

2011 Environmental Quality Incentive Program Proposal

Albuquerque Field Office

Introduction:

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Albuquerque office works closely with the Ciudad and Coronado Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The following tribal entities are served by the Albuquerque Field Office: Cochiti, Santo Domingo, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Sandia, and the To'hajiilee Chapter of the Navajo Nation.

The Albuquerque Field Office service is located in the west-central part of New Mexico. The Albuquerque Field office is located at 6200 Jefferson NE, Room 125.

The primary crops grown are Hay (both alfalfa and grass), Corn (silage), Sorghum, and Chile. Other crops such as grapes, apples, small vegetables, fruit and pecan trees are becoming more common. The remainder of the agricultural community, for the most part, is involved in ranching and dairy production.

Primary concerns with the agricultural producers in the area include: urban encroachment, irrigation and water issues, and soil erosion problems.

Local Work Group Meetings:

Two Local Work Group meetings were held on September 20 and 27, 2010 to help assist in the creation of this proposal. Representatives from the following groups or entities attended: Farm Service Agency, Bureau of Land Management, Pueblo of Sandia, Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Coronado Soil and Water Conservation District. Other persons attending included producers from the South Valley, Placitas and Bernalillo.

The participants discussed and outlined recommendations for EQIP resource priorities for the coming fiscal year. Other topics of discussion were cost-share rates, ranking, eligible practices, and funding allocations.

Priority Resource Concerns:

Priorities as determined by the Local Work Group are (in order of priority):

1. Water Quality – Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Ground or Surface Water
2. Soil Condition – Organic Matter Depletion
3. Plant Condition – Noxious and Invasive Plants
4. Plant Condition – Threatened and Endangered Plant Species
5. Water Quantity – Inefficient Water Use on Irrigated Land

Funding Considerations:

The LWG considered that the 2011 EQIP funding allocation should target the resource concerns as follows:

Non-Tribal	Tribal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 65% Irrigated land	60% Irrigated
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20% Rangeland	40% Rangeland
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5% Animal Feeding Operations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5% Wildlife	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5% Forestry	

All practices currently in the Field Office Technical Guide with cost associated in the cost docket, including management incentives, will be available for all resource concerns, all land uses. It will be the responsibility of the planner to provide accurate resource management system alternatives to the client. No cost caps were recommended for any practices.

Cost Share Rate Factor:

When rates were discussed with the LWG, the majority preferred cost share rates in the range of 75% (note: this is well below the 90% that the majority of our customers receive), though all understood the final cost share percentages are set at the state level.

Please refer to the FY 2011 EQIP cost list for final practice payment rates.

Ranking Criteria:

Please refer to the ranking criteria links for specific information.

Minimum Points:

The minimum level of points must be reached with the local questions in order for the applicant to be selected for priority funding. The maximum points an applicant can receive under Local Issue Questions is 400 pts.

- Irrigated Crop – 185 points
- Grazing Lands – 200 points
- AFO's – 250 points
- Wildlife – 175 points
- Forested – 150 points

Tie Breaker:

In the event two or more applications receive the same amount of points, ties will be broken by using efficiency points from Farm Irrigation System (FIRS) or (if still a tie or for range) the applicant that addresses the highest priority resource concern per the Local Work Group recommendations.

Watershed Initiative:

Not recommended for fiscal 2011

Small Acreage Initiative:

The vast majority of the producers served by the Albuquerque FO are presently small acreage producers. Therefore no separate initiative is recommended.