



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Programs Update

Nevada State Technical Advisory
Committee Meeting
May 19, 2025



FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

Programs Information for 2025

- ActNow Overview
- Grasslands of Special Environmental Significance
- Local Work Groups – Feed back that will affect ranking.
- Priority Practices Review
- FY25 Spending Report by fundpool

ACT NOW



ACT NOW - Refresher

- Conservation Program Manual(CPM) 530.37 ACT NOW
 - A. ACT NOW allows NRCS to approve and obligate a ranked application in a designated ranking pool when an application meets or exceeds a state-determined minimum ranking score without waiting until the NRCS field office ranks all applications in the ranking pool.
 - B. States may designate or develop specific ranking pools for ACT NOW.

FY25 ACT NOW-NV Practices

Practice Code	Practice Name
314	Brush Management
315	Herbaceous Weed Treatment
327	Conservation Cover
328	Conservation Crop Rotation
329	Residue and Tillage Management, No Till
340	Cover Crop
345	Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till
391	Riparian Forest Buffer
422	Hedgerow Planting
512	Pasture and Hay Planting
550	Range Planting
612	Tree/Shrub Establishment

In FY25 NRCS NV decided to offer the ActNow program for the practices listed on this slide. These practices are typically time sensitive/need to be implemented during a certain season. This results in them being delayed or unfeasible for them to be installed if the contracting is limited to our typical timelines. By limiting the ActNow program to these practices we have a lower number of applications/financial demand and we have lowered our threshold score to 1 point. This allows all eligible projects to be funded.

For applications that include the practices listed, as well as other unrelated projects, the application will be ranked in multiple fundpools. There is a potential that only the practices on the application that are also listed on this slide are selected for funding, and the other unrelated practices are not selected for funding in the fundpool that they were ranked in.

NRCS-NV created an ActNow fundpool for catastrophic events in the event a catastrophic event occurs in NV and effects a high number of potential program participants. We have yet to specify which practices, land units, and locations will be included as we have yet to have a catastrophic event to occur this FY. It is also unlikely that we will be able to offer one this FY unless we are granted additional funds as we have spent almost all of our initial allocation.

Grasslands of Special Significance



Background Information

- The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) Grasslands of Special Environmental Significance (GSS) areas are eligible for an **increased Federal Share** for enrollment of GSS land that **protects the long-term grazing uses and related conservation values on** eligible private range and pasture lands.
- This program emphasizes support of grazing operations, maintaining and improving **plant and animal biodiversity, and protecting grasslands and shrublands under the threat of conversion** to cropping, urban development, and other non-grazing uses.

Policy Information

- Conservation Programs Manual (CPM) Title 440.528.33 B(3)(iii)
- (iii) Grassland of special environmental significance, which is defined in 7 CFR Section 1468.3 as grasslands that contain little or no noxious or invasive species, as designated or defined by State or Federal law; are subject to the threat of conversion to nongrassland uses or fragmentation; and the land is—
 - • **Rangeland, pastureland, shrubland, or wet meadows on which the vegetation is dominated by native grasses, grass-like plants, shrubs, or forbs, or is improved, naturalized pastureland, rangeland, or wet meadows.**
 - • And the land provides, or could provide, habitat for threatened or endangered species or at-risk species, protects sensitive or declining native prairie or grassland types or grasslands buffering wetlands, or provides protection of **highly sensitive natural resources as identified by the State conservationist**, in consultation with the State technical committee.

Current Area of GSS in NV

- **Focal species for Nevada include;** Greater Sage-grouse, Bi-state Sage- grouse, Southwest Willow Flycatcher, Yellow Billed Cuckoo, Desert Tortoise, Columbia Spotted Frog, Lahontan Cutthroat Trout, and potentially other species as approved by the NRCS Nevada State Biologist.

