

2021 Team Ranking Questions

Team 1 (Flagstaff, Fredonia)

Team 1 Range Water and Wildlife Habitat

1. Will the proposed project address the resource concern- Domestic Animals-Inadequate Stock Water (Rangeland, Grazed Forest, Pasture)? For the next 4 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. On the contracted acres, conservation practices increase the percent of the grazable areas that are within 1.5 miles of permanent reliable water (in relation to existing water sources) by: >75% (50 pts)
 - b. On the contracted acres, conservation practices increase the percent of the grazable areas that are within 1.5 miles of permanent reliable water (in relation to existing water sources) by: 50-74% (35 pts)
 - c. On the contracted acres, conservation practices increase the percent of the grazable areas that are within 1.5 miles of permanent reliable water (in relation to existing water sources) by: 25-49% (20 pts)
 - d. On the contracted acres, conservation practices increase the percent of the grazable areas that are within 1.5 miles of permanent reliable water (in relation to existing water sources) by: 10-24% (5 pts)
2. What is the cost per acre for adding new reliable water sources to the contracted acres? For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one. (\$ per acre = Cost of Watering System/Acres Covered)
 - a. < \$15 per acre of land that will be within 1.5 mi. (50 pts)
 - b. \$15 to \$30 per acre of land that will be within 1.5 mi. (35 pts)
 - c. > \$30 per acre of land that will be within 1.5 mi. (20 pts)
3. Will the proposed project address the resource concern- Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife? For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. Contracted conservation practices address available terrestrial wildlife habitat to improve the WHEG score by: >0.3 (50 pts)
 - b. Contracted conservation practices address available terrestrial wildlife habitat to improve the WHEG score by: 0.2 to 0.3 (35 pts)
 - c. Contracted conservation practices address available terrestrial wildlife habitat to improve the WHEG score by: <0.2 (20 pts)
 - d. Contracted conservation practices will not address available terrestrial wildlife habitat.
4. Will the project include watering facilities that have added storage for wildlife and will be left on for wildlife to access when livestock are not in the pasture? (50 pts)
5. Has the applicant participated in other NRCS contracts and maintained their practices according to NRCS operation and maintenance guidelines OR has the applicant not participated in an NRCS contract before? (50 pts)

Team 1 Plant Condition and Wildlife Habitat

1. Will the proposed project address the resource concern- Degraded Plant Condition? For the next 5 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. Contracted conservation practices will improve the similarity index (SI) from a current score of: <20 and/or improve 6 RHA Biotic Integrity factors to < Moderate (60 pts)
 - b. Contracted conservation practices will improve the similarity index (SI) from a current score of: 21 to 30 and/or improve 5 RHA Biotic Integrity factors to < Moderate (50 pts)
 - c. Contracted conservation practices will improve the similarity index (SI) from a current score of: 31 to 40 and/or improve 5 RHA Biotic Integrity factors to < Moderate (40 pts)

- d. Contracted conservation practices will improve the similarity index (SI) from a current score of: 41 to 50 and/or improve 4 RHA Biotic Integrity factors to < Moderate (30 pts)
- e. Contracted conservation practices will improve the similarity index (SI) from a current score of: 51 to 60 and/or improve 3 RHA Biotic Integrity factors to < Moderate (20 pts)
2. Does the proposed project address Soil Quality Degradation resource concerns? For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. Contracted conservation practices will improve Rangeland Soil/Site Stability and/or Hydrology Function from an existing departure value of: Extreme (60 pts)
 - b. Contracted conservation practices will improve Rangeland Soil/Site Stability and/or Hydrology Function from an existing departure value of: Moderate to Extreme (40 pts)
 - c. Contracted conservation practices will improve Rangeland Soil/Site Stability and/or Hydrology Function from an existing departure value of: Moderate (20 pts)
3. Will the proposed project address the resource concern- Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife? For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one?
 - a. Contracted conservation practices address available terrestrial wildlife habitat to improve the WHEG Fragmentation score to: 0.8 or greater (30 Pts)
 - b. Contracted conservation practices address available terrestrial wildlife habitat to improve the WHEG Fragmentation score to: 0.6 to 0.7 (20 Pts)
 - c. Contracted conservation practices address available terrestrial wildlife habitat to improve the WHEG Fragmentation score to: 0.5 (10 Pts)
 - d. Contracted conservation practices will not address available terrestrial wildlife habitat.
4. Will the proposed project share a common border with a previously treated or restored area with scope of contributing to landscape scale restoration? Previous restored area can be either within the same land unit or across jurisdictional boundaries. (50 Pts)
5. Has the applicant participated in other NRCS contracts and maintained their practices according to NRCS operation and maintenance guidelines OR has the applicant not participated in an NRCS contract before? (50 pts).

