Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Summary
EQIP Beginning Farmer / Rancher

Program: EQIP 2008	**Ranking Date:**	**Application Number:**
Ranking Tool: EQIP Beginning Farmer / Rancher - Irrigated		**Applicant:**
Final Ranking Score:		**Address:**
Planner:		**Telephone:**
Farm Location:		

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
Clean and Abundant Water: Water Quality - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
1. a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15 Point(s)
1. b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated impaired water body?	10 Point(s)
1. c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a water body?	5 Point(s)
Clean and Abundant Water: Water Conservation - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
2. a. Increase groundwater recharge in identified groundwater depletion areas (http://water.usgs.gov/ogw/rasa/html/TOC.html)?	15 Point(s)
2. b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and result in estimated water savings of at least 5% and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?	10 Point(s)
2. 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:	
3. a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15 Point(s)
3. b. Reduce green house gases such as methane, nitrous oxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOC)?	15 Point(s)
3. c. Increase carbon sequestration?	5 Point(s)
High Quality, Productive Soils Erosion Reduction - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
4. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	15 Point(s)
Healthy Plant and Animal Communities Wildlife Habitat Conservation - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
5. a. Benefit threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?	15 Point(s)
5. b. Retain wildlife and plant benefits on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	15 Point(s)
High Quality, Productive Soils, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities: Special Environmental Efforts/Initiatives - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
6. a. Eradicate or control noxious or invasive species?	10 Point(s)

6. b. Increase, improve or establish pollinator habitat?	10 Point(s)
6. c. Implement precision agricultural methods?	10 Point(s)
6. d. Properly dispose of animal carcasses?	5 Point(s)
6. e. Implement an Integrated Pest Management plan?	5 Point(s)
Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy Production - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
7. a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	15 Point(s)
7. b. Increase on-farm energy efficiency with more efficient equipment?	10 Point(s)
7. c. Assist in producing energy from renewable resources (solar, wind, biofuel, etc)?	10 Point(s)
Business Lines - Conservation Implementation Additional Ranking Considerations - Will the proposed project result in:	
8. a. Implementation of all planned conservation practices within three years of contract obligation?	10 Point(s)
8. b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted, or will complete an existing conservation system?	10 Point(s)
Does the applicant meet the following conditions:	
9. a. If the applicant has an existing EQIP contract, has it been, and is it now, on schedule and in full compliance?	5 Point(s)
9. b. Did the applicant successfully complete any past contract(s) in full compliance?	5 Point(s)
9. c. Is this the applicant's first EQIP application?	5 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
Answer one of the following planning questions only if applicable to this application:	
1. Was a progressive conservation plan developed to treat 30% or more of the identified resource concerns on the application acres prior to the application cutoff? (5 points)	5 Point(s)
2. Was a RMS conservation plan developed to treat the identified resource concerns on the application acres prior to the application cutoff? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
3. Was a RMS conservation plan developed to treat the identified resource concerns on the entire ag operation prior to the application cutoff? (20 points)	20 Point(s)
Answer all of the following questions that apply to this application.	
4. Will the quality criteria for 'Soil Erosion-Ephemeral Gully and/or Classic Gully' be met with the installation of the conservation practices in this application where it was not met on benchmark conditions? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
5. Will the quality criteria for 'Water Quality-Excessive Nutrients and Organics' be met with the installation of the conservation practices in this application where it was not met on benchmark conditions? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
6. Will the quality criteria for 'Water Quality - Excessive Suspended Sediment and Turbidity in Surface Water' be met with the installation of the conservation practices in this application where it was not met on benchmark conditions? (10 points)	10 Point(s)

7. Will the quality criteria for 'Air Quality - Particulate Matter and Objectionable Odor' be met with the installation of a Windbreak, Shelterbelt or Tree Planting? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
8. Will the planned conservation practices in this application benefit the contract participant's fields or treatment units that have resource problems related to a livestock operation? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
9. Will the quality criteria for 'Air Quality' and 'Water Quality' be met with the installation of new buffers and/or filtration practices? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
10. Will the quality criteria for 'Plant Condition - Noxious and Invasive Plants' be addressed through the use of Grazing Management or Integrated Pest Management techniques? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
11. Will the quality criteria for 'Fish and Wildlife - Inadequate Food, Inadequate Water, or Inadequate Cover/Shelter' be met with the installation of the conservation practices in this application where it was not met on benchmark conditions? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
12. Will the planned practices reduce the risk of wildfires? E.g. Forest thinning, forest pruning, green strips, firebreaks/fuel breaks, prescribed burning. (10 points)	10 Point(s)
13. Is this application be part of a Joint Agreement (see Contracting Manual 512.41) to address contiguous land units with multiple ownership or participants to treat the common resource concerns? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
14. Has the applicant had a NRCS contract either cancelled or terminated in the last 3 years or do they have a contract that is in the process of being cancelled or terminated? (-250 points)	-250 Point(s)
15. Does the applicant have an active contract with practices 2 or more years behind schedule? (-200 points)	-200 Point(s)
Cropland Questions 16-28	
16. Will the planned practices improve the soil condition index to meet or exceed quality criteria? (5 points)	5 Point(s)
17. Will nutrient management be applied for 3 years? (20 points)	20 Point(s)
18. Will pest management be applied for 3 years? (20 points)	20 Point(s)
Answer one of the next 3 questions on soil erosion reduction as a result of contract implementation? Use the current NRCS tool for the appropriate erosion type. If multiple types of erosion occur use most predominant.	
19. Is average soil loss reduced by > 10 tons/acre to meet quality criteria? (15 points)	15 Point(s)
20. Is average soil loss reduced by 5-10 tons/acre to meet quality criteria? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
21. Is average soil loss reduced by < 5 tons/acre to meet quality criteria? (5 points)	5 Point(s)
Answer one of these two conservation tillage questions ONLY if the practices are planned for the contract and the No Till/Strip Till or Mulch Till for each crop in the rotation is planned to meet NRCS Standards.	

