

**Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Application Ranking Summary  
Pastureland Mesic Soils-West and East  
Program: EQIP 2014, Fiscal Year 2019  
National Priorities Addressed**

Issue Questions	Responses
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 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
2. b. Implementing the practices in a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)?	10 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
2. d. Reducing the impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides in a “non-impaired water body”?	10 Point(s)
2. e. Implementing practices that improve water quality through animal mortality and carcass management?	10 Point(s)
Water Conservation – Will the proposed project conserve water by: (select all that apply)	
3. a. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce aquifer overdraft.	15 Point(s)
3. b. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce on-farm water use?	10 Point(s)

3. c.Implementing practices in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	10 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
<b>Air Quality - Will the proposed project improve air quality by: (select all that apply)</b>	
4. a. Meeting on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	10 Point(s)
4. b. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm emissions of particulate matter (PM2.5, PM10)?	10 Point(s)
4. c.Implementing practices that reduce on-farm generated greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), and nitrous oxide (N2O)?	10 Point(s)
4. d. Implementing practices that increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	10 Point(s)
<b>Soil Health:– Will the proposed project improve soil health by: (select all that apply)</b>	
5. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil “T”)?	10 Point(s)
5. b.Increasing organic matter and carbon content, and improving soil tilth and structure?	10 Point(s)
<b>Wildlife Habitat – Will the proposed project improve wildlife habitat by: (select all that apply)</b>	
6. a. Implementing practices benefitting threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern.	10 Point(s)
6. b. Implementing practices that retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or other set-aside program?	10 Point(s)
6. c. Implementing practices benefitting honey bee populations or other pollinators?	10 Point(s)
6. d. Implementing land-based practices that improve habitat for aquatic wildlife?	10 Point(s)
<b>Plant and Animal Communities: Will the proposed project improve plant and animal communities by: (select all that apply)</b>	
7. a. Implementing practices that result in the management control of noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10 Point(s)

7. b. Implementing practice in an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM)?	10 Point(s)
Energy Conservation– Will the proposed project reduce energy use by: (select all that apply)	
8. a. Reducing on-farm energy consumption?	10 Point(s)
8. b. Implementing practice(s) identified in an approved AgEMP or energy audit, which meet ASABE S612 criteria?	10 Point(s)
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 Point(s)

**State Issues Addressed**

<b>Issue Questions</b>	<b>Responses</b>
<b>WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION CONCERNS</b>	
1. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in practice installation on a land unit that is directly adjacent to surface water (surface water is defined by CP22 in 2-CRP (Rev. 4) Amend. 1 & 2), and result in improved water quality by decreasing nutrients, sediment, pathogens, or agricultural chemicals delivered to surface waters, as documented on the NRCS-CPA-52 and evidenced by a positive CPPE for the resource concern?	60 Point(s)
2. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the treatment of an animal production system that currently has less than 6 months storage or polluted runoff, and will result in NO winter spreading of animal manures, as evidenced by the CNMP?	50 Point(s)
3. Is any portion of the land included in this application within a MDEQ impaired watershed (surface water) as shown on the impaired watersheds map, and will practices be implemented to address the delivery of sediment, nutrients, pathogens, or agricultural chemicals to the surface waters, as documented on the NRCS-CPA-52 and evidenced by a positive CPPE for the resource concern?	60 Point(s)

<b>SOIL EROSION CONCERNS</b>	
4. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the treatment of classic or ephemeral gullies, sheet and rill erosion, or wind erosion on <del>land currently eroding above "T?"</del>	60 Point(s)
<b>DEGRADED PLANT CONDITION CONCERNS</b>	
5. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in livestock being excluded from forest land or environmentally sensitive areas, or the treatment of pasture land with a "pasture condition index" of 35 or less with a <del>prescribed grazing system?</del>	50 Point(s)
6. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP specifically address the control (reduce to less than 10% of the stand) of Category A or B species listed on the NRCS-Michigan "Invasive Plant Species List" adapted from the Michigan DNR publication, "Meeting the Challenge of Invasive Plants: A Framework for Action" (Higman and Campbell, 2009)?	10 Point(s)
<b>FISH AND WILDLIFE INADEQUATE HABITAT CONCERNS</b>	
7. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the "Wildlife Habitat Inventory Index" being increased from less than 0.70 to greater than <del>0.70?</del>	10 Point(s)
8. Will this application implement any of the following practices to meet the <b>ADDITIONAL CRITERIA FOR WILDLIFE HABITAT</b> , including pollinators, as listed in the practice standard? 314-Brush Management, 315-Herbaceous Weed Control, 327-Conservation Cover, 380-Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment, 390-Riparian Herbaceous Cover, 391-Riparian Forest Buffer, 393-Filter Strip, 612-Tree/Shrub Establishment, 666-Forest Stand Improvement	35 Point(s)
9. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in additional habitat for a documented Threatened, Endangered, Special Concern Species or a Michigan At-Risk Indicator Species?	10 Point(s)

CONSERVATION PLANNING	
10. Is the treatment to be implemented using EQIP part of an Implementation Schedule or Farmstead/Cropping Improvement Action Plan that will assist in a farm becoming MAEAP verified, Wildlife Risk Mitigated or will result in Risk Reduction of a "high risk," as identified by one of the State of Michigan's "A*Syst" Tools?	35 Point(s)
11. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the application of practices associated with a NRCS-approved Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)?	10 Point(s)
12. Will the conservation practice(s) in this application be installed on lands protected by a Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) easement or an Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)-Agricultural Land Easement (ALE)?	10 Point(s)

**Local Issues Addressed**

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Will the application address resource concerns related to confined animal lot runoff, inadequate storage of animal waste or the lack of nutrient management?	25 Point(s)
2. Will this application convert a predominantly confined livestock operation to a prescribed grazing system?	20 Point(s)
3. Will this application result in livestock being removed from surface water, or provide restricted access where there was previously unrestricted access?	25 Point(s)
4. Will this application result in the removal of livestock from documented sensitive areas, such as woodlots or wetlands?	20 Point(s)
5. Will this application result in permanent grass buffers directly adjacent to surface water in offered area?	20 Point(s)
6. Will the application address additional needs for forage quality and/or quality, as documented by pasture condition score?	20 Point(s)

<p>7. Will the conservation practices proposed in this application control top priority invasive species on the enrolled land to support prescribed grazing implementation? Top priority invasive species are determined by the associated Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) or Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA). If a management area has not been established where the offered acres are located, will the practices address the control of Category A or B species listed on the NRCS-Michigan "Invasive Plant Species List" adapted from the Michigan DNR publication, "Meeting the Challenge of Invasive Plants: A Framework for Action" (Higman and Campbell, 2009)?</p>	<p>20 Point(s)</p>
<p>8. Will this application result in an increased Wildlife Habitat Index score greater than 0.5, as documented by the Michigan Biology Technical Note 12?</p>	<p>20 Point(s)</p>
<p>9. Does this application include a practice which will improve soil health?</p>	<p>20 Point(s)</p>
<p>10. Will this application result in improvement (higher level of conservation benefit) of an existing prescribed grazing system?</p>	<p>20 Point(s)</p>
<p>11. Will this application address soil erosion? (If erosion is currently above "T," practices in the application must bring the erosion to "T" or less.)</p>	<p>20 Point(s)</p>
<p>12. Will this application result in the grazing animals having adequate water available that encourages efficient forage use (distance from each paddock to water is 1/4 mile or less)?</p>	<p>20 Point(s)</p>