Team 1 Forestry and Wildfire Hazard Reduction

1. Will the proposed project address the resource concern- Degraded Plant Condition- Wildfire hazard, excessive biomass accumulation? For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. Will basal area be reduced to ≤ 60 sqft/ac (50 Pts)
 - b. Will basal area be reduced to between 60 and 120 sqft/ac (40 Pts)
 - c. Will basal area be reduced to ≥ 120 sqft/ac (30 Pts)
2. Will the proposed project address the resource concern- Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife? For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. Contracted conservation practices address available terrestrial wildlife habitat to improve the WHEG score by: >1.0 (50 Pts)
 - b. Contracted conservation practices address available terrestrial wildlife habitat to improve the WHEG score by: 0.6 to 1.0 (40 Pts)
 - c. Contracted conservation practices address available terrestrial wildlife habitat to improve the WHEG score by: <0.6 (30 Pts)
 - d. Contracted conservation practices will not address available terrestrial wildlife habitat.
3. Will the proposed project share a common border with an area previously managed for forest health and wildfire mitigation or with a documented plan for forest health and wildfire mitigation? This area can be either in an existing unit or across jurisdictional boundaries. (50 Pts)
4. Has the applicant participated in other NRCS contracts and maintained their practices according to NRCS operation and maintenance guidelines OR has the applicant not participated in an NRCS contract before? (50 pts)
5. Will the proposed conservation practice address pest damage (dwarf mistletoe, bark beetle)? For the next 2 questions, answer yes to only one, or neither.

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- a. Both are present and will be treated (50 Pts)
- b. One pest is present and will be treated (30 Pts)
- c. Contracted conservation practices will not address pest damage.

Team 1 Irrigated Crop

1. Will the proposed project address the resource concern Insufficient Water- Inefficient use of irrigation water? For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. On the contracted field, will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to above 95%? (40 Pts)
 - b. On the contracted field, will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to 86-95%? (30 Pts)
 - c. On the contracted field, will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to 85%? (20 Pts)
2. Will the proposed project plan include a flow measuring device and irrigation water management? (40 Pts)
3. Will the proposed project improve water quality by... Answer yes to all that apply.
 - a. Reducing impacts from sediment, nutrients, or pesticides on land adjoining an impaired water body (303d listed waterbody, State designation)? (14 Pts)
 - b. Reducing impacts from sediment, nutrients, or pesticides on land adjoining a non-impaired water body? (13 Pts)
 - c. Proposed project will not address water quality.
4. Will the proposed project conserve water by... Answer yes to all that apply.
 - a. Implementing practices that reduce on farm water use? (14 Pts)
 - b. Implementing practices in an area where the participant is within a geographically established or watershed wide project? (13 Pts)
 - c. Implementing practices that reduce on farm water use by changing to crops with lower consumptive water use? (13 Pts)
5. Will the proposed project Improve soil health by... Answer yes to all that apply.
 - a. Reducing on-farm erosion to tolerable limits to less than the soil T value? (10 Pts)
 - b. Increasing soil organic matter, carbon content, and structure based on a SCI value greater than 0? (10 Pts)
 - c. Implementing practices in an area where the participant is within a geographically established or watershed wide project? (10 Pts)
 - d. Implementing practices that reduce on farm water use by changing to crops with lower consumptive water use? (10 Pts)
 - e. None apply.

Team 1 Backyard Conservation

1. Does the proposed project area have an established planting schedule for the next 2 years? (42 pts)
2. Will the proposed project address the resource concern- Undesirable plant productivity and health? Answer yes to all that apply.
 - a. Will the proposed project improve plant productivity, health and vigor by extending the growing season to 220 days or more? (42 Pts)
 - b. Will the proposed project improve plant productivity, health and vigor by protecting crops from any or all of the following: rain, sun, or snow damage? (42 Pts)
 - c. Proposed project will assist the producer in being able to grow plants in areas where they are not typically suited or adapted to grow? (42 Pts)
 - d. Will the high tunnel in the application be protected from the wind by an existing windbreak/shelter belt? (42 pts)