Ranking Points for GSS Properties

Habitat Values on the Offered Property (choose only one)

Nevada Department of Wildlife or USFWS designated Essential/Irreplaceable or Core habitats for any of the above named species. (65 POINTS)

Nevada Department of Wildlife or USFWS designated Important or Priority habitats for any of the above named species. (32.5 POINTS)

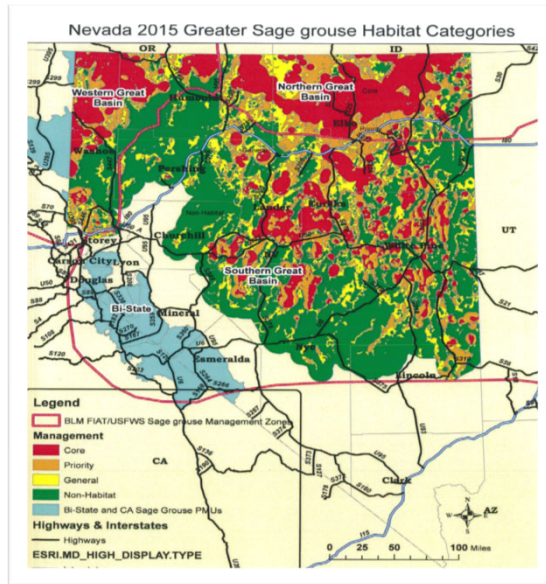
Nevada Department of Wildlife or USFWS designated Suitable or General habitats for any of the above named species. (15 POINTS)

Habitat within or adjacent to Nevada Department of Wildlife or USFWS designated Suitable or General habitats for any of the above named species. (7.5 POINTS)

Habitats outside of Nevada Department of Wildlife or USFWS designated Suitable or General habitats for any of the above named species. (0 POINTS)

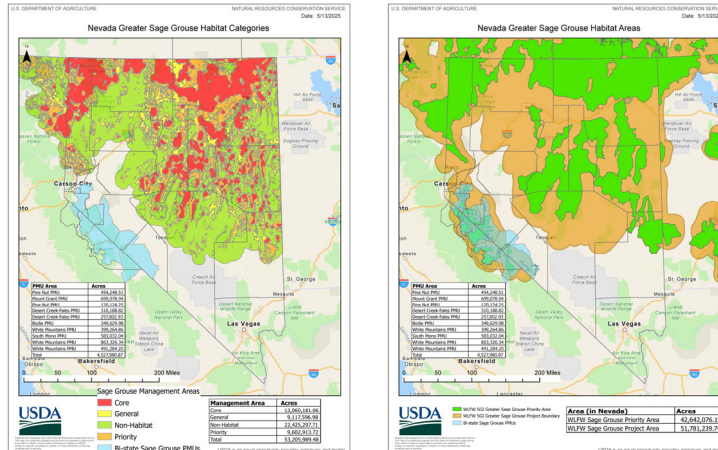
This question has been used since 2016 to help NRCS-NV prioritize easement applications that include higher value habitat types.

MAP to Support 2015 - 2022



This map has been used to help support answers to the question on the above slide.

Maps to Support FY 2025



These 2 maps are updated. The map on the left uses shapefiles from Nevada Department of Wildlife. These shapefiles have been the same since 2015. The map on the right is from the 'Working Lands for Wildlife' Program. A USDA-NRCS program. These maps will help support answering the question listed in the previous slide.

Areas Outside of Map

- If an area is outside of the map defined it is considered ineligible unless a species of concern can be identified (in conjunction with NRCS State Biologist) and all other eligibility criteria is met.

If the application falls outside of the areas mapped, or would like to focus on species other than Sage Grouse, we can work with the landowner and partner agency to determine what value of habitat that application would be providing for that specific species.

FY25 Decisions

- NRCS-NV would like to continue to proceed with the GSS definition that has been approved since at least 2016.
- NRCS-NV would like to update the 'habitat' map with the maps in the previous slides.
- STAC will need to approve along with NV-State Conservationist.

Local Work Group Feedback Effect on Ranking



How Ranking Pools Work.

Ranking Scores are a weighted average of

- **Priority Resource Priorities**
- **Program Priorities**
- Planned Practice Effects
- Vulnerability Score
- Efficiency Score

Ranking scores are a weighted average of the five bullets above. The two bullets in bold (Priority Resource Concerns and Program Priorities) are the components that can be adjusted based on input from LWG's, or other groups.

What feedback can influence Ranking Scores?

