

Ranking Categories – BEGINNING FARMER/RANCHER; LIMITED RESOURCE FARMER/RANCHER; SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMER/RANCHER

Primary Resource Concerns –

- **Air Quality – Objectionable Odors**
- **Domestic Animals – Inadequate Stock Water**
- **Plant Condition – Productivity, Health, Vigor (Cropland, Forestland, Rangeland, Pastureland, Hayland)**
- **Plant Condition – Noxious, Invasive Plants**
- **Soil Condition – Organic Matter Depletion**
- **Soil Erosion – Streambank**
- **Water Quality – Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Groundwater**
- **Water Quality – Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water**
- **Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Groundwater**
- **Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Surface Water**
- **Water Quality – Excessive Suspended Sediment and Turbidity in Surface Water**
- **Water Quantity – Aquifer Overdraft**
- **Water Quantity – Inefficient Water Use on Irrigated Land**
- **Water Quantity – Inefficient Water Use on Non-irrigated Land**
- **Water Quantity – Insufficient Flows in Water Courses**

Secondary Resource Concern –

- **Fish and Wildlife – Threatened and Endangered Species, Declining Species, Species of Concern (Arkansas Darter, Arkansas River Shiner, Bald Eagle, Eastern Spotted Skunk, Greater Prairie Chicken, Lesser Prairie Chicken, Neosho Madtom, Neosho Mucket Mussel, Northern Bobwhite Quail, Topeka Shiner)**

Eligible Land Uses –

- **Crop, Forest, Grazed Range, Hay, Headquarters, Pasture**

Additional Requirements for this Category –

- **The Kansas Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Self-Assessment Worksheet will be completed and signed by the applicant prior to the evaluation period cut-off date to be considered for funding.**
- **If treating a Grazinglands Health ranking category resource concern:**
 - o **The unit of concern will be converted to a grazing plan during the life of the contract that will:**
 - **On grazed range, achieve 50 percent or less use for the year on the key forage species in identified grazing areas.**
 - **On pastureland or hayland, meet electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG) requirements for regrowth by the end of the growing season.**
 - o **On native rangeland, producer will implement a modified harvest method monitoring system using grazing exclusion cages approved by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, that will verify the degree of use of the key forage species in identified key grazing areas, in the defined or planned grazing system, during the life of the contract.**
 - o **Cropland converted to grazing land will make up no more than 20 percent of the application acres to be eligible for this ranking category.**

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- **If treating a Forestland Health ranking category resource concern, producer must develop a Forest Stewardship/Management Plan with the Kansas Forest Service.**
- **Any EQIP plan of operations that includes an animal waste management facility will provide for the development and implementation of a comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP). Payment will not be made on the waste storage facility or associated practices until the CNMP has been developed.**
- **If treating a Water Quantity ranking category resource concern and the land will continue to be irrigated:**
 - o **Producer must currently have or will install a functioning state-approved water measuring device to state installation specifications (Kansas Administrative Regulations [K.A.R] 5-1-6) before financial assistance is received.**
 - o **If the land continues to be irrigated, producer will use an approved evapotranspiration (ET) based scheduling system.**
 - **Producer will not exceed calculated ET by 10 percent the first year of the contract, and will not exceed the calculated ET by five percent the remaining years of the contract.**
 - o **Well capacity must be able to meet the seasonal Net Irrigation Requirement (NIR), with 50 percent chance rainfall, for the crop grown.**
 - o **Producer will stay within the certified rate, amount, and location of the existing water right at the time the EQIP contract is obligated.**
 - o **No end gun or similar appurtences will be present or used on the pivot system for the lifespan of the system.**
- **If treating a Water Quantity ranking category resource concern, producer reports to the Division of Water Resources (DWR) or water districts will be used to determine the benchmark condition of net water savings. Producers' will furnish reports for the previous five years to determine the average benchmark condition, and each year during the contract to ensure net water savings.**

State Issues –

Answer the following question related to resource concerns:

- (1) Unit of concern has at least one of the following resource concerns of Plant Condition – Productivity, Health, and Vigor; Plant Condition – Noxious and Invasive Plants; Water Quality – Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Groundwater; Water Quality – Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water; Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Groundwater; Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Surface Water; and/or Water Quality – Excessive Suspended Sediment and Turbidity in Surface Water. (1100 points)

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Answer the following questions related to at-risk species:

- (2) Any part of the unit of concern is located within an at-risk species habitat area for Topeka Shiner, Arkansas Darter, Arkansas River Shiner, Bald Eagle, Eastern Spotted Skunk, Neosho Mucket Mussel, and/or Neosho Madtom and treatment of the resource concern will benefit the at-risk species. Planned treatment will meet eFOTG species habitat requirements. (10 points)
- (3) Any part of the unit of concern is located in a Greater Prairie Chicken, Lesser Prairie Chicken, and/or Northern Bobwhite Quail habitat area that has at least a medium or greater woody canopy infestation level for targeted undesirable species as indicated in the NRCS eFOTG Brush Management specification. The producer will implement a plan that meets NRCS eFOTG requirements to benefit Greater Prairie Chicken, Lesser Prairie Chicken, or Northern Bobwhite Quail. (10 points)

Answer the following question related to partner funding assistance:

- (4) Producer has secured funding for portions of the project from other contributors, which may include, but is not limited to, conservation districts, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams, or other cost-share programs. (5 points)

If a Water Quality resource concern will be treated, answer ONE of the following two questions related to nitrate leaching potential. If neither applies leave the answers "NO":

- (5a) A HIGH nitrate leaching potential exists for greater than or equal to 50.0 percent of the unit of concern. (400 points)
- (5b) A combination of MEDIUM and/or HIGH nitrate leaching potential exists for greater than or equal to 50.0 percent of the unit of concern. (200 points)

If a Water Quality resource concern will be treated, answer ONE of the following two questions related to Potential Soil Loss Index (PSLI). If neither applies leave the answer "NO":

- (6a) PSLI of HIGH exists for greater than or equal to 50.0 percent of the unit of concern. (400 points)
- (6b) A combination of MEDIUM and/or HIGH PSLI exists for greater than or equal to 50.0 percent of the unit of concern. (200 points)

If a Water Quality resource concern will be treated, answer ONE of the following four questions related to Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL). If none apply leave the answers "NO":

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- (7a) Greater than or equal to 50.0 percent of the unit of concern is located within a Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) identified high priority Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) watershed for eutrophication, dissolved oxygen, nutrients, and/or pesticides AND is targeted to meet the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Strategic Plan to improve water quality nationwide by 2012. (30 points)
- (7b) Any part of the unit of concern, but less than 50.0 percent, is located within a KDHE identified high priority TMDL watershed for eutrophication, dissolved oxygen, nutrients, and/or pesticides AND is targeted to meet the EPA Strategic Plan to improve water quality nationwide by 2012. (25 points)
- (7c) Greater than or equal to 50.0 percent of the unit of concern is located within a KDHE identified high priority TMDL watershed for eutrophication, dissolved oxygen, nutrients, and/or pesticides but is NOT a TMDL targeted to meet the EPA Strategic Plan. (20 points)
- (7d) Any part of the unit of concern, but less than 50.0 percent, is located within a KDHE identified high priority TMDL watershed for eutrophication, dissolved oxygen, nutrients, and/or pesticides but is NOT a TMDL targeted to meet the EPA Strategic Plan. (15 points)

If a Water Quality resource concern will be treated, answer ONE of the following two questions related to receiving water bodies. (Receiving water body is defined as permanent water bodies greater than 0.5 acres in size; rivers; streams, including United States Geological Survey blue line intermittent streams; and Food Security Act wetlands for which hydrology has not been altered.) If neither applies leave the answers “NO”:

- (8a) Any part of the unit of concern is located within 180.0 feet of a receiving water body or has a soil with Frequent flood frequency. (20 points)
- (8b) Any part of the unit of concern is located between 180.1 to 300 feet of a receiving water body or has a soil with Occasional flood frequency. (15 points)

If a Water Quality resource concern will be treated, answer ONE of the following two questions related to Kansas Geological Survey identified sensitive groundwater areas. If neither applies leave the answers “NO”:

- (9a) Greater than or equal to 50.0 percent of the unit of concern is located within a Kansas Geological Survey identified sensitive groundwater area. (20 points)
- (9b) Any part of the unit of concern, but less than 50.0 percent, is located within a Kansas Geological Survey identified sensitive groundwater area. (15 points)

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If a Water Quality resource concern will be treated, answer ONE of the following four questions related to drainage into federal reservoirs. If none apply leave the answer “NO”:

- (10a) The entire unit of concern (100.0 percent) is located within a hydrologic unit code (HUC) 11 drainage that is directly adjacent to a federal reservoir. (20 points)
- (10b) The entire unit of concern (100.0 percent) is located in a HUC 8 main stem drainage that is upstream of a federal reservoir, above the HUC 11 drainage that is directly adjacent to the federal reservoir. (10 points)
- (10c) Any part of the unit of concern, but less than 100.0 percent, is located within a hydrologic unit code (HUC) 11 drainage that is directly adjacent to a federal reservoir. (15 points)
- (10d) Any part of the unit of concern, but less than 100.0 percent, is located in a HUC 8 main stem drainage that is upstream of a federal reservoir, above the HUC 11 drainage that is directly adjacent to the federal reservoir. (5 points)

If a Water Quality resource concern will be treated, answer ONE of the following two questions related to Kansas Source Water Assessment Areas. If neither applies leave the answers “NO”:

- (11a) Greater than or equal to 50 percent of the unit of concern is located within a Kansas Source Water Assessment Area. (15 points)
- (11b) Any part of the unit of concern, but less than 50.0 percent, is located within a Kansas Source Water Assessment Area. (10 points)

If a Water Quality resource concern will be treated, answer the following question related to Watershed Restoration Action Plans (WRAPs):

- (12) Any part of the unit of concern is located in a WRAPs implementation area. (10 points)

If a Water Quality resource concern will be treated, answer the following question related to applications considered joint agreements:

- (13) Application is a joint agreement, as defined in the Conservation Programs Manual, Section 512.41, with multiple participants in the effort of streambank stabilization. (20 points)

If a Water Quality resource concern will be treated, Answer EACH of the following four questions related to nutrient management and waste water application:

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- (14) The nutrient management plan includes the application of livestock waste that will be applied by injection/subsurface application. (5 points)
- (15) As a part of the nutrient management plan, split nitrogen applications will be implemented for all applicable nutrient applications in the rotation, to provide nutrients at the time for maximum crop utilization. (5 points)
- (16) The nutrient management plan includes the application of phosphorous by band applying for all applicable nutrient applications in the rotation. (5 points)
- (17) Waste water applied by irrigation will use an approved irrigation scheduling system. (5 points)

If a Plant Condition or Domestic Animal resource concern will be treated, answer ONE of the following questions related to the amount of rest to be provided by your planned grazing system. If none apply leave the answers “NO”:

- (18a) The planned grazing system will provide rest for greater than 91.0 percent of the days during the growing season. (775 points)
- (18b) The planned grazing system will provide rest no more than 90.9 percent and no less than 86.0 percent of the days during the growing season. (675 points)
- (18c) The planned grazing system will provide rest no more than 85.9 percent and no less than 82.0 percent of the days during the growing season. (425 points)
- (18d) The planned grazing system will provide rest no more than 81.9 percent and no less than 74.0 percent of the days during the growing season. (175 points)
- (18e) The planned grazing system will provide rest no more than 73.9 percent and no less than 49.0 percent of the days during the growing season. (50 points)
- (18f) The planned grazing system will provide rest no more than 48.9 percent and no less than 30.0 percent of the days during the growing season. (10 points)

