

**Natural Resources Conservation Service
Application Ranking Summary
Blaine County Cropland**

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
If the application is for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering "Yes" to the following question. Answering "Yes" to question 1a will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the national priority category.	
1. a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other national level questions. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250 Point(s)
Clean and Abundant Water: Water Quality - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
2. a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15 Point(s)
2. b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated "impaired water body" (TMDL, 303d, etc.)?	15 Point(s)
2. c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a "non-impaired water body"?	5 Point(s)
Clean and Abundant Water: Water Conservation - Will the proposed project assist the producer implement conservation practices which:	
3. a. Decrease aquifer overdraft?	15 Point(s)
3. b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?	10 Point(s)
3. c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	5 Point(s)
Clean Air: Treatment of air quality from agricultural sources - Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practice(s) which:	
4. a. Meet on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15 Point(s)
4. b. Reduce on-farm generated green house gases such as CO2 (Carbon Dioxide), CH4 (Methane), and N2O (Nitrous Oxide)?	15 Point(s)
4. c. Increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	5 Point(s)
Soil Health: Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practice(s) which:	
5. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	15 Point(s)
5. b. Improve soil tilth, organic matter, structure, health, etc.?	5 Point(s)
Healthy Plant and Animal Communities Wildlife Habitat Conservation - Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practice(s) which:	
6. a. Benefit on-farm habitat associated with threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?	15 Point(s)
6. b. Help retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	10 Point(s)
High Quality, Productive Soils, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities: Will the proposed project assist the producer implement practices which:	
7. a. Help manage or control noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10 Point(s)
7. b. Increase, or improve habitat to benefit pollinator or other targeted wildlife species?	10 Point(s)
7. c. Properly dispose of livestock carcasses?	5 Point(s)
7. d. Are identified in an Integrated Pest Management plan?	10 Point(s)
7. e. Are identified in a Nutrient Management plan?	10 Point(s)
7. f. Apply principles of adaptive nutrient management?	5 Point(s)
Energy Conservation - Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practices which:	
8. a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	15 Point(s)
8. b. Increase on-farm energy efficiency with practices and improvements identified in an approved energy audit equivalent to criteria required in Ag EMP (122,124)?	10 Point(s)
8. c. Assist in implementing energy conservation measures that also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants?	10 Point(s)
Business Lines - Conservation Implementation Additional Ranking Considerations - Will the proposed project result in:	
9. a. Implementation of all conservation practices scheduled in the contract on the CPA-1155 within three years of date of obligation?	10 Point(s)
9. b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted?	5 Point(s)
9. c. Implementation of practice(s) which will complete an existing conservation system or suite of practices?	5 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Sheet and Rill Erosion – Does the offer include planned treatment of sheet and rill erosion to the quality criteria level on the offered acres where sheet and rill erosion will be controlled to “T” or less?	35 Point(s)
2. Irrigation – Will the proposed project improve irrigation efficiency or reduce the acres of irrigated cropland on the operation?	40 Point(s)
3. Erosion Control: Classic Gullies – Will the planned project address classic gully erosion on cropland or grazing land?	35 Point(s)
4. Invasive Species: Cedar Control – Will the planned project eradicate or control eastern redcedar?	40 Point(s)
5. Streambank Erosion – Will the planned project include practices to address active stream bank erosion?	30 Point(s)
6. Energy Conservation – Will the planned project include practices that will result in energy conservation benefits?	30 Point(s)
Surface Water: Nutrients/Organics – Will the planned project include practices to address surface water nutrients?	
7. Will the planned practices address surface water nutrient/organics in a nutrient limited watershed?	20 Point(s)
8. Will the planned practices address surface water nutrients/organics in a field that lies within ¼ mile of an impaired water body?	10 Point(s)
9. Will the planned practices address surface water nutrients/organics in a field that adjoins a water body that extends beyond the applicants property boundary?	5 Point(s)
10. Will the planned practice address surface water nutrients/organics on a field that adjoins a pond or other water body that lies entirely within the property boundary of the applicant?	5 Point(s)

Local Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Other - Has the applicant ever had a previous USDA contract that was not fulfilled? This would typically have a negative point value.	-200 Point(s)
2. Other: Will all items in the project be planned for completion by the end of the second year of the contract?	25 Point(s)
3. Other: Will all items in the project be planned for completion by the end of the third year of the contract?	10 Point(s)
4. Other: Will the planned treatment compliment or complete an existing conservation system? The system may or may not have been started in a CPC, but at time of completion, must meet NRCS standard and specifications to receive credit.	10 Point(s)
5. Plant Condition - Plants not Adapted or Suited: Will the planned treatment include the conversion of existing cropland to permanent vegetation by implementing Forage and Biomass Planting (512) and either prescribed grazing (528) or Forage Harvest Management (511).	55 Point(s)
6. Plant Condition - Plants not Adapted or Suited: Will the planned treatment include the conversion of existing cropland to permanent vegetation by implementing Range Planting (550) and either prescribed grazing (528) or Forage Harvest Management (511).	80 Point(s)
7. Soil Condition - Organic Matter Depletion: Does the offer include adoption of one or more of the following treatments to improve soil organic matter: No-till (329)?	55 Point(s)
8. Soil Condition - Organic Matter Depletion: Does the offer include adoption of one or more of the following treatments to improve soil organic matter: Conservation Crop Rotation (328)?	20 Point(s)
9. Soil Condition - Organic Matter Depletion: Does the offer include adoption of one or more of the following treatments to improve soil organic matter: Cover Crop (340)?	15 Point(s)
10. Soil Erosion - Classic Gully: Will the planned treatment include the treatment of classic gully erosion that currently exceeds 5 tons annually?	55 Point(s)
11. Soil Erosion - Stream bank: Does the offer include practices to address active stream bank erosion by implementing at least two of the following practices: Critical Area Planting (342), Fence (382), Pasture and Hay Planting (512), Range Planting (550), Riparian Forrest Buffer (391), Use exclusion (472), Filter Strip (393), or Watering Facility (614) ?	45 Point(s)
12. Soil Erosion - Wind: Will the proposed project reduce active wind erosion to less than "T" on all cropland acres? In order to receive points for this concern, active wind erosion must exceed T on at least a portion of the cropland acres in the existing state.	15 Point(s)
13. Soil Erosion- Ephemeral: Will the proposed project reduce active Ephemeral Erosion to less than "T" on all contract acres by implementing the following practices: Grassed Waterway (412) and/or Terrace (600)? In order to receive points for this concern, completed system must meet current NRCS standard and specifications.	50 Point(s)
14. Soil Erosion/Water Quality: Does the planned treatment include adoption one or more of the Conservation Buffer practices such as, but not limited to, Contour Buffer Strips (332), Cross Wind Trap Strips (589C), or Field Borders (386)?	15 Point(s)
15. Water Quality - Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water: Will the planned treatment include adoption of nutrient management (590) to apply nutrients within the recommendations of a current soil test (within 3 years).	10 Point(s)
16. Energy- Inefficient Energy Use: Will the planned project improve the energy efficiency of existing field operations as verified by RUSLEII?	5 Point(s)