



FY 2023 Local Work Group Recommendations Proposal for Team 8

Team 8 Field Offices

Team 8 is composed of the Datil, Socorro, and Carrizozo Field Offices. Datil Field Office is located in Datil, New Mexico. The office provides assistance to the Quemado and Salado Soil and Water Conservation Districts with a combined total of approximately 4.1 million acres. 39% is Federal land and 61% is private and state land. Majority of all land is considered rangeland or grazed woodlands. This office covers the northern and eastern parts of Catron County, the southern portion of Cibola County and the western portion of Socorro County. Topography is varied with elevations ranging from 4500 feet to 10,000 feet with much of the area above 6,000 feet. Soils vary from deep well drained loams and clays to shallow gravelly to rocky soils on mountain sides. Average rainfall ranges from 10 to 20 inches depending on elevation, with annual precipitation figures varying widely from year to year. Vegetation ranges from warm season grass species in lowland areas to cool season grass species in mountain highlands, common grass species include blue and black gramma to pine associated bunch grasses. The predominant use of land at the present time is still ranching with more and more emphasis placed on hunting as a source of income. There is also a component of land being sold as subdivisions in the areas that contain suitable numbers of tree species.

The Socorro Field Office serves the Socorro Soil and Water Conservation District which is located close to the geographic middle of New Mexico. The great majority of the irrigated land lies within the floodplain of the Rio Grande. Virtually, all this land is surface irrigated from the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District canals and ditches. One legally recognized Acequia is located on the East side of the Rio Grande and south of US-60. Also, all these lands are also surface irrigated from a main ditch which is owned and maintained by the respective Acequia members. There are several vineyards located outside of the floodplain which are drip irrigated. Approximately 75% of the irrigated land is considered hay land. Irrigated pasture, chili, oats, and corn are some of the other crops grown on the irrigated lands. All the irrigated land is in the Chihuahua Desert Shrub Common Resource Area. The field office has over 1 million acres of



native grazing lands. Land ownership is characterized by intermingled deeded, state, and federal lands. Common Resource Areas represented by grazing lands within the District include Upper Rio Grande Rift Valley, Chihuahua Desert Shrub, Colorado Plateau Mixed Grass Plains, and the Central New Mexico Highlands.

The Carrizozo Field Office is located in the western and southern portions of Lincoln County and the eastern portion of Socorro County in south-central New Mexico. The field office serves the Carrizozo and Upper Hondo SWCD located in Carrizozo and Capitan respectively. The field office area is comprised primarily of native grazing lands that are open grasslands on the rolling plains, and juniper-pinion savannah on the toe slopes and valleys of the Capitan, Jicarilla, and White Mountains. The mountain slopes are covered with Ponderosa pine and mixed conifer primarily on Lincoln National Forest lands, approximately 4,500 acres is irrigated pasture and orchards adjacent to the Hondo, Ruidoso and Bonito Rivers. Most of the agricultural land use in Lincoln County is cow/calf ranches.

Local Work Group meetings

The Local Work Group (LWG) met at three in-person meetings: Datil Field Office held their meeting on September 15, 2022, Socorro Field Office held theirs September 22, 2022, Carrizozo held theirs September 27, 2022. Invitations were sent to Federal, State and County agencies, and local ranchers and farmers. The meeting was mostly attended by representatives of partner agencies such as FSA, NMACD, USFS, and SWCD.

CSP, CIG, ACEP

There weren't any recommendations for the CSP, CIG, or ACEP program. This part of the LWG meeting discussion was more informative about the general program criteria.

Program Outreach

Potential outreach and workshop topics were discussed at the LWG meeting. It was suggested by NMACD member to prioritize areas during RCPP outreach when guidance will be released. Also, LWGs recommended to have a Soil Health training before the irrigation season.



Priority Resource Concerns

Priority resource concerns were identified by the LWG for each land use type for FY 2022. LWG didn't have any recommendation for FY 2023, so the resource concerns remain the same.

- **Animals**

- Grazing Land and Forested

- Livestock Production Limitation – Inadequate livestock water
 - CART=50%
 - Livestock Production Limitation – Inadequate feed and forage
 - CART= 50%

- **Water**

- Irrigated Cropland/Pastureland

- Excessive/Insufficient Water – Inefficient use of irrigation water
 - CART= 80%
 - Water Quality Degradation – Excess nutrients in surface and ground water
 - CART= 20%

- Grazing Land

- Water Quality Degradation – Excessive sediment in surface waters
 - CART=100 %

- Animal Feeding Operation/Confined Animal Feeding Operation (AFO/CAFO)

- Water Quality Degradation – Excessive nutrients in surface and ground water
 - CART= 100%

- **Soil**

- Irrigated Cropland/Pastureland

- Soil Erosion – Sheet, rill, and wind erosion
 - CART= 100%

- Grazing Land and Forested

- Soil Erosion – Sheet, rill and wind erosion
 - CART= 50%



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- Soil Erosion – Concentrated flow erosion
 - CART= 50%
- **Plant**
 - Irrigated Cropland/Pastureland
 - Degraded Plant Condition – Undesirable plant productivity and health
 - CART= 50%
 - Degraded Plant Condition – Excessive plant pest pressure
 - CART= 50%
 - Grazing Land and Forested
 - Degraded Plant Condition – Excessive plant pest pressure
 - CART= 50%
 - Degraded Plant Condition – Inadequate structure and composition
 - CART= 50%
- **Energy**
 - Inefficient Energy Use: Ranching practices and field operations
 - CART= 50%

Team Sub Accounts and Funding Considerations

- Forested –25 %
- Grazing land – 50%
- Irrigated Cropland/Pastureland – 20%
- AFO/CAFO – 5%

These percentages may vary depending on the actual amount of money needed to fully fund the highest-ranking forest, grazing lands, irrigated, or AFO/CAFO contracts.

Payment Percentage Rates

The LWG meeting participants suggested we do not pursue caps to any practice at this time. The LWG agreed to utilize the financial assistance rate factors established by NRCS.



Screening Criteria

The LWG decided to not utilize a screening tool for applications.

Ranking Questions

The LWG reviewed all the ranking questions, and no recommendations were made for any of the land use.