

Ranking Criteria for FY2024 ACEP WRE Applications in Pennsylvania

Section: Economic Considerations		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
Total Easement Restoration Cost	Total restoration cost is less than 50% of the total easement value	10
	Total restoration cost is between 50-80% of the total easement value	5
	Total restoration cost is greater than or equal to 80% of the total easement value	0
Percentage of noxious and/or invasive species	Less than 20% of the vegetation in the total easement area is noxious and/or invasive	10
	21-50% of the vegetation in the total easement area is noxious and/or invasive	5
	Greater than 50% of the vegetation in the total easement area is noxious and/or invasive	0
Operation and maintenance costs	Offered acreage/Planned restoration requires no embankments or mechanical structures	10
	Offered acreage/Planned restoration requires an embankment	5
	Offered acreage/Planned restoration requires mechanical structures	0
Permitting	YES	0
	NO	20
Type of Proposed Easement	Permanent Easement	20
	30-year Easement	0
Total Easement Enrollment Size	Proposed enrollment is 50 acres or larger	10
	Proposed enrollment is 20-49 acres	5
	Proposed enrollment is 10-24 acres	2
Is the applicant a covered producer participating in the CRP Transition Incentives Program (CRP-TIP) and NRCS is evaluating the assessment during the two-year period covered by the CRP-1R? OR Land that is currently enrolled in CRP in a contract that is set to expire within 1 year from the application date OR land under a CRP contract that is in transition to a covered farmer or rancher pursuant to 16 U.S.C. 3835(f) and such land is farmed wetland and adjoining land that has highest wetland functions and values and is likely to return to production after the land leaves CRP.	YES	5
	NO	0

Section: Easement Offer Configuration		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
Purpose of Enrollment Offer Adjacent Acreage	Adjacent acres directly benefit the hydrology of the restoration area	10
	Adjacent acres directly benefit Threatened and Endangered Species within the restoration area	7
	Adjacent acres connect offer of enrollment to a permanently protected area	4
	Adjacent acres create a simpler, more manageable easement boundary	4
Easement Offer Boundary Configuration	Easement offer boundary is simple with few corners, angles, and turns, creating an easily managed polygon	10
	Easement offer boundary is moderately simple with minimal corners, angles and turns, creating a moderate to manage polygon	5
	Easement offer boundary is complicated with multiple corners, angles and turns, creating a difficult to manage polygon	0
Easement Offer Parcel Configuration	Easement offer parcel is one contiguous block of land with no right-of-ways	10
	Easement offer parcel is one contiguous block of land with right-of-ways	5
	Easement offer parcel is divided by non-eligible acreage, right-of-ways, non-eligible CRP, or other area not controlled by the landowner	2
	Easement offer parcel is manipulated by landowner, is cut-up, divided among eligible acreage, or separated by cut-outs or in-holdings	0

Section: Eligibility Criteria Score		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
Eligible Acres Contain: (Select ALL that apply based on Interdisciplinary Team Report)	Prior Converted (PC) hydric soil acres	25
	Farmed Wetland (FW) hydric soil acres	15
	Farmed Wetland Pasture (FWP) hydric soil acres	10
	Eligible CRP/CREP	5
	Wetland (W) farmed under natural conditions	5
	Degraded Wetlands (which WILL BE restored)	5
	Riparian Links (greater than 300' with photo documentation)	5

Section: Habitat		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
Threatened , Endangered, and Special Concern Species (maintain rare native species)	PNDI shows Threatened, Endangered, or Special Concern Species	15
	PNDI shows no Threatened, Endangered, or Special Concern Species	0
Aquatic Life Use	Offered acres contain a Wild and Scenic River of Exceptional Value Stream	15
	Offered acres contain a stream that outlets directly into a Wild and Scenic River or Exceptional Value Stream	7
	Offered acres contain a High Quality Stream (HQ-CWFD, TSF, or WWF)	15
	Offered acres contain a stream that outlets directly into a High Quality Stream (HQ-CWFD, TSF, or WWF)	7

Section: Restoration of Hydrology (50% of Environmental Benefit Points)		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
Hydric Soils	Restoration methods restore hydric soils on greater than 70% of the restoration area	50
	Restoration methods restore hydric soils on 60-69% of the restoration area	25
	Restoration methods restore hydric soils on 50-59% of the restoration area	10
	Restoration methods restore hydric soils on less than 50% of the restoration area	0
Dominant Land Use of the Offered Acreage within the Restoration Area	Row crops produced within the last three years	50
	Hay produced within the last three years	25
	Acres used as pasture within the last three years	10
	No row crop, hay, or pasture within the last three years	0
	Forest	0

Section: Location		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
Proximity to designated local, state, or Federal wildlife habitat/conservation, or forest area of significance	Project is directly adjacent to a designated local, state, or Federal wildlife habitat/conservation, or forest area of significance	10
	Project is within five miles of a designated local, state, or Federal wildlife habitat/conservation, or forest area of significance	5
	Project is greater than five miles from a designated local, state, or Federal wildlife habitat/conservation, or forest area of significance	0
Proximity and Connectivity to Permanently Protected Areas	Project is directly adjacent to an existing permanently protected area	25
	Project is within five miles of an existing permanently protected area	5
	Project is greater than five miles away from an existing permanently protected area	0

Section: Location		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
Proximity to existing wetlands, streams, or surface waters	Offered acres connect existing wetlands, streams, or surface waters	10
	Offered acres are adjacent to existing wetlands, streams, or surface waters	5
	Offered acres are within one mile of existing wetlands, streams, or surface waters	2
	Offered acres are greater than one mile from existing wetlands, streams, or surface waters	0
Offered acres are located within a Pennsylvania WRE Priority Area	YES	25
	NO	0