3. Has the applicant participated in other NRCS contracts and maintained their practices according to NRCS operation and maintenance guidelines OR has the applicant not participated in an NRCS contract before? (40 pts)

Team 2 (Navajo, Hopi)

Team 2 Rangeland

1. Is a prescribed grazing system selected?
2. Will Deferred Grazing occur for 1-2 years
3. Will Deferred Grazing occur for 3-5 years
4. SI less than 30?
5. SI Less than 45?
6. SI Less than 55?
7. Livestock Inadequate Water: Quantity, Quality & Distribution Addressed?
8. Are practices 528, 382, 614, 516, 378 and/or 642 used to address Wind & Water Erosion?

Team 2 Cropland

1. Does the application address soil quality?
2. Irrigation Water Efficiency (FIRI),
 - a. 90% or More;
 - b. 80-90%;
 - c. 70-80%;
 - d. 60-70%
3. Will any of the following practices be used to address Wind and Water Erosions to meet T?,
 - a. 327, 328, 239, 240, 280, 585, 590, 50 points
 - b. 441, 442, 443, 449, 464 50 points
 - c. 466, 603 30 points

Team 2 Forestland

1. Is a prescribed grazing system selected?
2. Will Deferred Grazing occur for 1-2 years?
3. Is Wildfire Hazard Resource Concern Addressed?
4. Is Excessive Pest Pressure (ie bark beetle/ mistletoe/tree deformities) Addressed?
5. Does the application Improve understory conditions?
6. Does the application include Silvicultural Prescription with Partnership?
7. Does the application include Silvicultural Prescription?

Team 2 High Tunnel Systems

1. Undesirable plant productivity
2. More than 20 Miles away from a Grocery Store
3. NO access to a farm plot with irrigation

Team 3 (Kingman, Prescott Valley, Tonto)

Team 3 Range

1. Is brush management being applied to address a degraded plant condition resource concern? (50 points)
 - a. Yes (50 points)
 - b. No (0 points)
2. Will the application improve the average WHEG water score to above 0.5 for the contract acres? (50 points)
 - a. Yes (50 points)
 - b. No (0 points)
3. If the application includes water development, what is the distance to the nearest existing water site from the planned location (If multiple waters sources are planned, select the site currently farthest from existing water source)? (60 points)
 - a. <0.5 miles (10 points)
 - b. 0.5- 1miles (20 points)
 - c. 1-1.5 miles (30 points)
 - d. 1.5-2 miles (40 points)
 - e. 2-2.5 miles (50 points)
 - f. Greater than 2.5 miles (60 points)
 - g. Not applicable (0 points)
4. How many locally led resource concerns will this project address (select as many as applies)? (120 points)
 - a. Livestock Production Limitation – Inadequate livestock water quantity, quality, and distribution (40 points)
 - b. Degraded Plant Condition – Plant productivity and health (40 points)
 - c. Degraded Plant Condition – Wildfire hazard from biomass accumulation (40 points)
 - d. None are met (0 points)

Team 3 Pasture

1. Is prescribed grazing planned for at least 2 years of the contract? (50 points)
 - a. Yes (50 points)
 - b. No (0 points)
2. Will Irrigation Water Management be contracted for at least 2 years? (50 points)
 - a. Yes (50 points)
 - b. No (0 points)
3. How many locally led resource concerns will this project address (select as many as applies)? (120 points)
 - a. Livestock Production Limitation – Inadequate livestock water quantity, quality, and distribution (40 points)
 - b. Degraded Plant Condition – Plant productivity and health (40 points)
 - c. Insufficient Water – Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water (40 points)
 - d. None are met (0 points)
4. According to FIRI, the proposed project will increase irrigation efficiency to over 85% by increasing: (60 points)
 - a. Not applicable (60 points)
 - b. <10% (20 points)
 - c. 10-20% (40 points)
 - d. >20% (60 points)

Team 3 Crop

1. Will Irrigation Water Management be contracted for at least 2 years? (50 points)

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- a. Yes (50 points)
 - b. No (0 points)
2. How many locally led resource concerns will this project address (select as many as applies)? (120 points)
- a. Wind and Water Erosion – Wind Erosion (40 points)
 - b. Degraded Plant Condition – Plant productivity and health (40 points)
 - c. Insufficient Water – Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water (40 points)
 - d. None are met (0 points)
3. According to FIRI, the proposed project will increase irrigation efficiency to over 85% by increasing: (60 points)
- a. <10% (20 points)
 - b. 10-20% (40 points)
 - c. >20% (60 points)
 - d. Not applicable (60 points)
4. Will implementation of the application cause the soil condition index to trend positive? (50 points)
- a. Yes (50 points)
 - b. No (0 points)