If a Plant Condition or Domestic Animal resource concern will be treated, answer ONE of the following questions related to tamarisk (salt cedar) or sericea lespedeza infestation. If none apply leave the answers “NO”:

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- (19a) The grazing unit is infested with up to 10.0 percent of tamarisk (salt cedar) or sericea lespedeza and the producer will implement a plan to control these species. (175 points)
- (19b) The grazing unit is infested with no more than 20.0 percent and no less than 10.1 percent of tamarisk (salt cedar) or sericea lespedeza and the producer will implement a plan to control these species. (50 points)
- (19c) The grazing unit is infested with no more than 30.0 percent and no less than 20.1 percent of tamarisk (salt cedar) or sericea lespedeza and the producer will implement a plan to control these species. (10 points)

If a Plant Condition or Domestic Animal resource concern, answer the following question related to brush infestation:

- (20) The grazing unit is infested with a brush species at the medium woody canopy infestation level as indicated in the NRCS eFOTG for Brush Management and the producer will implement a plan to control the brush species. (5 points)

The following question **MUST BE ANSWERED "YES"** in order for this application to be considered eligible for this ranking category.

- (21) The appropriate Kansas Self-Assessment Worksheet(s) has been completed, signed, and returned to NRCS by the applicant prior to the evaluation period cut-off date.

If treating a Grazinglands Health ranking category resource concern, **EACH** of the following questions **MUST BE ANSWERED "YES"** in order for this application to be considered eligible for this ranking category.

- (22) The unit of concern will be converted to a grazing plan during the life of the contract that will: (1) On grazed range, achieve 50 percent or less use for the year on the key forage species in identified grazing areas, (2) On pastureland or hayland, meet electronic Field Office Technical Guide requirements for regrowth by the end of the growing season.
- (23) On native rangeland, producer will implement a modified harvest method monitoring system using grazing exclusion cages approved by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, that will verify the degree of use of the key forage species in identified key grazing areas, in the defined or planned grazing system, during the life of the contract. Cropland converted to grazing land will make up no more than 20 percent of the application acres to be eligible for this ranking category.

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If treating a Forestland Health ranking category resource concern, the following question MUST BE ANSWERED "YES" in order for this application to be considered eligible for this ranking category.

- (24) Producer must develop a Forest Stewardship/Management Plan with the Kansas Forest Service.

If treating an animal waste management facility, the following questions MUST BE ANSWERED "YES" in order for this application to be considered eligible for this ranking category.

- (25) Any EQIP plan of operations that includes an animal waste management facility will provide for the development and implementation of a comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP). Payment will not be made on the waste storage facility or associated practices until the CNMP has been developed.

If treating a Water Quantity ranking category resource concern, the following question MUST BE ANSWERED "YES" in order for this application to be considered eligible for this ranking category.

- (26) If the land continues to be irrigated, (1) producer must currently have or will install a functioning State approved water measuring device to State installation specifications (K.A.R. 5-1-6) before cost-share dollars are received; (2) well capacity must be able to meet the seasonal Net Irrigation Requirement, with 50 percent chance rainfall, for the crop grown; and (3) the producer will stay within the certified rate, amount, and location of the existing water right at the time the EQIP contract is obligated.
- (27) (1) Producer reports to the Division of Water Resources or water districts will be used to determine the benchmark condition of net water savings. Producer has furnished reports from the previous five years to determine the average benchmark condition. Producer will provide these reports to NRCS each year during the contract to ensure net water savings; (2) If the land continues to be irrigated, producer will use an approved evapotranspiration (ET) based scheduling system. Producer will not exceed calculated ET by 10 percent the first year of the contract, and will not exceed calculated ET by 5 percent the remaining years of the contract; and (3) If the land continues to be irrigated, no end gun or similar appurtenances will be present or used on the pivot system for the lifespan of the system (15 years).