



**Natural Resources Conservation Service - Wisconsin
National Water Quality Initiative
Bear Lake-Little Wolf River Watershed (040302021704)
Plan of Operations**

The National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) is a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) initiative to work with agricultural producers to implement voluntary conservation practices to improve water quality in high-priority watersheds while maintaining agricultural productivity. NWQI is designed to help individual agricultural producers take actions to reduce the runoff of sediment, nutrients, and pathogens into waterways where water quality is a critical concern. The goal is to implement conservation practices in focused watersheds in a concentrated area so that agriculture no longer contributes to the impairment of water bodies within these priority watersheds.

Within NWQI eligible producers may receive assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for installing on-farm conservation practices. Eligible land is determined by NRCS and is based on an identified resource concern. Eligible producers may apply for financial assistance for conservation practices that will address the identified resource concerns.

Eligible Watershed Area:

The eligible watershed area for the initiative is the Bear Lake-Little Wolf River Watershed. The Watershed Boundary Dataset is the delineation used to identify the 12-digit hydrologic unit watershed boundary.

In order to be eligible for funding, 50% or more of the NWQI-EQIP contract acreage must be located within the boundary of the watershed.

Eligible Practices and Payment Rates:

See the documents posted on the [NRCS Wisconsin NWQI webpage](#) for the list of eligible conservation practices for the NWQI-EQIP sign-up. Practice payment rates are posted in the [NRCS Payment Schedule website](#). Applicants who certify they are a Beginning Farmer, Limited Resource Farmer or a Socially Disadvantaged Farmer are eligible to receive a higher practice payment rate.

In order to be eligible for funding, the application must include at least one core conservation practice; or the application must be for an eligible Conservation Activity Plan (CAP).

Payment limits will be the same as those established for the Wisconsin EQIP General sign-up.

Application Period:

EQIP applications are accepted on a continuous basis throughout the year. The NWQI-EQIP sign-up period application deadline(s) are available on the NRCS-WI NWQI web site. All eligible applications received by the application deadline will be evaluated and ranked for funding consideration.

Interested agricultural producers may apply in person, by telephone, fax, email, or letter at the Waupaca County Service Center. The following is the contact information for the Waupaca County Service Center:

Waupaca Service Center
1337C Royalton St
Waupaca, WI 54981-1608

Contact: Lisa Neuenfeldt, District Conservationist
Phone: (715) 258-8380 x107
Fax: (855) 814-3121
Email: lisa.neuenfeldt@usda.gov

Fund Pools:

The following fund pool has been established for the NWQI-EQIP sign-up:

NWQI – Bear Lake-Little Wolf River

Producers applying for available financial assistance will be competing for funds within this fund pool.

Applications for Conservation Activity Plans (i.e. Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan, Drainage Water Management Plan CAP, Irrigation Water Management Plan CAP, and Nutrient Management Plan CAP) will be a single stand-alone application and will not be included in an application that contains non-CAP conservation practices.

A separate application form (i.e. NRCS-CPA-1200) does not need to be submitted if the applicant already has a deferred or current-year EQIP application.

Resource Concerns:

Addressing water quality degradation resource concerns in the Bear Lake-Little Wolf River Watershed via implementation of core conservation practices is the priority for the NWQI-EQIP sign-up and is reflected in the application ranking tool.

The eligible resource concern categories are:

- Concentrated erosion
- Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss
- Soil quality limitations
- Storage and handling of pollutants
- Wind and water erosion

Land Use Types:

The following land use types are eligible for financial assistance through NWQI: Crop, Forest, Pasture, Farmstead, and Associated Ag Land.

Application Ranking:

Scoring of all applications will be done according to the ranking established in the Conservation Assessment and Ranking Tool (CART).

Funding:

NRCS will allocate the available NWQI-EQIP funds based on the numerical ranking system in Conservation Assessment and Ranking Tool (CART). Applications will be selected for plan development and contracted in ranked order according to the ranking score, as funds allow. If there are insufficient funds available to fund an application, applications not selected for contracting will be deferred to the next EQIP application ranking period.