Team 3 Forest

1. How many locally led resource concerns will this project address (select as many as applies)? (120 points)
- a. Wind and Water Erosion – Wind Erosion (40 points)
 - b. Degraded Plant Condition – Plant productivity and health (40 points)
 - c. Insufficient Water – Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water (40 points)
 - d. None are met (0 points)
2. Will the application include brush management and/or forest stand improvement?
- a. Yes (50 points)
 - b. No (0 points)
3. Will the application include brush management, forest stand improvement, and/or fuel breaks? (60 points)
- a. All Three (60 points)
 - b. Two (40 points)
 - c. One (20 points)
 - d. None (0 points)

Team 4 (Holbrook, Springerville, Whiteriver)

Team 4 Range

1. Will the proposed project include implementation of a prescribed grazing plan (528)? (100 pts)
2. Will the proposed project complement or connect existing conservation practices in the area of concern? (50 pts)
3. Will brush management (314) be applied on the application acres where woody species have been determined to be invasive per the ESD? (50 pts)
4. Will the proposed project address landscape level wildlife concerns such as improving wildlife habitat connectivity, noxious/invasive species listed on the Arizona NRCS List of Noxious/Invasive Species, or improve water access for wildlife? (50 pts)
5. Will the proposed project address livestock water development (642, 533, 614, 516) by distributing reliable water sources that will facilitate a grazing system? (50 pts)

Team 4 Crop

1. Will Field Sediment, Nutrient and pathogen loss - Excessive sediments in surface water resource concern be addressed with planned practices; Field border (386), Filter Strip (393) or Cover crop (340) in a field adjacent to a sensitive area (pond, stream, wetland, sinkhole). (100 pts)
2. Will Soil Quality Limitations- Organic Matter Depletion resource concern be addressed with EQIP planned practice Cover Crop (340) to be applied on eligible cropland acres? (75 pts)
3. Will Source Water Depletion - inefficient irrigation water use be addressed with EQIP planned practices: Irrigation Land Leveling (464), Irrigation Pipeline (430) and/or Irrigation System Surface and Subsurface (443), Sprinkler system (442), micro irrigation (441) to be completed the eligible cropland acres on the Tract(s)? (75 pts)
4. Will the planned practices increase irrigation efficiency? (50 pts. Max)
 - a. 4a. The application will increase irrigation efficiency <10% (10 pts.)
 - b. 4b. The application will increase irrigation efficiency 10-20% (25 pts.)
 - c. 4c. The application will increase irrigation efficiency >20% (50 pts.)
5. Does the assessment address Wind and Water Erosion by including planned practices that convert a portion of the offered acres from annual cropland to permanent vegetation utilizing wildlife friendly or native species? Answer YES if the assessment includes one of the conservation practices listed below as a planned practice to address Wind and Water Erosion on at least 5% of the offered cropland acres, and the plantings will specifically utilize wildlife friendly or native species. (50 pts.)
 - a. Conservation Cover (327)
 - b. Contour Buffer Strips (332)
 - c. Critical Area Planting (342)
 - d. Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)
 - e. Field Border (386)
 - f. Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390)
 - g. Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
 - h. Filter Strip (393)
 - i. Grassed Waterway (412)
 - j. Wildlife Habitat Planting (420)
 - k. Forage and Biomass Planting (512)
 - l. Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)

Team 4 Pasture

1. Will Degraded Plant Condition - Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health resource concern be addressed with planned practice Prescribed Grazing (528)? (100 pts)
2. Does the proposed project address a wildlife resource concern such as pollinator habitat, shelter or food source? (50 pts)
3. Will Livestock Production Limitation - Inadequate Feed and Forage be addressed by including planned practice Forage and Biomass Planting (512) inter-seeding legumes on 25% of the eligible pastureland acres? (50 pts)
4. Will Degraded Plant Condition - Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health resource concern be addressed and will the EQIP planned practice Access Control (472) be utilized on at least one sensitive area (i.e. stream, spring, wetlands, and water bodies) to exclude livestock within the pastureland acres where livestock currently have access? (50 pts)
5. Will the planned practices increase irrigation efficiency? (50 pts. Max)
 - a. 5a. The application will increase irrigation efficiency <10% (10 pts.)
 - b. 5b. The application will increase irrigation efficiency 10-20% (25 pts.)
 - c. 5c. The application will increase irrigation efficiency >20% (50 pts.)