- Priority Resource Concerns

This is the easiest way LWG's and TAC can influence fund-pools.

NRCS software splits Resource Concerns into Resource Concern Categories.

Please work with State Programs Staff and/or your local Field Office when submitting feedback to ensure that we help translate to NRCS speak.

If you are interested in learning more about this NRCS-NV State Programs Staff is available to provide training to you as an individual or any group that you would like us to present to.

Default Resource Concern 'Points'

Categories			
Category	Min %	Default %	Max %
Air quality emissions	0	5	100
Aquatic habitat	0	5	100
Concentrated erosion	0	10	100
Degraded plant condition	0	5	100
Field pesticide loss	0	5	100
Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss	0	5	100
Fire management	0	5	100
Inefficient energy use	0	5	100
Livestock production limitation	0	5	100
Pest pressure	0	5	100
Salt losses to water	0	5	100

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Categories			
Category	Min %	Default %	Max %
Soil quality limitations	0	5	100
Source water depletion	0	10	100
Storage and handling of pollutants	0	5	100
Terrestrial habitat	0	5	100
Weather resilience	0	5	100
Wind and water erosion	0	10	100

Ranking Pool Report

The above slide shows the default values we receive from national. As you can see there is an almost equal distribution of “weight” for each resource concern category.

Lincoln County Priority Resource Concerns

Categories			
Category	Min %	Default %	Max %
Air quality emissions	0	--	100
Aquatic habitat	0	--	100
Concentrated erosion	0	--	100
Degraded plant condition	0	25	100
Field pesticide loss	0	--	100
Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss	0	--	100
Fire management	0	--	100
Inefficient energy use	0	--	100
Livestock production limitation	0	25	100
Pest pressure	0	20	100
Salt losses to water	0	--	100

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Ranking Pool Report

Categories			
Category	Min %	Default %	Max %
Soil quality limitations	0	20	100
Source water depletion	0	--	100
Storage and handling of pollutants	0	--	100
Terrestrial habitat	0	10	100
Weather resilience	0	--	100
Wind and water erosion	0	--	100

This slide shows adjustments NRCS-NV was able to make to the LWG fund pool that Lincoln County is a part of based off of feedback we received from them. Their LWG letter us listed 1.) Livestock and Wildlife Water Availability – reflected above as Livestock Production Limitation. 2.) Invasive Species including Plant Pests, weeds, and Aquatics – this is reflected above on Pest Pressure. 3.) Degraded Plant Condition-Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health – this is reflected above as Degraded Plant Condition. 4.) Human Concerns – There is no where on the Priority Resource categories above to include this but there are places on the fundpool questions this was reflected, and of course this is accounted for in the planning process. 5.) Habitat degradation and Loss and Organic Matter Depletion – reflected above on Soil Quality Limitations and Terrestrial habitat.

Priority Resource Concern Effect on Ranking Score

Practices	Resource Concerns Addressed	Ranking Score with Template RC's	Ranking Scores with Lincoln County PRC's	Score Increase
314	Plant Productivity and Health	23.265	34.265	11
516, 533, 614	Inadequate Livestock water quantity, quality and Distribution	26.841	38.399	12.558
430	Inefficient Irrigation Water Use	30.774	37.989	7.215

This slide shows the ranking totals for projects in this fundpool using the national template, which NRCS-NV has to use when we do not receive feedback from LWG's, and the ranking totals for the same projects after the feedback from Lincoln County was implemented. As you can see, the livestock water project was originally had the second most ranking points and now has the most ranking points. The 314-brush management practice received 7 less ranking points than the irrigation pipeline project originally, but received only 3.7 fewer points after the feedback was implemented.

The above shows differences only implementing feedback on the priority resource concern categories. An even greater difference can be made in each LWG if feedback on the ranking questions is provided.

It is important to discuss your input with your DC, or other NRCS staff, to help translate the feedback into NRCS speak and ensure that your feedback is implemented as intended.

Deadline to Provide Input on Priority Resource Concerns 9/1/25

- State Office Deadlines: Please get your feedback to your Local Field Office by **September 1** so we can have your Priority Resource Concerns updated for your Local Work Group fundpool.

