

2014 Environmental Quality Incentive Program Proposal

For the Roswell, NM Field Office

Introduction

The Roswell Field Office is located in SE New Mexico in the lower Pecos River valley. It encompasses approximately 100,000 acres of irrigated cropland and a little less than 3,000,000 acres of rangeland. The cropland is irrigated by wells pumping from underground aquifers. All irrigation water is adjudicated, regulated by PVACD, and limited to 3.5 ac ft per acre per annum. There are about 41 AFO operations serviced out of the Roswell office averaging 2500 milking cows each. Rangeland is mostly a patchwork of Federal, State, and private lands intermingled. The average size ranching operation is 18,000 acres.

Local Work Group

A meeting of the Roswell Field Office Local Work Group was held on September 9, 2013 at 11:00 AM at the Farm Bureau Office located at 701 S. Atkinson Roswell, NM 88203. Participants included anyone that has an interest in participating. 11 individuals representing federal, state, and special districts and organizations were present. A copy of the mail out list and the attendees are enclosed or held in the local FO. The LWG consists of local officials of the following entities:

- USDA-NRCS
- USDA-RC&D
- USDA-Farm Service Agency & County Committee
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- NM State Land office
- City of Roswell
- Town of Dexter
- Town of Hagerman
- Pecos Valley Artesian Conservancy District
- Dairy Producers of New Mexico
- Bitter Lakes National Wildlife Refuge
- NM Game and Fish
- NM State Engineer
- NM Environmental Department

Priority Resource Concerns

Primary concerns within the area include rangeland hydrology, irrigation water efficiency, and ground and surface water pollution prevention. Specific resource concerns are listed below in order of priority by land use:

	<u>Resource Concern</u>	<u>Rangeland</u>	<u>Irrigated Cropland</u>	<u>AFO</u>
1.	Water Quantity	1	1	2
2.	Water Quality	2	2	1
3.	Domestic Animals	5	7	6
4.	Plant Condition	3	3	5
5.	Soil Condition	6	4	4
6.	Soil Erosion	4	5	7
7.	Fish & Wildlife	7	8	9
8.	Air Quality	9	6	8
9.	Energy	8	9	3

The top four will be addressed under each land use - minimum

Funding Considerations

Funds received are to be allocated at 50% to rangeland and 40% to irrigated cropland and 10% to AFO's. Contract limits were recommended to be set at \$150,000 total. At least one complete viable project is to be funded in each contract. The group recommended that the payment schedule used for the 2013 program be used again for 2014.

Cost Share Rate Factor

The payment schedule was recommended to be based on the same payment rate as last year according to the updated regional cost list. There was discussion about cost caps for high cost practices, but the group decided not to recommend any cost caps at this time.

Ranking Criteria

No changes to the ranking criteria were recommended, and no additional questions for local issues were submitted.

Watershed initiative: The Local Work Group does not wish to use a portion of their allocation to target resource concerns within their local watershed.

Small Acre Initiative

The LWG decided that they were not in favor of committing a portion of the Field Office allocation for this initiative at this time.