Team 4 Forestry and Wildlife

1. Will Forest Stand Improvement (666) be applied on at least 25% of the offered acres (as recommend in an existing Forest Management Plan or Forest Stewardship Plan)? (100 pts.)
2. Will the proposed practices address wildfire hazard and excessive biomass accumulation using prescribed fire (as recommend in an existing Forest Management Plan or Forest Stewardship Plan) (338)? (75 pts.)
3. Is the area to be treated located within 500 feet of a 303D listed stream? (50 pts.)
4. Will Brush Management (314) and/or Herbaceous Weed Control (315) practice be applied to specifically address invasive/noxious/prohibited plants, such as non-native salt cedar, Russian olive, camelthorn, knapweed, etc. on the offered acres where these species occur (as recommend in an existing Forest Management Plan or Forest Stewardship Plan)? (50 pts.)
5. Does the proposed project complement existing work from private, municipal, county, state, and/or federal cooperators? (25 pts.)
6. Inadequate Habitat: Will at least one planned practice be implemented on the offered planning land unit to provide beneficial habitat for native pollinators? (25 pts.)

Team 4 White Mountain Apache Tribal

1. Will the proposed project include implementation of a prescribed grazing plan (528) (50 points)
2. Will the proposed project complement or connect existing conservation practices in the area of concern? (100 points)
3. Will brush management (314) be applied on the application acres where woody species have been determined to be invasive per the ESD? (100 points)
4. Will the planned practices increase irrigation efficiency? (75 pts. Max)
 - a. 4a. The application will increase irrigation efficiency <10% (25 points)
 - b. 4b. The application will increase irrigation efficiency 10-20% (50 points)
 - c. 4c. The application will increase irrigation efficiency >20% (75 points)
5. Will the planned practices directly benefit a Tribal species of concern? (25 points)
6. Will Degraded Plant Condition - Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health resource concern be addressed with EQIP planned practice Fence (382)? (50 points)

Team 4 High Tunnel

1. Will the planned High Tunnel(s) be located within a food desert?
2. Does the applicant meet the NRCS definition of a Veteran Farmer or Rancher (VFR)?
3. Does the applicant meet the NRCS definition of Beginning Farmer or Rancher?
4. Does the applicant meet the NRCS definition of Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher?
5. Does the applicant meet the NRCS definition of Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher?
6. Does the assessment include at least one High Tunnel (325) as a planned practice on acres where specialty crop production has occurred for at least three out of the past five years (2016-2020)? (100 pts)
*Answer yes if the at least one planned High Tunnel is on a site that has been in fruit or vegetable production (crops that can be grown in a high tunnel) for at least three of the past five years.
7. Will Degraded Plant condition- plant productivity and health resource concern be addressed with high tunnel (325) and 50% or more of the crops grown in the operation are currently being sold direct to consumer; donated to food banks or other similar facility; or used as a part of a coordinated food system using church, market, or other educational networks? (150 pts.)
*The intent is to prioritize local food production and distribution to the public. Home use = a no answer.

Team 5 (Avondale, Parker, Yuma)

Team 5 Irrigation Efficiency

1. Will system efficiency of irrigation system be improved by greater than 20%
2. Will a nutrient management and/or pest management plan be implemented?
3. Will practices that address soil quality be implemented with application (e.g. Cover Crop, Irrigation Water Management, Mulching, Residue and Tillage Management etc.)?
4. Has producer cancelled a contract within the last 3 years?

Team 5 Air Quality

1. Will application apply practices that will directly reduce particulate release?
2. Will irrigation water management be applied to maintain adequate soil moisture levels?
3. Will application apply more than just dust control and irrigation practices, to address PM release/wind erosion?
4. Has producer cancelled a contract within the last 3 years?

Team 5 Livestock Water Availability

1. Will the application create a reliable network of waters, within PLU?
2. Will the proposed project include implementation of a grazing management plan?
3. Will the project entail renewable energy sources vs. traditional sources?
4. Has producer cancelled a contract within the last 3 years?