22. Will a combination mulch and no-till/strip till system be used continuously in the crop rotation? (5 points)	5 Point(s)
23. Will a no-till/strip till system be used continuously in the crop rotation? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
The Soil Tillage Intensity Rating (STIR) difference between benchmark conditions and planned conditions: Answer 1 of the next 5 questions.	
24. Will the benchmark STIR improve by 10 to 20? (5 points)	5 Point(s)
25. Will the benchmark STIR improve by 21 to 40? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
26. Will the benchmark STIR improve by 41 to 50? (15 points)	15 Point(s)
27. Will the benchmark STIR improve by 51 to 60? (20 points)	20 Point(s)
28. Will the benchmark STIR improve by 61 or greater? (25 points)	25 Point(s)
Irrigated Cropland and Irrigated Pasture/Hayland Questions 29-43	
29. Will the quality criteria for 'Soil Erosion - Irrigation Induced' be met with the installation of the conservation practices in this application where it was not met on benchmark conditions? (5 points)	5 Point(s)
30. Will the planned conservation practices convert the irrigation system from surface to sprinkler? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
31. Will Irrigation Water Management be applied for 3 years? (20 points)	20 Point(s)
32. Will the planned conservation practices convert the existing irrigation system to a drip irrigation system? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
33. Will prescribed grazing be implemented on irrigated pasture as a management intensive grazing system? (15 points)	15 Point(s)
Answer one of the next 3 questions on irrigation efficiencies. Refer to the National Engineering Handbook and do not provide points for conveyance systems that do not provide irrigation water to the farm being treated. Average irrigation efficiencies on all acres in the application.	
34. Is irrigation efficiency improved more than 21% to meet quality criteria? (average irrigation efficiencies for the entire system) (15 points)	15 Point(s)
35. Is irrigation efficiency improved from 12 to 21% to meet quality criteria? (average irrigation efficiencies for the entire system) (10 points)	10 Point(s)
36. Is irrigation efficiency improved by less than 12% to meet quality criteria? (average irrigation efficiencies for the entire system) (5 points)	5 Point(s)
Answer one of the next two questions for Irrigated Cropland and/or Irrigated Pasture or Hayland if sprinkler system which is gravity pressurized is one of the conservation practices planned for the EQIP contract.	
37. Do the planned conservation practices include the installation of a 50 to 99% gravity pressurized sprinkler irrigation system? This can be either an existing or new system installation. (5 points)	5 Point(s)
38. Do the planned conservation practices include the installation of a 100% gravity pressurized sprinkler irrigation system? This can be either an existing or new system installation. (10 points)	10 Point(s)
Grazingland (Range and/or Pasture) Questions - Grazed Forest can be included if grazing is the primary land use.	

39. Will the planned conservation practices allow the applicant to meet the quality criteria for 'Plant Condition - Productivity, Health, and Vigor' and/or 'Domestic Animals - Inadequate Quantities and Quality of Feed and Forage' where they have not been met on benchmark conditions? (5 points)	5 Point(s)
40. Will the planned conservation practices allow the applicant to meet the quality criteria for 'Domestic Animals - Inadequate Stock Water 'where they have not been met on benchmark conditions? (5 points)	5 Point(s)
41. Will prescribed grazing be applied for 3 years? (20 points)	20 Point(s)
42. Will the prescribed grazing system incorporate multiple grazing units with rest periods during the growing season? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
43. Will brush management be applied on the application acres where woody species have been determined to be invasive AND does the planned treatment include a grazing plan which benefits habitat for sensitive species known to inhabit the area? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
Forest Questions 44-46 (Timber Production is primary land use)	
44. Will the planned practices promote tree species which are most adapted and suitable to improve forest health? The resource concern must be addressed by the conservation practices/activities proposed in the application. (5 points)	5 Point(s)
45. Will planned practices improve forest productivity by managing to proper stocking levels? The resource concern must be addressed by the conservation practices/activities proposed in the application. (5 points)	5 Point(s)
46. Will insect and disease problems be addressed? The resource concerns must be addressed by the conservation practices/activities proposed in the application. (5 points)	5 Point(s)
Stream Bank Erosion Questions 47-50	
47. Has the design been completed and have the permits been applied for? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
48. Will the treatment include installation of a buffer within the riparian area? (10 points)	10 Point(s)
49. Is the erosion having a direct negative effect on habitat known to be used by an existing species of concern or T & E species AND will planned conservation practices address this? (15 points)	15 Point(s)

Local Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Do the planned practices address water quality concerns that have been identified as impairments in a TMDL management plan or 303d listed stream where the land is located (direct impacts)? (40 points)	40 Point(s)
2. Will the planned practices result in the permanent relocation of a confined animal feeding area away from a stream or other water body? (60 points)	60 Point(s)
3. Do the planned practices reduce livestock impacts to live water by installing practices such as fencing, water developments, buffer areas and prescribed grazing management? (35 points)	35 Point(s)

4. Does this application include conservation practices that will improve permanent wildlife habitat on and around crop/pasture fields? (35 points)	35 Point(s)
5. Will the planned practices solve an existing resource problem that has led to a letter of violation? (45 points)	45 Point(s)
6. Will the application result in a change in existing grazing plan to increase level of management? (35 points)	35 Point(s)