Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Summary

Blackfeet Tribal Grazing Land

Program:	**Ranking Date:**	**Application Number:**
Ranking Tool: Blackfeet Tribal Grazing Land		**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?	Yes O or No O
1. b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated impaired water body?	Yes O or No O
1. c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a water body?	Yes O or No O
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)?	Yes O or No O
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?	Yes O or No O
2. c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	Yes O or No O
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?	Yes O or No O
3. b. Reduce green house gases such as methane, nitrous oxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOC)?	Yes O or No O
3. c. Increase carbon sequestration?	Yes O or No O
High Quality, Productive Soils Erosion Reduction – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
4. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil “T”)?	Yes O or No O
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?	Yes O or No O
5. b. Retain wildlife and plant benefits on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	Yes O or No O
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?	Yes O or No O
6. b. Increase, improve or establish pollinator habitat?	Yes O or No O
6. c. Properly dispose of animal carcasses?	Yes O or No O
6. d. Implement an Integrated Pest Management plan?	Yes O or No O
6. e. Implement precision agricultural methods?	Yes O or No O
Strategic Initiative – Energy Conservation and Sustainable Production Energy Conservation – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
7. a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	Yes O or No O

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?	Yes O or No O
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?	Yes O or No O
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?	Yes O or No O
9. b. Did the applicant successfully complete any past contract(s) in full compliance?	Yes O or No O
9. c. Is this the applicant's first EQIP application?	Yes O or No O

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
GENERAL QUESTIONS: Select all that apply.	
1. Could this application assist the producer meet or avoid the need for their animal feeding operations (AFO) to be regulated as a point source under the Clean Water Act and/or Montana Water Quality Act?	Yes O or No O
2. Does the proposed project lie in a 16-digit watershed listed on the 303(d)-list identified by NRCS through the determination tool AND does the application propose to address a water quality criteria that is listed as an impairment for the stream?	Yes O or No O
3. Does the land offered with this application fall within the boundaries of a local group conservation effort or plan and the contracted practices will address the resource objectives of that conservation effort?	Yes O or No O
4. Does the application include the contracting of cost-shareable management practices?	Yes O or No O
5. If funded, would this be the applicant's first EQIP contract?	Yes O or No O
6. Does the application directly benefit sage grouse habitat identified by the MT Fish, Wildlife, and Parks?	Yes O or No O
7. Does the application result in the implementation of any one of the following innovative technologies? a. Precision agriculture b. Nutritional Balancer (NutBal) c. Grazingland Spatial Analysis Tool (GSAT) d. Rangeland health monitoring e. Certified organic farming or ranching f. Precision irrigation g. Micro irrigation h. Dual nozzles i. Lepa, or Lesa pivot systems j. Pivots with panels that use automatic continuous moisture monitoring technologies k. Self cleaning fish screens l. On-farm composting m. Feed management n. Alternative Energy	Yes O or No O
CONSERVATION PLANNING: Answer no more than one question with yes.	
8. Does the applicant use a Resource Management System (RMS) conservation plan developed/re-evaluated within the last 5 years?	Yes O or No O
9. Does the applicant use a progressive conservation plan developed/re-evaluated within the last 5 years?	Yes O or No O
PEST MANAGEMENT: Answer no more than one question with yes.	
10. Does the application include the development and implementation of an integrated pest management (IPM) plan for noxious weeds on the impacted non-cropland acres of the operation? (Herbasceous Weed Control is not eligible for cost-share on cropland.)	Yes O or No O
11. Does the application include the development and implementation of a treatment plan for noxious weeds on the impacted non-cropland acres of the operation? (Herbaceous Weed Control is not eligible for cost-share on cropland.)	Yes O or No O
CRITICAL SPECIES: Answer no more than one question with yes.	
12. Does the application benefit critical fish, wildlife, or plant species and assist the producer meet or avoid the need to be regulated under the Endangered Species Act?	Yes O or No O
13. Does the application benefit critical fish, wildlife, or plant species identified as Species of Concern by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the Montana Natural Heritage Program?	Yes O or No O
14. Does the application directly benefit fish and/or wildlife species habitat (not covered above)?	Yes O or No O
POLLINATOR SPECIES: Answer no more than one question with yes.	
15. Does the application benefit pollinator species through the seeding of pollinator friendly seeding mixes on ½ to 5 acres of land? (Must be in accordance with Montana NRCS Biology Technical Note	Yes O or No O