Team 5 Colorado River Indian Tribe

1. Will the proposed project address the resource concern Insufficient Water- Inefficient use of irrigation water?
For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to above 95%? (40 Pts)
 - b. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to 86-95%? (30 Pts)
 - c. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to 80-85%? (20 Pts)
2. Will system efficiency of irrigation system be improved by greater than 20%
 - a. Yes (50 PTS)
 - b. No (0 PTS)
3. Will the proposed project include a flow measuring device and irrigation water management?
 - a. Yes (50 PTS)
 - b. No (0 PTS)

Team 6 (Casa Grande, Chandler)

Team 6 Irrigated Cropland

1. The application will increase irrigation efficiency
 - a. 5-10%,
 - b. 10-15%,
 - c. 15-20%,
 - d. >20%

2. Will the conservation treatment incorporate irrigation water management with soil moisture sensors and have an annual water savings of 30% or greater from an irrigation system that will be installed as part of the treatment or from an irrigation system that has been installed within the previous 5 years?
3. Will the conservation treatment incorporate IWM with soil moisture sensors and have an annual water savings of 20% - 29% from an irrigation system that will be installed as part of the treatment or from an irrigation system that has been installed within the previous 5 years?
4. Will the conservation treatment incorporate IWM with soil moisture sensors and have an annual water savings of 15% - 19% from an irrigation system that will be installed as part of the treatment or from an irrigation system that has been installed within the previous 5 years?
5. Will the practices planned for EQIP include new water management tools such as variable speed pump controllers, automated drip system or pivot controls, moisture sensors, flow controls, or similar?

Team 6 Irrigated Pasture

1. The application will increase irrigation efficiency
 - a. 5-10%,
 - b. 10-15%,
 - c. 15-20%,
 - d. >20%
2. Will the conservation treatment incorporate irrigation water management with soil moisture sensors and have an annual water savings of 30% or greater from an irrigation system that will be installed as part of the treatment or from an irrigation system that has been installed within the previous 5 years?
3. Will the conservation treatment incorporate IWM with soil moisture sensors and have an annual water savings of 20% - 29% from an irrigation system that will be installed as part of the treatment or from an irrigation system that has been installed within the previous 5 years?
4. Will the conservation treatment incorporate IWM with soil moisture sensors and have an annual water savings of 15% - 19% from an irrigation system that will be installed as part of the treatment or from an irrigation system that has been installed within the previous 5 years?
5. Will the practices planned for EQIP include new water management tools such as variable speed pump controllers, automated drip system or pivot controls, moisture sensors, flow controls, or similar?

Team 6 Urban

1. Will the application assist the producer to improve plant productivity, health and vigor?
2. Will the application assist the producer to grow plants in areas where they are not typically suited or adapted to grow through the implementation of conservation measures to improve soil health?
3. Will the application assist the producer to reduce water use for crop production by changing the irrigation system to a water conserving system such as sprinklers or micro-irrigation?
4. Is roof runoff management a contracted practice (a gutter system and storage tanks to capture storm runoff from high tunnel)?
5. Are excessive winds a concern and addressed in the project by installing a windbreak/shelterbelt or hedgerow planting?

Team 7 (Douglas, Sells, Tucson)

Team 7 Southern Cochise County Irrigated Crop and Pasture Lands

1. The application will increase irrigation efficiency.
 - a. a. <10%
 - b. b. 10-20%
 - c. c. >20%
2. Does the applicant plan to finish all structural practices within 1 year after approval of a contract?

3. Are practices that were implemented by the applicant under previous Farm Bill Program contracts, and which are within their identified lifespan being operated and maintained according to practice standards?
4. Will the proposed project address either or both of the following resource concerns; Poor Plant Productivity and/or Erosion (wind and/or water)?
5. Will the proposed project include a flow measuring device and/or irrigation water management for at least 1 year?

Team 7 SE AZ Rangeland Restoration

1. Does the EQIP application include the conservation practice 314 Brush Management to address noxious and invasive plant resource concerns?
2. Does the EQIP application appropriate 55% or more of its financial obligation towards the implementation of 314 Brush Management?
3. Does the EQIP application include 528 Prescribed Grazing?
4. Does the land proposed for EQIP funding include 10 or more wildlife and/or plant species which are categorized as endangered, threatened, candidate or as a species of concern according to the USF&WS, USFS, BLM and/or AZSLD listings, within 5 miles or less, according to the AZG&F On-line Environmental Review Tool or USF&WS IPaC Tool?