It is important to provide this feedback to make sure that the projects that you think should be funded in your area are being funded. Without the feedback provided by your Local Work Group, NRCS-NV will use national templates and the ranking points will not reflect your Local Work Group's priorities.

Priority Practices Revisited



FY25 Priority Practices

Practice Code	Practice Name
314	Brush Management
315	Herbaceous Weed Treatment
340	Cover Crop
449	Irrigation Water Management
516	Livestock Pipeline
528	Prescribed Grazing
533	Pumping Plant
550	Range Planting
612	Tree/Shrub Establishment
614	Watering Facility

This is NRCS Nevada’s updated priority practice list. These practices received the increased payment rate regardless of HU status.

Feedback received at the June STAC meeting included to increase the list (10 maximum) and to add practices that are frequently used in Nevada.

We also received feedback to include practices that may be utilized by small and urban producers. We identified tree/shrub planting as the practice that had been requested and utilized the most for the program participants.

Priority Practice Discussion 2024

Practice code and name	Land Use	# Of Contracts
315 - Herbaceous Weed treatment	All but cropland	16
340 - Cover Crop	All	11
394 - firebreak	All	1
449 - irrigation water management	All currently irrigated land	129
561 - Heavy Use Area Protection	All	zero
590 - nutrient management	cropland, pasture	1
595 - Pest mgmt Cons system (IPM)	All where pests are managed	zero

This slide is a reminder of how we arrived at the practice list on the previous slide. This slide shows a list of NRCS-NV's priority practice list from 2024, the land uses they can be applied on, and the number of contracts that included at least one instance of this practice. We wanted to increase the list of practices from 7 to 10 (max allowed by policy). We also wanted to focus on practices that used frequently in the state.

Priority Practice Discussion 2024

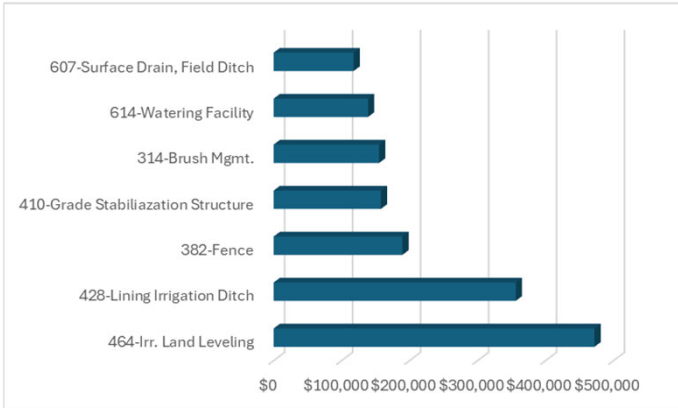
Practice Code and Name	Land Use	# of Contracts
315-Herbaceous Weed Treatment	All but cropland	16
314-Brush Management	All but cropland	30
340-Cover Crop	All	11
449-Irrigation Water Management	All irrigated	129
516-Livestock Pipeline	All but cropland	62
528-Prescribed Grazing	All where grazing/browsing occur	23
533-Pumping Plant	All	77
550-Range Planting	All but cropland	18
612-tree and shrub establishment	All	1
614-Watering Facility	All where livestock or wildlife occur	62

This slide shows the practices STAC approved for FY2025, their applicable land uses, and the number of contracts that included at least one instance of the practice code.

As you can see we included a number of practices that were used more frequently across the state. There was a large emphasis on livestock water and vegetation management.

Some practices were included because we wanted to incentivize their usage. For example 612 Tree and Shrub establishment was included as a way to provide more funds to potential Urban Ag projects; 340 cover crop and 550 range planting were included to try and increase the adoption of these practices. The frequency of usage for these practice codes is about the same for FY25.

