

**Natural Resources Conservation Service
Application Ranking Summary
FY17 Water Conservation - Eastern High Sierra Desert**

National Priorities Addressed

| Issue Questions | Point(s) |
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| 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. | |
| 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. | 250 |
| Water Quality Degradation – Will the proposed project improve water quality by: (select all that apply) | |
| 2. a. Implementing the practices in a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP)? | 15 |
| 2. b. Implementing the practices in a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)? | 10 |
| 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)? | 10 |
| 2. d. Reducing the impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides in a "non-impaired water body"? | 10 |
| 2. e. Implementing practices that improve water quality through animal mortality and carcass management? | 10 |
| Water Conservation – Will the proposed project conserve water by: (select all that apply) | |
| 3. a. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce aquifer overdraft. | 15 |
| 3. b. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce on-farm water use? | 10 |
| 3. c. Implementing practices in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project? | 10 |
| 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? | 10 |
| Air Quality - Will the proposed project improve air quality by: (select all that apply) | |
| 4. a. Meeting on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures? | 10 |
| 4. b. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm emissions of particulate matter (PM2.5, PM10)? | 10 |
| 4. c. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm generated greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), and nitrous oxide (N2O)? | 10 |
| 4. d. Implementing practices that increase on-farm carbon sequestration? | 10 |
| Soil Health:- Will the proposed project improve soil health by: (select all that apply) | |
| 5. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")? | 10 |
| 5. b. Increasing organic matter and carbon content, and improving soil tilth and structure? | 10 |
| Wildlife Habitat – Will the proposed project improve wildlife habitat by: (select all that apply) | |

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| 6. a. Implementing practices benefitting threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern. | 10 |
| 6. b. Implementing practices that retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or other set-aside program? | 10 |
| 6. c. Implementing practices benefitting honey bee populations or other pollinators? | 10 |
| 6. d. Implementing land-based practices that improve habitat for aquatic wildlife? | 10 |
| 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 |
| 7. b. Implementing practice in an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM)? | 10 |
| Energy Conservation– Will the proposed project reduce energy use by: (select all that apply) | |
| 8. a. Reducing on-farm energy consumption? | 10 |
| 8. b. Implementing practice(s) identified in an approved AgEMP or energy audit, which meet ASABE S612 criteria? | 10 |
| 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 |
| State Issues Addressed | |
| Issue Questions | Point(s) |
| State Category One Ranking Criteria – Conservation Activity Plan 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. | |
| 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 state level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section. | 250 |
| State Category Two Ranking Criteria – INSUFFICIENT WATER: Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water Will program application result in implementation of irrigation water management (449 - Irrigation Water Management) for an existing irrigation system, and for which NRCS has not previously paid for IWM at the proposed level? Answering “Yes” to question a. will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of state ranking points that can be earned. | |
| 2. a. 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. | 250 |
| State Category Three Ranking Criteria – INSUFFICIENT WATER: Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water California Irrigation Water Savings Tool found in the California eFOTG Section 1, Resource Assessment Tools. Conservation treatment includes implementation of IWM and/or an irrigation system that results in an increase of: (Select “Yes” to One Answer Only, if applicable) | |
| 3. a. More than 30 percent annual water savings. | 115 |
| 3. b. 15 to 30 percent annual water savings. | 65 |