Team 7 Tohono O'odham Rangeland

1. Will the proposed project address resources concern that will assist land users to manage for drought situations? (i.e. - inadequate stock water and forage)?
2. Will brush management be applied on the application acres where woody species have been determined to be invasive?
3. Will the proposed project address two or more locally identified resource concerns?
4. Does the proposed activities reduce erosion?
5. Will the proposed project address at least two LWG identified resource concerns?

Team 7 Tohono O'odham Dryland Farming

1. Will the proposed project address two locally identified resource concerns?
2. Will the proposed project use existing topographical characteristics of land in determining farm design preserving topsoil?
3. Will Residue and Tillage Management be contracted for two growing seasons to help address a high rate of potential evapotranspiration, low organic matter levels, and rains which fall mostly as heavy showers and are lost to run-off?
4. Will the proposed project address Naturally Available Moisture Use by land use which does not limit the sustainable and beneficial use of the water resource?
5. Will the proposed project utilize plants adapted to the site, meet production goals, this includes addressing pollinators and beneficial insects and do not negatively impact other resources?

Team 7 South Central AZ Irrigated Crop and Pasture Lands

1. The application will increase irrigation efficiency.
 - a. a. <10%
 - b. b. 10-20%
 - c. c. >20%
2. Will the proposed project address three or more locally identified resource concerns?
3. Will the proposed project address the two locally identified resource concerns specified (Source Water Depletion & Soil Quality Limitations)?
4. Will the proposed project result in implementation of all planned structural practices within 2 years of contract obligation and within 4 years for all management practices?
5. Will the proposed project include a flow measuring device and irrigation water management?

6. Will Residue Management-Conservation tillage (30 percent or more crop residue left after planting) be contracted for at least 2 years?
7. Will the practices to be implemented build upon practices already implemented through an approved conservation plan?
8. Will the proposed plan include implementation of a nutrient management plan, complete with record keeping?

Team 7 Rangeland Water Quantity and Degraded Plant Condition Strategy

1. Will the planned project address resource concerns that will help land users to manage for drought situations (water development for livestock/wildlife)?
2. Will the proposed project include implementation of a grazing management plan (Prescribed Grazing, complete with record keeping)?
3. Will the proposed project address the two locally identified resource concerns specified in this CIS (Livestock Production Limitation & Degraded Plant Condition)?
4. Will the proposed project result in implementation of all planned structural practices within 2 years of contract obligation and within 4 years for all management practices?
5. Will the practices to be implemented build upon practices already implemented through an approved conservation plan?
6. Will the planned practices benefit multiple Species of Concern?

Team 8 (Safford, Willcox, San Carlos)

Team 8 Brush Management

1. Does the proposed project address all three priority resource concerns? 100 pts
2. Does the EQIP application include the conservation practices listed below to address: Degraded Plant Condition and Livestock Production limitation (inadequate water) A-Brush Management B-Livestock Pipeline, Pumping Plant, Watering Facility, Water Well - 50 pts
3. Does the application include practices that will benefit wildlife species identified by the AZGFD as species of greatest conservation need within the district? 35 pts
4. Are practices that were implemented in previous Farm Bill program contracts, and which are within their identified practice lifespan, being operated and maintained according to practice standards? 15 pts
5. Will the proposed project address a specific noxious/invasive species identified by the Local Work Group or is listed on the Arizona Noxious/Invasive species list? 50 pts

Team 8 Cropland

1. Will the proposed project include a flow measuring device and irrigation water management? Pts: 50
2. Are practices that were implemented by the applicant under previous Farm Bill Program contracts, and which are within their identified lifespan being operated and maintained according to practice standards? Pts:25
3. Does the applicant include at least 2 practices with a lifespan of 10 years or more, as documented in the Conservation Practice Standards database that addresses source water depletion? Pts: 100
4. Does the applicant have existing water conservation practices already in place at the time the application is received? (i.e. existing maintained operating flowmeter) Pts:35
5. The application will increase irrigation efficiency rating by:
 - a. <10 pts:10
 - b. 10-15 pts: 20
 - c. 15-20 pts: 30
 - d. >20 pts: 40