Top EQIP Practices in Fiscal Year 2024

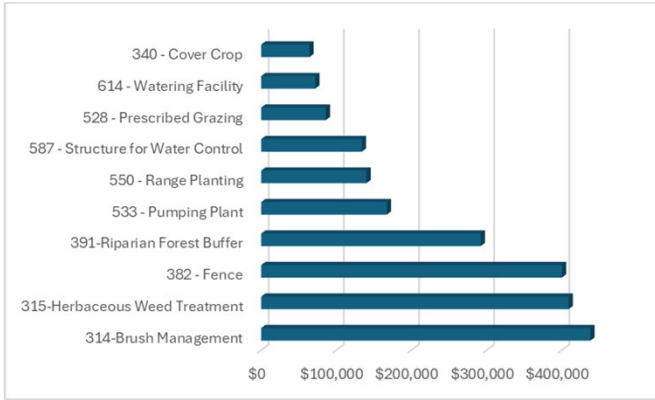


Not Listed:

- **430-Irrigation Pipeline**
 - \$2.35 million
- **587-Structure for Water Control**
 - \$980,000
- **442-Sprinkler System**
 - \$951,000

The graph shows EQIP spending by practice for the top 10 practices in Nevada for FY24. Practice 430 Irrigation Pipeline, 587 structure for water control, and 442 Sprinkler System are not included on the graph because their large size makes the smaller practices hard to see on the graph. We did not discuss dollar amount contracted in FY24 during the priority practice discussion but I wanted to share with you now.

Top EQIP-IRA Practices Fiscal Year 24



Not Listed:

- **430-Irrigation Pipeline**
 - \$2.43 million
- **442-Sprinkler System**
 - \$848,000

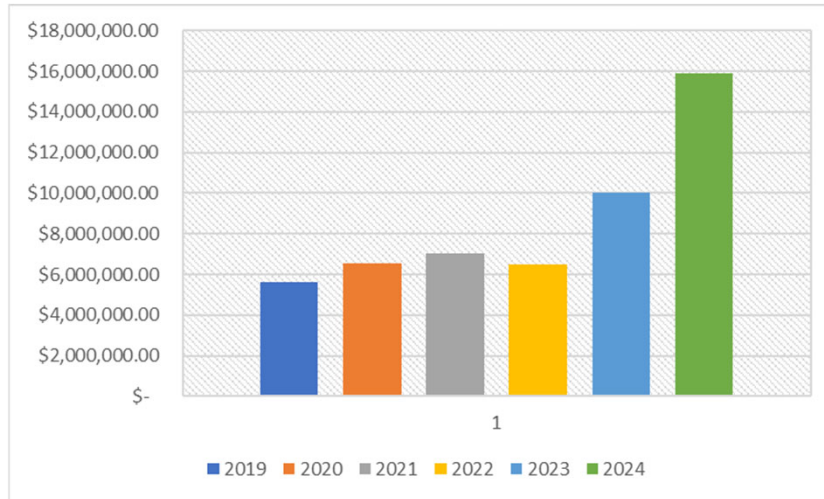
The graph shows EQIIRA spending by practice for the top 10 practices in Nevada for FY24. Practice 430 Irrigation Pipeline and 442 Sprinkler System are not included on the graph because their large size makes the smaller practices hard to see on the graph. We did not discuss dollar amount contracted in previous conversations about priority practice list but I wanted to share this information with you now.

Would the STAC like to keep the Priority Practice list the same for FY26 or would you like to adjust?

FY 25 Spending Report and Fundpool Review



Total Obligation 2019 - 2024



This graph shows NRCS-Nevada’s total obligations from 2019 to 2024. NRCS Nevada increased by 60% from FY23 to FY24. In FY25 we received \$15.8 million in EQIP funds and to date we have pre-approved (selected for funding) \$13.6 million in projects. We anticipate spending the \$15.8 million in EQIP funds, as well as \$1.5 million in CSP, and approximately \$5.5 million in ACEP in FY 25. This spending will exceed FY24 spending by approximately \$7 million. This is an approximately 40% increase from FY24 to FY25.

