

**Natural Resources Conservation Service
Application Ranking Summary
FY17 Forestland - Central Coast**

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Point(s)
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)	

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 – SOIL EROSION: Sheet and Rill Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will provide ground cover on sites to reduce sheet and rill soil erosion from rainfall and treatment area is located in burned areas where the inherent, undisturbed, soil EHR is: (Select “Yes” to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
2. a. ‘Severe’ or ‘Very Severe’ and slopes are greater than 20 percent.	25
2. b. ‘Severe’ or ‘Very Severe’ and slopes are less than 20 percent.	20
State Category Three Ranking Criteria – SOIL EROSION: Classic Gullies (Select “Yes,” if applicable)	
3. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will stabilize road and roadsides that are hydrologically connected and chronic sources of sediment carried in stormwater runoff. Adequately sized water conveyance structures designed for 100 year stormwater events will carry concentrated surface water runoff to a designated outlet and away from road surface and roadside risk areas.	35

<p>State Category Four Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excessive Sediment in Surface Water</p> <p>Class I and Class II watercourses are defined under the California Forest Practice Rules.</p> <p>A Class I watercourse is defined as: (1) Domestic supplies, including springs, on site and/or within 100 feet downstream of the operations area, and/or (2) Fish always or seasonally present onsite, includes habitat to sustain fish migration and spawning; and, a Class II watercourse is defined as: (1) Fish always or seasonally present offsite within 1000 feet downstream, and/or (2) Aquatic habitat for non-fish aquatic species.</p> <p>(Select "Yes," if applicable)</p>	
<p>4. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will control direct sediment delivery from roads, livestock infrastructure and use, trails, landings, stream crossings or legacy construction sites to a Class I or Class II watercourse.</p>	30
<p>State Category Five Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Elevated Water Temperature</p> <p>Past or recent disturbances have left stream reaches with canopy cover at 70 percent or less of desired closure rates for the site. Current conditions do not provide for the development of species or large wood recruitment capable of providing desired closure rates and solar exposure is negatively affecting stream temperature.</p> <p>(Select "Yes," if applicable)</p>	
<p>5. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will establish or specifically develop the riparian area through vegetation management and/or restoration structures to increase shade and lower water temperatures to promote water quality for fish, riparian species and habitat.</p>	30
<p>State Category Six Ranking Criteria – DEGRADED PLANT CONDITION: Inadequate Structure and Composition</p> <p>Desirable and/or undesirable species are determined by Ecological Site Description, Vegetative Guide, Terrestrial Vegetation of CA by Barbour et al, a state noxious weed list or a local noxious weed list.</p> <p>(Select "Yes," if applicable)</p>	
<p>6. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will result in the treatment unit being stocked to soil capacity with 70 percent or greater desirable plant species composition.</p>	35
<p>State Category Seven Ranking Criteria – DEGRADED PLANT CONDITION: Excessive Plant Pest Pressure (Select "Yes" to All Applicable Answers)</p>	
<p>7. a. Conservation treatment will address invasive exotic plant pests as declared by the State Firewood Task Force such as sudden oak death (SOD) and golden spotted oak borer (GSOB).</p>	15
<p>7. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes 85 percent removal of noxious and/or invasive plant populations on treatment unit. Unwanted plants include those on the local weed management area (WMA), California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) invasive species list or identified as threatening declining forest/woodland habitats, such as, aspen, oak woodland, cottonwood or sycamore.</p>	20
<p>State Category Eight Ranking Criteria – DEGRADED PLANT CONDITION: Wildfire Hazard from Excessive Biomass Accumulation</p> <p>(Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)</p>	

8. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will create a vertical break between tree crowns (live and dead portions) and understory vegetation on 70 percent or more of the treatment area to reduce the likelihood of stand-replacing fires AND the treatment area is identified in a local fire plan such as a community wildfire protection plan, county fire plan, CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plan, or a local neighborhood fire plan which is endorsed by a fire service agency.	40
8. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will create a vertical break between tree crowns (live and dead portions) and understory vegetation on 70 percent or more of the treatment area to reduce the likelihood of stand-replacing fires.	20
State Category Nine Ranking Criteria – INADEQUATE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE: Habitat Degradation Food, Water, Cover/Shelter, Habitat Continuity/Space Evaluated using Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) or Pollinator Habitat Assessment (PHA). The 'planned' assessment score must be greater than or equal to 0.5 (≥ 0.5) for the WHEG or, greater than or equal to 90 points (≥ 90 points) for the PHA. (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
9. a. Fish or wildlife habitat improvements in the EQIP schedule of operations directly benefit Federal or State threatened, endangered, rare, proposed, candidate, fully protected and selected species (selected species included: Tricolored blackbird, Western burrowing owl, Foothill yellow-legged frog, Steelhead, Western pond turtle and pollinators) and the WHEG or PHA the 'planned assessment score is met.	20
9. b. Fish or wildlife habitat improvements in the EQIP schedule of operations directly benefit habitat for Species of Special Concern (as identified in Section II under Special Environmental Concerns) animals and the WHEG or PHA the 'planned assessment score is met.	15
Local Issues Addressed	
Issue Questions	Point(s)
Local Category One - 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 local priority category.	
1. a. Is the program application for development of a TSP prepared Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other local level Answers. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining Answers in this section.	400
Local Category Two - SOIL EROSION: Sheet and Rill (Select "Yes," if applicable)	
2. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will provide site stability where a catastrophic event has occurred in the past five years to reduce erosion from rainfall, maintain soil stability from concentrated flow on high risk sites such as: (1) bare road/trail/disturbed surfaces; (2) on soils with a 'High' erosion hazard rating (EHR) or a K factor greater than or equal to 0.35 (K factor ≥ 0.35) and soils with grades exceed 4 percent; or, (3) on soils with a 'Moderate' EHR or a K factor less than 0.35 (K factor < 0.35) and soils with grades exceeding 10 percent.	25
Local Category Three - SOIL EROSION: Classic Gullies Visual assessment of the treatment area confirms road and road-side erosion and/or follows California Department of Fish and Wildlife erosion protocols for prioritizing critical sites. (Select "Yes," if applicable)	

3. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will stabilize road and roadsides that are hydrologically connected and chronic sources of sediment carried in stormwater runoff. Adequately sized water conveyance structures designed for 100 year stormwater events will carry concentrated surface water runoff to a designated outlet and away from road surface and roadside risk areas.	20
Local Category Four - WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excessive Sediment in Surface Water (Select "Yes," if applicable)	
4. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will reduce delivery of sediment from forestland where a catastrophic event has occurred in the past five years to: (1) a Class I and/or II watercourses; (2) a TMDL watershed listed for "Sediments"; and/or, (3) a watercourse that supports threatened and endangered fish species.	30
Local Category Five - WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excessive Sediment in Surface Water Conservation treatment will control sediment delivery from improperly designed or failing roads, trails, landings and crossings into a: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
5. a. Class I stream/watercourses as classified under the California Forest Practice Rules. • A Class I watercourse is defined as: 1) Domestic supplies, including springs, on site and/or within 100 feet downstream of the operations area and/or 2) Fish always or seasonally present onsite, includes habitat to sustain fish migration and spawning.	40
5. b. Class II stream/watercourses as classified under the California Forest Practice Rules. • A Class II watercourse is defined as: 1) Fish always or seasonally present offsite within 1000 feet downstream and/or 2) Aquatic habitat for nonfish aquatic species. 3) Excludes Class III waters that are tributary to Class I waters	30
5. c. Class III stream/watercourses as classified under the California Forest Practice Rules. • A Class III watercourse is defined as: No aquatic life present, watercourse showing evidence of being capable of sediment transport to Class I and II waters under normal high water flow conditions after completion of timber operations.	15
Local Category Six - DEGRADED PLANT CONDITION: Inadequate Structure and Composition (Overstocked Stands) Conservation treatment results in overstocked forest stands being adjusted to site-appropriate stocking rates to reduce pest impacts on forest health, to minimize wildfire hazard and to extend seasonal water quantities. (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
6. a. Reforestation (more than 150 trees) will be to within 20 percent of optimal stocking rates for desired species; and, the reforestation treatment area is located on Site II or better soils where the magnitude of success and benefits to wildlife, water quality and quantity will promote a healthy forest. Site Index will be determined by direct field measurement or from the Soil Survey.	30
6. b. Reforestation (more than 100 trees) will be to within 20 percent of optimal stocking rates for desired species; and, the reforestation treatment area is located on Site III or better soils where the magnitude of success and benefits to wildlife, water quality and quantity will promote a healthy forest. Site Index will be determined by direct field measurement or from the Soil Survey.	25
6. c. Reforestation will be to within 20 percent of optimal stocking rates for desired species for the treatment site.	15
Local Category Seven - DEGRADED PLANT CONDITION: Inadequate Structure and Composition (Competing Understory) Current understory competing vegetation canopy cover is severe, affecting water quantity, plant vigor and are ladder fuels for catastrophic type fires. Competing vegetation is defined as woody stems less than three inches diameter at breast height (DBH) and/or brush species. (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
7. a. Stocking is adjusted through a reduction of 200 trees or more and/or a basal area reduction of 35 percent or more to meet stocking targets for a healthy forest as determined by direct field measurement or from the Soil Survey.	40
7. b. Stocking is adjusted through a reduction of 150 trees or more and/or a basal area reduction of 35 percent or more to meet stocking targets for a healthy forest as determined by direct field measurement or from the Soil Survey.	25

