

**Natural Resources Conservation Service
Application Ranking Summary
NWQI All Watersheds**

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
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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 State priority category.	
1. 1a. Is the program application for development of a TSP prepared Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is “Yes”, do not answer any other State-level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section	400 Point(s)
Water Quality – EPA Watersheds:	
2. Does the application include core conservation practices that will be implemented within ¼ mile of a stream or water body that is threatened (i.e., receives significant runoff of excess nitrogen and/or phosphorous), on the EPA 303(d) list, or is impaired with a TMDL in place and therefore not on the 303(d) list (or other critical stream or water body authorized by the Regional Conservationist)?	100 Point(s)
Geographic Impacts:	
3. Are core conservation practices planned on the offered acres? i. Greater than 75 percent of the offered acres are within the targeted watershed, AND ii. Greater than 75 percent of the offered acres have a core conservation practice planned for application	125 Point(s)
Collaborative Efforts:	
4. Are core conservation practices planned within an existing State agency or other non-USDA water quality project area addressing the same or similar pollutants?	75 Point(s)
Effort to address watershed impairments:	
5. Does this program application include the implementation of a system of conservation practices which address the primary watershed impairments?	50 Point(s)
High Risk Soils:	
6. Are core conservation practices to be implemented on offered acres with a majority of soil types that are classified hydrologic group D (high runoff) or group A (high infiltration)?	50 Point(s)

Local Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Will the proposed project reduce sediment and organic deposition through the conversion of cropland to permanent Grass?	30 Point(s)
2. Will the proposed project decrease organics and sediment deposition in streams through the implementation of a prescribed grazing plan on all grazingland?	20 Point(s)
3. Will the proposed project address active gully erosion that will reduce sediment loads in the targeted streams?	20 Point(s)
4. Will the proposed project reduce nutrient loads in targeted streams through the implementation of a nutrient Management Plan on all acres of the operation?	20 Point(s)
5. Will the proposed project reduce turbidity and organics in the targeted stream by excluding livestock from all blue line streams within the project area?	20 Point(s)
6. Will the proposed project reduce turbidity and organics in the targeted stream by installing filters, field borders, or riparian buffers along blue line streams within the project area?	20 Point(s)
Proximity of proposed practices to blue line streams. (answer the one question below which best describes the proposed project)	
7. a. Will the proposed project include core practices installed within 1/8 mile of a blue line stream.	50 Point(s)
7. b. Will the proposed project include core practices installed within 1/4 mile of a blue line stream.	30 Point(s)
7. c. Will the proposed project include core practices installed within 1/2 mile of a blue line stream.	10 Point(s)
Reductions of sediment deposition due to soil tillage. (This question will only apply to operations with existing cropland. answer the one question that best describes the proposed project)	
8. a. Will the proposed project result in a reduction of active sheet and rill erosion from existing cropland which will reduce sediment deposition in impaired streams by converting to permanent grass?	30 Point(s)
8. b. Will the proposed project result in a reduction of active sheet and rill erosion from existing cropland which will reduce sediment deposition in streams by implementing a continuous no-till system on that cropland?	15 Point(s)
8. c. Will the proposed project result in a reduction of active sheet and rill erosion from existing cropland which will reduce sediment deposition in impaired streams by implementing a mulch-till or ridge-till residue management system?	5 Point(s)
Implementation of a systems approach to improving water quality. (answer the one question that best describes the proposed project)	
9. a. Will the proposed project include at least one core practice and at least one additional trapping, avoiding, and controlling practices to be implemented within the target watershed?	40 Point(s)
9. b. Will the proposed project include at least one core practice and at least one additional trapping, avoiding, or controlling practice to be implemented within the target watershed?	20 Point(s)
9. c. Will the proposed project include at least one core practice to be implemented within the target watershed?	0 Point(s)