

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Application Ranking Summary
National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)
Fiscal Year 2017 EQIP 2014
National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
<p>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.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	250 Point(s)
<p>Water Quality Degradation – Will the proposed project improve water quality by: (select all that apply)</p>	
<p>2. a. Implementing the practices in a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP)?</p>	15 Point(s)
<p>2. b. Implementing the practices in a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)?</p>	10 Point(s)
<p>2. c. Reducing impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides on land adjoining a designated “impaired water body” (TMDL, 303d listed waterbody, or other State designation)?</p>	10 Point(s)
<p>2. d. Reducing the impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides in a “non-impaired water body”?</p>	10 Point(s)
<p>2. e. Implementing practices that improve water quality through animal mortality and carcass management?</p>	10 Point(s)
<p>Water Conservation – Will the proposed project conserve water by: (select all that apply)</p>	
<p>3. a. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce aquifer overdraft.</p>	15 Point(s)
<p>3. b. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce on-farm water use?</p>	10 Point(s)
<p>3. c. Implementing practices in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?</p>	10 Point(s)
<p>3. d. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm water use as a result of changing to crops with lower water consumptive use, the rotation of crops, or the modification of cultural operations?</p>	10 Point(s)
<p>Air Quality - Will the proposed project improve air quality by: (select all that apply)</p>	

Issue Questions	Responses
4. a. Meeting on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	10 Point(s)
4. b. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm emissions of particulate matter (PM2.5, PM10)?	10 Point(s)
4. c. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm generated greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), and nitrous oxide (N2O)?	10 Point(s)
4. d. Implementing practices that increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	10 Point(s)
Soil Health:– Will the proposed project improve soil health by: (select all that apply)	
5. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil “T”)?	10 Point(s)
5. b. Increasing organic matter and carbon content, and improving soil tilth and structure?	10 Point(s)
Wildlife Habitat – Will the proposed project improve wildlife habitat by: (select all that apply)	
6. a. Implementing practices benefitting threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern.	10 Point(s)
6. b. Implementing practices that retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or other set-aside program?	10 Point(s)
6. c. Implementing practices benefitting honey bee populations or other pollinators?	10 Point(s)
6. d. Implementing land-based practices that improve habitat for aquatic wildlife?	10 Point(s)
Plant and Animal Communities: Will the proposed project improve plant and animal communities by: (select all that apply)	
7. a. Implementing practices that result in the management control of noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10 Point(s)
7. b. Implementing practice in an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM)?	10 Point(s)
Energy Conservation– Will the proposed project reduce energy use by: (select all that apply)	
8. a. Reducing on-farm energy consumption?	10 Point(s)
8. b. Implementing practice(s) identified in an approved AgEMP or energy audit, which meet ASABE S612 criteria?	10 Point(s)
Business Lines – Will the practices to be scheduled in the “EQIP Plan of Operations” result in:	
9. a. Enhancement of existing conservation practice(s) or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is received?	10 Point(s)

Issue Questions	Responses
State Issues Addressed	
Issue Questions	Responses
<p>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.</p>	
<p>1. a. Is the program application for development of a TSP-prepared 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.</p>	400 Point(s)
Water Quality – EPA Watersheds:	
<p>2. a. 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 or phosphorous) and on the EPA 303(d) list, or listed as impaired with a TMDL in place and therefore not on the 303(d) list, or specified as a critical stream or water body authorized by the Regional Conservationist?</p>	100 Point(s)
Geographic Impacts:	
<p>3. a. Are more than 75 percent of the acres treated i. Located within a NWQI watershed AND ii. Do they have at least one core conservation practice planned on them?</p>	125 Point(s)
Collaborative Efforts:	
<p>4. a. Are core conservation practices planned for the applicant’s treated acres within an existing non-USDA water quality project area addressing the same or similar pollutants?</p>	75 Point(s)
Effort to Address Watershed Impairments:	
<p>5. a. Does this program application include the implementation of a system of conservation practices which address the NWQI primary resource concerns? (Water quality degradation: 1) Nutrients in surface water; 2) Excessive Sediment in Surface Water; 3) Excess pathogens and chemicals from manure, biosolids or compost applications in surface water)</p>	50 Point(s)
High Risk Soils:	
<p>6. a. 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)?</p>	50 Point(s)

Local Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
Issue Questions	Responses
1. If this application is for a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), give the application the maximum number of points for local ranking questions and do not answer any further local ranking questions.	250 Point(s)
2. Will this application result in a practice being implemented to reduce erosion (wind or water) on cropland?	50 Point(s)
3. Will this application result in the development and implementation of a nutrient management plan?	60 Point(s)
4. Will this application result in the development and implementation of an integrated pest management plan?	25 Point(s)
5. Will this application address soil quality concerns including compaction, maintaining or increasing organic matter (documented by RUSLE2), or carbon sequestration?	40 Point(s)
6. Will this application result in implementation of one of the following practices? cover crop, residue management, filter strip, grassed waterway, windbreak, water and sediment control basin, grade stabilization structure, stream bank protection, vegetative barriers	25 Point(s)
7. Will this application result in all of the following practices being implemented to address soil health and erosion? cover crop and no-till	50 Point(s)