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| 3. c. 10 to 14 percent annual water savings. | 35 |
| State Category Four Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excess Nutrients in Surface Water The Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List is found at the State Water Resources Control Board website: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/tmdl/integrated2010.shtml Conservation treatment will reduce the potential for nutrients to enter a surface waterbody on the 303(d) list for the pollutant category, 'Nutrients', where an existing ditch, canal, drain, tributary or outlet to the waterbody exists. The EQIP schedule of operations includes: (Select "Yes" to All Applicable Answers) | |
| 4. a. Management practices that will minimize the potential for nutrients to enter the surface water of the 303(d) listed waterbody. | 10 |
| 4. b. Vegetative practices that will minimize the potential for nutrients to enter the surface water of the 303(d) listed waterbody. | 10 |
| 4. c. Structural practices that will minimize the potential for nutrients to enter the surface water of the 303(d) listed waterbody. | 5 |
| State Category Five Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excess Nutrients in Groundwater The California State Water Resources Control Board map, "Hydrogeologically Vulnerable Areas and High Use Groundwater Basins," map is available at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/docs/hydro_areas.pdf Conservation treatment includes management practice(s) and the treatment area is located within: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable) | |
| 5. a. A Hydrogeologically Vulnerable Area. | 40 |
| 5. b. A High Use Ground Water Basin Area, but not a Hydrogeologically Vulnerable Area. | 20 |
| State Category Six Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excess Pesticides in Surface Water The Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List is found at the State Water Resources Control Board website: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/tmdl/integrated2010.shtml Conservation treatment will reduce the potential for pesticides to enter a surface waterbody on the 303(d) list for the pollutant category, 'Pesticides', and where an existing ditch, canal, drain, tributary or outlet to the waterbody exists. The EQIP schedule of operations includes: (Select "Yes" to All Applicable Answers) | |
| 6. a. Management practices that will minimize the potential for pesticides to enter the surface water of the 303(d) listed waterbody. | 10 |
| 6. b. Vegetative practices that will minimize the potential for pesticides to enter the surface water of the 303(d) listed waterbody. | 10 |
| 6. c. Structural practices that will minimize the potential for pesticides to enter the surface water of the 303(d) listed waterbody. | 5 |
| State Category Seven Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excess Pesticides in Groundwater The California State Water Resources Control Board map, "Hydrogeologically Vulnerable Areas and High Use Groundwater Basins," map is available at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/docs/hydro_areas.pdf Conservation treatment includes management practice(s) and the treatment area is located within: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable) | |
| 7. a. A Hydrogeologically Vulnerable Area. | 10 |
| 7. b. A High Use Ground Water Basin Area, but not a Hydrogeologically Vulnerable Area. | 5 |

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| State Category Eight Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excessive Sediment in Surface Water The Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List is found at the State Water Resources Control Board website: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/tmdl/integrated2010.shtml Conservation treatment will reduce the potential for soil sediment to enter a surface waterbody on the 303(d) list for the pollutant category, 'Sediment', and where an existing ditch, canal, drain, tributary or outlet to the waterbody exists. The EQIP schedule of operations includes: (Select "Yes" to All Applicable Answers) | |
| 8. a. Management practices that will minimize the potential for sediment to enter the surface water of the 303(d) listed waterbody. | 10 |
| 8. b. Vegetative practices that will minimize the potential for sediment to enter the surface water of the 303(d) listed waterbody. | 10 |
| 8. c. Structural practices that will minimize the potential for sediment to enter the surface water of the 303(d) listed waterbody. | 5 |
| State Category NINE Ranking Criteria – INEFFICIENT ENERGY USE: Farming/Ranching and Field Operations (Select "Yes," if applicable) | |
| 9. a. Conservation treatment results in implementation of farming, ranching, and field operations practices that result in at least 5 percent reduction in energy use. Practices include those that state "reduce energy use" in the purpose section of the standard. | 10 |
| Local Issues Addressed | |
| Issue Questions | Point(s) |
| Local Category One - INSUFFICIENT WATER: Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water Will program application result in implementation of irrigation water management (449 - Irrigation Water Management) for an existing irrigation system, and for which NRCS has not previously paid for IWM at the proposed level? Answering "Yes" to criteria a. will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of local ranking points that can be earned for the local priority category. | |
| 1. a. If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other local level criteria. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining criteria in this section. | 400 |
| Local Category Two - INSUFFICIENT WATER: Inefficient Moisture Management (Select "Yes," if applicable) | |
| 2. a. The EQIP schedule of operations includes conservation practice, 484, Mulching, and/or 380, Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment, to minimize runoff, encourage infiltration, control evapotranspiration and minimize evaporation losses. | 30 |
| Local Category Three - INSUFFICIENT WATER: Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water California Irrigation Water Savings Tool found in the California eFOTG Section 1, Resource Assessment Tools. The EQIP schedule of operations includes conservation practices for irrigation water management (IWM) and/or an irrigation system improvement (does not include water conveyances to the field) that results in a water savings of: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable) | |
| 3. a. greater than 20 acre/inch per acre per year | 205 |
| 3. b. 2 to 20 acre/inch per acre per year. | 120 |
| 3. c. less than 2 acre/inch per acre per year. | 35 |