FY24 Spending and FY25 Spending so far- National and State Fundpools

Account (fundpool)	Amount	Account	Amount
General EQIP (total)	\$7,069,671	General EQIP (total)	\$15,855,230
National Air Quality	Not Available	National Air Quality	\$1,902,190
National Water Quality	\$85,833	National Water Quality	\$0
Water Smart - TCID	\$660,444	WaterSmart - TCID	\$1,373,916
Sage Grouse Initiative	\$0	Sage-Grouse Initiative	\$692,866
Tribes	\$322,921	Tribes	1,397,069
ActNow EQIP	Not Available	ActNow EQIP	\$400,556
Livestock	\$0	Livestock	\$153,432
Water Mgmt. Entities	\$599,326	Water Mgmt. Entities	\$0
High Tunnels	\$0	High Tunnels	\$6,368
Source Water Initiative	\$652,593	Source Water Initiative	\$905,005
Beginning Farmer/Rancher	\$332,084	Beginning Farmer/Rancher	\$707,456
Socially Disadvantaged	\$132,027	Socially Disadvantaged	\$123,836

These charts show the difference in funds spent in national and state fundpools in NV from FY24 to FY25.

Some of these dollar amounts are slightly misleading due to the fact that IRA funds were available in FY24 and they are currently not available in FY25. Fundpools such as Sage Grouse Initiative and Livestock were largely funded by IRA in FY24. As well as many projects that would have otherwise been eligible for the “Tribes” fundpool.

Does STAC want to decrease the amount of fundpools we have listed above? Do we want to make new ones? Are there fundpools you would like us to allocate a larger percentage of funds to?

Fundpools that NRCS-NV cannot take from (cannot use in other fundpools) include National Air Quality (tractors); National Water Quality; Water Smart-TCID; and Sage Grouse initiative. The fundpools are nationally lead, funds received for these fundpools can only be used in these fundpools. The other fundpools can be increased or reduced within policy guidelines.

FY24 Spending and FY25 Spending so far- LWG Fundpools

Account	Amonut	Account	Amount
General EQIP (total)	\$7,069,670	General EQIP (total)	\$15,855,230
Elko LWG	\$609,714	Elko LWG	\$925,110
Ely LWG	\$357,800	Ely LWG	\$932,000
Fallon LWG	\$495,152	Fallon LWG	\$232,444
Las Vegas LWG	\$339,933	Las Vegas LWG	\$1,019,598
Lovelock LWG	\$599,927	Lovelock LWG	\$305,000
Minden LWG	\$465,392	Minden LWG	\$788, 601
Winnemucca LWG	\$612,520	Winnemucca LWG	\$834,106
Yerington LWG	\$804,004	Yerington LWG	\$1,093,944
Urban Ag Fundpool	Not Availabile	Urban Ag Fundpool	\$5,250

FAR

Center

This slide shows the amount of spending in LWG fundpools in FY24 and the amount of pre-approved applications in each LWG fundpool so far in FY25. It was NRCS-NV’s goal to allocate as much funds as possible to LWG fundpools. This gives more controls to LWG’s in terms of what types of projects are funded across the state.

All LWG’s were initially allocated \$925,000 in FY 25. More than what was requested in any LWG in FY24. Several LWG fundpools saw increases in allocation after applications were ranked. The extra funds were needed in order to fund the next highest application. Lovelock will not be having a batch 2; Fallon and Minden are the only LWG fundpools that will have a batch 2.

These LWG fundpools do not represent all funding for each field office. For example; many projects in Fallon are funded in the WaterSmart-TCID fundpool from the previous slide. This fundpool is limited to Truckee Carson Irrigation District producers. Many applications in the Minden and Yerington office are funded by the Source Water Initiative Fundpool shown on the previous slide. Many applications from the Winnemucca and Elko office were funded in the ‘tribes’ fundpool from the previous slide.

Deadlines for Applications

- **CSP Application Deadline – May 23, 2025**
- **EQIP Application Deadline – June 13, 2025**

4 fund-pools will have a FY25 Batch 2 –

Minden LWG, Fallon LWG, National Water Quality, and WaterSmart-TCID

- **FY26 Applications** – Feel free to submit now. Please inform your field office you are aware there are no more funding opportunities this FY but want to submit now.

Staff may not start working on your project right away but the application deadline has been met.

For more information

- Talk to your local office
- NRCS Nevada Website
 - Use the QR Code or visit <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/nevada>
- Email SM.NRCS.NV.INFO@usda.gov



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