Number MT-20, March, 2009.)	
16. Does the application benefit pollinator species through the seeding of pollinator friendly seeding mixes on more than 5 acres of land? (Must be in accordance with Montana NRCS Biology Technical Note Number MT-20, March, 2009.)	Yes O or No O
GRAZINGLAND	
17. Does the application include the development and implementation of an NRCS-approved prescribed grazing plan that benefits plant condition, productivity, health, and vigor and will be contracted on 50% or more of the grazing operation?	Yes O or No O
18. Does the application include fences or the development of offstream water for the improvement of riparian pastures and to manage livestock access to state or tribal waters in accordance with an NRCS-approved prescribed grazing plan that fully considers riparian health?	Yes O or No O
19. Does the application include livestock watering facilities and fencing to exclude livestock access to state or tribal waters in accordance with an NRCS-approved prescribed grazing plan that fully considers riparian health?	Yes O or No O
20. Does the application include the establishment of improved pastures on cropland for spring and/or fall grazing?	Yes O or No O
21. Does the application include the renovation of improved pastures for spring and fall grazing?	Yes O or No O
22. Does the application include a 2 year season long deferred prescribed grazing plan for the recovery of plant and soil resources following wildfires or extended drought?	Yes O or No O
23. Does the application include accelerated treatment of native grazinglands?	Yes O or No O
24. Does the application include watering facilities in uplands to facilitate improved livestock distribution?	Yes O or No O
25. Does the application include installation of watering facilities with consideration for wildlife access?	Yes O or No O
26. Does the application utilize fencing of uplands to facilitate upland grazing?	Yes O or No O
27. Does the application include practices approved by NRCS Montana as benefitting producers negatively impacted by grizzly bears and/or wolves?	Yes O or No O
DRY CROPLAND	
28. Does the application include the planned treatment of a saline recharge area where the discharge affects someone else's property?	Yes O or No O
29. Does the application include the planned treatment of a saline recharge area where the discharge affects your own property?	Yes O or No O
30. Does the application result in an improving soil health condition from the benchmark condition as determined from the Soil Condition Index (SCI) worksheet (System must result in an SCI of > 0.00 on the offered acres)?	Yes O or No O
31. If there is no improvement in the SCI from the benchmark condition, will the proposed plan meet the threshold value for the Montana Crop Diversity Tool value of >3?	Yes O or No O
32. Does the application include practices for erosion control, or addressing excessive wind, sheet and rill, or gully erosion on the applied acres? (Excessive means above RUSLE "T"). The sum of all erosion sources must be at 'T' or less.	Yes O or No O
IRRIGATED LAND	
33. Does the application include the conversion from a pumped irrigation system to a piped gravity flow system? No pumps can be included for payment in the contract to receive these points; however, a 15 HP booster pump is allowable in the system as long as there is an overall decrease in HP requirements.	Yes O or No O
34. Does the application include irrigation system improvements that will decrease the required pump size by 5 HP or greater?	Yes O or No O
35. Does the application include the conversion of a flood irrigation system to a sprinkler irrigation system where the corners will not be flood irrigated?	Yes O or No O
37. Will a fish screen be installed at the stream diversion point?	Yes O or No O
38. Does the application include an irrigation project that will produce more than 20% water savings according to a NRCS-approved design?	Yes O or No O
39. Does the application include an irrigation project that produces a 15% to 20% water savings according to a NRCS-approved design?	Yes O or No O

40. Does the application include an irrigation project that produces a 10-15% water savings according to a NRCS-approved design?	Yes O or No O
41. Will the application result in increased flows to a dewatered stream reach identified in the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Dewatered Stream list?	Yes O or No O
42. Does this application result in direct benefits to irrigation induced erosion from irrigation conveyance systems or farm fields?	Yes O or No O
FOREST LAND	
43. Does the application include forest restoration measures on land burned by wildfire within the last 3 years for erosion control, reforestation, or watershed protection?	Yes O or No O
44. Is the primary objective of Forest Stand Improvement insect or disease control to improve forest health or forest management with consideration for growth and yield of forest overstory?	Yes O or No O
45. Does the application include wildfire hazard reduction on property that includes a home site, is within 1/4 mile of any neighboring home site/structure, is in a location significant to impacting drinking water supplies, or is protecting public infrastructure?	Yes O or No O
46. Does the application include wildfire hazard reduction on property that adjoins lands on which a fuel treatment/reduction project has been recently complete or is currently underway?	Yes O or No O
47. Does the application include water quality or riparian habitat restoration measures to restore or enhance the watershed on lands not impacted by wildfire within the last 3 years?	Yes O or No O
48. Does the application include management measures designed for protection or enhancement of T&E species or species of special concern?	Yes O or No O
49. Does the application include contracted management practices for management of understory? (example - Herbaceous Weed Control or Prescribed Grazing)	Yes O or No O

Local Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Does this application include more than one noxious weed control method according to a Noxious Weed Management Plan (NWMP) and is the majority of the area being treated within the Two Medicine and/or Cut Bank watersheds?	Yes O or No O
2. Will this application develop an off-stream water source, replacing natural or manmade bodies of water as the primary source for livestock?	Yes O or No O
3. Will the application serve to implement a rotational grazing system utilizing cross-fence and/or water developments?	Yes O or No O

Land Use:

Resource Concerns	Practices

Ranking Score

Efficiency:

Local Issues:

State Issues:

National Issues:

Final Ranking Score:

This ranking report is for your information. It does not in any way guarantee funding. When funding becomes available, you will be notified if your application is selected for funding. Some changes to the application may be required before a final contract is awarded.

Notes:

NRCS Representative: **Signature Date:**	**Application Signature Not Required for Contract Development unless required by State policy:** **Signature Date:**