

# 2011 Environmental Quality Incentive Program

## Local Work Group Summary for the Deming Field Office

### Introduction

The Deming Field Office is located in Luna County in Southwest New Mexico in the SD-2 Major Land Resource Area. It is bordered on the east by the Las Cruces and the Truth or Consequences Field Offices, on the north by the Truth or Consequences and Silver City Field Offices and on the west by the Silver City and Lordsburg Field Offices. The US – Mexico border is the southern boundary of the Field Office.

Agriculture in the District consists primarily of ranching and irrigated crop production. The ranches are primarily cow-calf operations while chile, cotton, sorghum, wheat, pecans, onions, grapes, silage, and other vegetables are the predominant crops. The only source of water is groundwater from the Mimbres and Nutt-Hockett underground water basins. Both are closed basins. The static water level in the basins has declined significantly since widespread irrigation began in the early 1900's.

### Local Work Group (LWG)

A meeting of the LWG was held on the morning of Tuesday, September 14, 2010. It was explained to the group the purpose of the EQIP program, what their responsibilities were and how their input was important to the overall success of the conservation effort in Luna County. We discussed what they perceived as the resource concerns of Luna County, proposed cost share rates and the practices that they deemed important to landowners. Those in attendance included representatives of the Deming Soil and Water Conservation District, Luna County Farm Service Agency, Black Range Resource Conservation & Development, NM State Land Office, Bureau of Land Management, NM Office of the State Engineer, and Hollis Fuchs, NRCS Area Conservationist.

### Priority Resource Concerns

#### Rangeland

On grazing land the major resource concerns are:

- Plant condition - Noxious or Invasive Brush; Productivity, Health and vigor
- Domestic animals - Inadequate Quantities of Quality of Feed and Forage
- Domestic animals - Inadequate stock water
- Soil condition – Rangeland site stability

#### Irrigated Cropland

The following are priority resource concerns on irrigated cropland:

- Water quantity - Inefficient use on Irrigated Land

- Soil Erosion – Wind and Irrigation induced
- Water Quality – Pesticides in ground water
- Plant Condition – Noxious and Invasive Plants

### **Funding Considerations**

The following land uses, and or resource concerns and the percentages of funding allocations that were considered for cost share in Luna County for Fiscal Year 2011 are as follows:

- Rangeland- Brush Management and Rangeland Improvements- 44%
- Animal Feeding Operations- 1%
- Irrigated Cropland- 55%

### **Cost Share Rate Factor**

The LWG recommended all practice cost share rates to be set at 75% in calculating the 2011 payment scheduler.

The LWG recommended the use of the following payments and caps:

- Up to 3 yr payments for management practices available in the payment scheduler.
- \$100,000 cost share cap on Micro irrigation Practice 441

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

### **Ranking Criteria**

No changes to the ranking criteria development were recommended.

Applications will be prioritized as follows:

#### Irrigated Cropland

Low Priority – scores < 125 points

Medium Priority – scores of 126 – 300 points

High Priority – scores > 300 points

Since low priority application address very few resource concerns this category will not be considered for funding until all medium and high priority applications are funded.

#### Rangeland

Low Priority – score <120 points

Medium Priority – scores of 120-200 points

High Priority – scores > 200

Since low priority applications do not address resource concerns this category will not be considered for funding until all medium and high priority applications are funded.

*Tie Breakers:*

Irrigation: Greatest before and after difference in the FIRS percent efficiency index.

Rangeland: Highest ranking in the "brush" section of the local ranking (Q1-6)

Additional tie breaker for all land uses if needed: The highest average soil erodibility index will be considered a higher priority application.

Please refer to the ranking criteria links for specific information.

### **Watershed Initiatives**

Deming service area will receive two separate CCPI allocations for rangeland, AZ/NM and Goat Ridge.

No additional watershed initiatives will be requested for regular EQIP funds.

### **State Small Acreage Initiative**

Small Acreage Initiative was approved by the Local Work Group. Small farmers were defined as producers with irrigated acres less than 60 ac. and adjusted family income of less than \$60,000.00.

The recommendation was made to apply \$10,000 out of the regular EQIP allocation to be matched by state funds.

This initiative will address irrigated land use only.

The contracted land must be located in Luna County.