7. c. Stocking is adjusted through a reduction of at least 100 trees or more and/ or a basal area reduction of at least 20 percent to meet stocking targets for a healthy forest as determined by direct field measurement or from the Soil Survey.	15
Local Category Eight - DEGRADGED PLANT CONDITION: Inadequate Structure and Composition (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
8. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will reduce understory canopy cover from 60 percent or more per acre to 10 percent understory canopy cover per acre or less to address an unbalanced forest condition by unwanted, competing vegetation.	35
8. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will reduce understory canopy cover from 45 percent or more per acre to 10 percent understory canopy cover per acre or less to address an unbalanced forest condition by unwanted, competing vegetation.	20
8. c. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will reduce understory canopy cover from 30 percent or more per acre to 10 percent understory canopy cover per acre or less to address an unbalanced forest condition by unwanted, competing vegetation.	10
Local Category Nine - DEGRADED PLANT CONDITION: Excessive Plant Pest Pressure (Select "Yes" to All Applicable Answers)	
9. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will address invasive exotic plant pests as declared by the State Firewood Task Force such as sudden oak death (SOD) and golden spotted oak borer (GSOB) and has the potential to spread into uninfected stands.	30
9. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes 85 percent removal of noxious and/or invasive plant populations on treatment unit. Unwanted plants include those on the local weed management area (WMA), California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) invasive species list or identified as threatening declining forest/woodland habitats, such as, aspen, oak woodland, cottonwood or sycamore.	30
Local Category Ten - DEGRADED PLANT CONDITION: Wildfire Hazard from Excessive Biomass Accumulation The fire threat rating will be determined from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP), "Fire Threat," map (http://frap.fire.ca.gov/data/frapgismaps/pdfs/ftthreat_map.pdf). Conservation treatment will result in reduced fire hazard on a landscape basis; and, the planned treatment unit: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
10. a. Designated a 'Very High' Fire Threat rating where the conservation treatment will enhance or complete landscape level conservation system in place that addresses fire hazard; the magnitude of conservation system effectiveness is based on being part of a larger cooperative landscape level treatment to address this concern.	50
10. b. Designated a 'High' Fire Threat rating where the conservation will enhance or complete landscape level conservation system in place that addresses fire hazard; the magnitude of conservation system effectiveness is based on being part of a larger cooperative landscape level treatment to address this concern	35
10. c. Designated a 'High' or 'Very High' Fire Threat rating.	20
Local Category Eleven - INADEQUATE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE: Habitat Degradation Food, Water, Cover/Shelter, Habitat Continuity/Space is evaluated using the following assessment protocols: The Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) or Pollinator Habitat Assessment (PHA). (Select "Yes" to All Applicable Answers)	
11. a. Riparian Zone: Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations in the EQIP schedule of operations will improve the riparian zone where the riparian WHEG 'planned' worksheet is greater or equal to 0.5 (≥ 0.5).	20
11. b. Multiple Habitat Types: Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations in the EQIP schedule of operations will improve multiple habitat types, improving habitat elements for both upland/riparian, based on the appropriate WHEG that benefit both terrestrial and aquatic habitats and species. The score on the WHEG worksheet for the Land Use/Cover Type is greater than or equal to 0.5 (≥ 0.5)	20
11. c. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations that improves necessary habitat element of an identified fish and wildlife species through implementation of a structural practice.	30