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| <p>Local Category Four - INSUFFICIENT WATER: Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water California Irrigation Water Savings Tool found in the California eFOTG Section 1, Resource Assessment Tools. Level I = Basic Irrigation Water Management; Level 2 = Intermediate Irrigation Water Management; Level III = Advanced Irrigation Water Management The EQIP schedule of operations includes conservation practices (structural and/or management) that will result in attainment of 449 – Irrigation Water Management. (Select "Yes" to One Answer, if applicable)</p> | |
| <p>4. a. Conservation treatment will achieve Level II or III irrigation water management according to NRCS CA Bulletin 201-11-3, and the farm operation ranks as "High" in need for 449 – Irrigation Water Management as determined from the Irrigation Scheduling planning tool.</p> | 40 |
| <p>4. b. Conservation treatment will achieve Level II or III irrigation water management according to NRCS CA Bulletin 201-11-3, and the farm operation ranks as "Medium" or "Low" in need for 449 – Irrigation Water Management as determined from the Irrigation Scheduling planning tool.</p> | 30 |
| <p>4. c. Conservation treatment will achieve Level I irrigation water management according to NRCS CA Bulletin 201-11-3.</p> | 20 |
| <p>Local Category Five - WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excess Nutrients in Surface Water The EQIP schedule of operations includes vegetative and/or management practices, in addition to conservation practices for an irrigation system conversion to a more efficient system, an irrigation system retrofit, or an irrigation conveyance improvement, to minimize the potential for nutrients to be transported to a surface waterbody where an existing pathway to the surface water exists. The hydrologic soil group for the treatment unit is predominately: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)</p> | |
| <p>5. a. C, soils with slow infiltration rates, and/or D, soils with very slow infiltration rates.</p> | 30 |
| <p>5. b. B, soils with moderate infiltration rates.</p> | 20 |
| <p>5. c. A, soils with high infiltration rates.</p> | 10 |
| <p>Local Category Six - WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excess Nutrients in Groundwater The EQIP schedule of operations includes conservation practices to minimize the amount of nutrients leaching to groundwater. The hydrologic soil group for the treatment unit is predominately: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)</p> | |
| <p>6. a. A, soils with high infiltration rates.</p> | 30 |
| <p>6. b. B, soils with moderate infiltration rates.</p> | 20 |
| <p>6. c. C, soils with slow infiltration rates, and/or D, soils with very slow infiltration rates.</p> | 10 |
| <p>The Windows Pesticide Screening Tool (Win-PST) hazard rating is greater than 'Low' for the treatment unit and mitigation is needed. NRCS Agronomy Technical Note 5 (February 2011) is found at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1043138.pdf Conservation treatment includes any combination of NRCS conservation practices or IPM techniques from NRCS Agronomy Technical Note 5, Tables 1 and 2 (February 2011) that results in a reduction of the Win-PST pesticide hazard rating for surface water to 'Low' or 'Very Low'. The EQIP schedule of operations includes only management practices to minimize the amount of pesticides leaving the treated area. The hydrologic soil group for the treatment unit is predominately:</p> | |
| <p>7. a. C, soils with slow infiltration rates, and/or D, soils with very slow infiltration rates.</p> | 25 |
| <p>7. b. B, soils with moderate infiltration rates.</p> | 15 |

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| 7. c. A, soils with high infiltration rates. | 10 |
| Local Category Eight - WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excessive Sediment in Surface Water The EQIP schedule of operations includes vegetative and/or management practices, in addition to conservation practices for an irrigation system conversion to a more efficient system, an irrigation system retrofit, or an irrigation conveyance improvement, to minimize the transport of soil sediment to a surface waterbody where an existing pathway to the surface water exists and sedimentation and/or turbidity is observed. The hydrologic soil group for the treatment unit is predominately: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable) | |
| 8. a. C, soils with slow infiltration rates, and/or D, soils with very slow infiltration rates. | 25 |
| 8. b. B, soils with moderate infiltration rates. | 15 |
| 8. c. A, soils with high infiltration rates. | 10 |
| Local Category Nine - INEFICIENT ENERGY USE: Farming/Ranching Practices and Field Operations The EQIP schedule of operations includes conservation practices that will result in: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable) | |
| 9. a. 30 percent or greater reduction in energy use. | 15 |
| 9. b. 16 to 29 percent reduction in energy use. | 10 |
| 9. c. 5 to 15 percent reduction in energy use. | 5 |