

2014 Environmental Quality Incentive Program Proposal

Silver City Field Office

Introduction:

The Silver City Field Office is located in the town of Silver City, county seat of Grant County, in the southwestern part of New Mexico. The field office provides assistance to the Grant and San Francisco Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) with a combined total of 4.3 million acres. Approximately 35% are state and private lands and 65% federal lands. There are a wide variety of landscapes ranging from 4,400 feet up to 11,000 feet elevation. Annual precipitation ranges from 10 inches in the southern desert to over 20 inches in the mountains. Soils are extremely variable and complex. They range from deep loamy soils in the two major river valleys and broad alluvial slopes to shallow rocky soils in the foothills and mountains. Vegetation ranges from the black grama, tobosa, dropseeds, yucca, Mormon tea, and mesquite. Cropland consists of mostly irrigated pastureland with some small vegetable farmers. The district incorporates desert grasslands sites up to ponderosa pine, piñon ricegrass, mountain brome and mountain muhly of the ponderosa pine type. The present economy of the area is mostly based on mining with less emphasis logging activities of the past.

Local Work Group:

The Grant and San Francisco Soil & Water Conservation Districts held a combined Local Work Group Meeting September 12, 2013, at the Silver City Field Office located at 3082 32nd Street Bypass Suite C, Silver City, NM. Invitations were sent out to federal, state, and local agencies. The meeting was also announced through media. Five participants were in attendance and provided input in developing the FY 2014 EQIP plan. Representatives from the, Grant SWCD, New Mexico Forestry Division, and other NRCS field offices had the opportunity to make suggestions to the District Conservationist.

Priority Resource Concerns:

Rangeland resource concerns:

Animals – Inadequate stock water for both wildlife and domestic animals, and inadequate cover/shelter

Soil Condition - Sheet and Rill erosion, Wind erosion, gulley erosion

Plant Condition – Undesireable plant productivity and health

Plant Condition- Excessive plant pest pressure

Irrigated Land resource concerns:

Water Quantity – Inefficient water use on irrigated lands.

Plant Condition –Excessive plant pest pressure

Water Quality – Excessive sediment in surface water, Elevated water temperatures, excessive nutrients in surface and ground water.

Forest Land resource concerns:

Plant Condition – Inadequate structure and composition

Water Quality – Excessive Suspended Sediment and Turbidity in Surface Water.

Animal – Inadequate Cover/Shelter, Inadequate Food and Water.

The local work group does not intend to limit landowners from addressing other resource concerns utilizing the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Funding Considerations:

The Local Work Group recommended continuing to allocate monies received to the two districts based on the same acreage figures used to determine the state allocation to the Silver City Service Center as done in previous years. Initially, both districts will use 45% of the available funds for grazing land practices, 45% for irrigated land and 10% for forest land. These funds are interchangeable if not otherwise obligated. Un-obligated funds within the districts are also interchangeable.

The LWG recommends a cap of \$90,000 per practices unless monies would have to be sent back then they recommended a waiver.

Payment Schedule:

The payment schedule used will be the payment schedule developed at the regional level.

Ranking Criteria:

The national ranking tool will be used. State issues will be incorporated into the ranking tool. South Area Ranking tool will be used.

Watershed Initiative:

No Watershed Initiative proposals were recommended for FY 2014

Small Acreage Initiative:

No small acreage initiative proposals were recommended for FY 2014