E	M	S-M	N-S				
Benchmark						0	0	< This value must be 17	
Projected future						0	0	< This value must be 17	
Rangeland Health						0			
Pasture Condition Score Sheet									
	1	2	3	4	5				
Benchmark						0	0	< This value must be 10	
Projected future						0	0	< This value must be 10	
Pasture Condition Score						0			
Stand Desity Index (SDI)									
Choose the predominant species represented in the stand (from the Forest Stewardship Plan)									
From the Forest Stewardship Plan, what is the Stand Density Index									
SDI Points						Wrong!			

Conservation Practices—to claim points for National Priority Question #3, the proposed project must include one or more of the following practices:

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)

Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
 Deep Tillage (324)
 Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
 Drainage Water Management (554)
 Stripcropping (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, Microirrigation (441)
 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)
 Irrigation System, Sprinkler (442)
 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation (650)

Habitat Type/Priority Species Table (Questions 9-14, Local)

Habitat Type	Priority 1 Species	Priority 2 Species	Priority 3 Species
Lowland Riparian	Bald Eagle, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Virgin Spinedace, Virgin River Chub	Arizona Toad, Lewis's Woodpecker, Allen's Big-eared Bat, Big Free-tailed Bat, Western Red Bat, Cornsnake, Western Threadsnake	Canyon Treefrog, Abert's Towhee, Bell's Vireo, Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Lucy's Warbler, Northern River Otter, Yuma Myotis, Cornsnake
Wetland	Columbia Spotted Frog, Least Chub, fat-whorled pondsnail, Kanab ambersnail	Western Toad, Short-eared Owl	Northern Leopard Frog, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt
Mountain Riparian	Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Bluehead Sucker, Bonneville Cutthroat Trout, Colorado River Cutthroat Trout	Western Toad, Leatherside Chub, Smooth Greensnake	Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Northern River Otter
Shrubsteppe	Gunnison Sage-grouse	Ferruginous Hawk, Greater Sage-grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Pygmy Rabbit	Brewer's Sparrow, Sage Sparrow, Sage Thrasher, Mule Deer
Flowing Water (Lotic)	Bluehead Sucker, Bonneville Cutthroat Trout, Bonytail, Colorado Pikeminnow, Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, Flannelmouth Sucker, June Sucker, Humpback Chub, Razorback Sucker, Roundtail Chub, Virgin Spinedace, Virgin River Chub, Woundfin	Desert Sucker, Leatherside Chub	Canyon Treefrog
Wet Meadow	Columbia Spotted Frog	Bobolink, Smooth Greensnake	
Grassland	Utah Prairie-dog	Burrowing Owl, Grasshopper Sparrow, Long-billed Curlew, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Short-eared Owl, Gunnison's Prairie-dog, White-tailed Prairie-dog	Great Plains Toad