Team 8 General Range

1. Will the proposed project result in Implementation of all planned structural practices within [2] years of contract obligation and within years for all management practices? (50 pts)
2. Are practices that were implemented by the applicant under previous Farm Bill Program contracts, and which are within their identified lifespan being operated and maintained according to practice standards? (50 pts)
3. Does the proposed project address all three priority resource concerns? (75 pts)
4. Will the proposed project include implementation of a grazing management plan (Prescribed Grazing, complete with recordkeeping)? (25 pts)
5. Will the proposed project address resource concerns that will assist land users to manage for drought situations? (i.e.-Inadequate stock water and forage)? (25 pts)
6. Application will establish a network of reliable waters for the following % of the management unit (ranch) (25 pts total)
 - a. 10-15%: 10 pts
 - b. 15-50%: 15 pts
 - c. >50%: 25 pts

Team 8 Apache-Sitegreaves Range

1. Will the proposed project result in implementation of all planned structural practices within [2] years of contract obligation and within 4 years for all management practices? (25 pts)
2. Are practices that were implemented by the applicant under previous Farm Bill Program contracts, and which are within their identified lifespan being operated and maintained according to practice standards? (50 pts)
3. Does the proposed project address all three priority resource concerns? (75 pts)
4. Will the proposed project include implementation of a grazing management plan (Prescribed Grazing, complete with recordkeeping)? (25 pts)
5. Will the proposed project address resource concerns that will assist land users to manage for drought situations? (i.e.-Inadequate stock water and forage)? (25 pts)
6. Application will establish a network of reliable waters for the following % of the management unit (ranch) (25 pts total)
 - a. 10-15%: 10 pts
 - b. 15-50%: 15 pts
 - c. >50%: 25 pts

Team 8 Gila Valley Irrigation Project

1. Will the project involve a practice that will minimize the water loss and divert water efficiently from the main diversion? (50 pts)
2. Will the project involve practices which will result in efficient use of irrigation water such as installation of water control structures? (75 pts)
3. The application includes irrigation practice(s) that will increase field irrigation efficiency by at least 15 -20 percent? (50pts)
4. Does the applicant plan to finish all structural practices within 2 years after approval of a contract? (25 pts)
5. Will the contract include implementation of an irrigation water management plan, complete with record keeping? (25 pts)
6. Will the proposed project address the highest priority locally identified resource concern (irrigation efficiency)? (25 pts)

Team 8 San Carlos Apache Tribal

1. Will the proposed project address two or more locally identified resource concerns? (50 pts)

2. Will the proposed project have a positive long-term impact on community members and natural resources by addressing locally identified long term resource concerns? (50 pts)
3. Will this project contribute to the quality of water by decreasing the concentration of salts and other chemicals in surface and groundwater supplies? (50 pts)
4. Will the proposed project address a resource concern that is identified in an overall land management plan (i.e. approved Tribal Integrated Resources Management Plan IRMP, Forest Management Plan, Wildlife Management Plan, Livestock Operation/Management Plans...etc.)? (50 pts)
5. Will the proposed project address long-term wildlife habitat concerns? (50 pts)

State Initiatives

Strike Force General

1. Does the applicant meet the NRCS definition of a veteran farmer or rancher (VFR)?
 - a. Yes 20 points
 - b. No 0 points
2. How many state priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application?
 - a. Three or more priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application 100 points
 - b. Two priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application 75 points
 - c. One priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application
 - d. No priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application

Arizona BFR

1. Does the applicant meet the NRCS definition of a veteran farmer or rancher (VFR)?
 - a. Yes 20 points
 - b. No 0 points
2. How many state priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application?
 - a. Three or more priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application 100 points
 - b. Two priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application 75 points
 - c. One priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application
 - d. No priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application

Arizona SD

1. Does the applicant meet the NRCS definition of a veteran farmer or rancher (VFR)?
 - a. Yes 20 points
 - b. No 0 points
2. How many state priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application?
 - a. Three or more priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application 100 points
 - b. Two priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application 75 points
 - c. One priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application
 - d. No priority resource concerns will be addressed in this application

Urban Conservation

1. Does the proposed application include a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. How many resource concerns will the application address?
 - a. 1 resource concern
 - b. 2 resource concerns
 - c. 3 or more resource concerns

3. Does the applicant self-certify for any of the following HU Categories on the NRCS-CPA-1200? Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher, or Veteran Farmer or Rancher
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
4. Does the proposed application participate in a Farm to School Program?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. Is the proposed application located within a food desert, as defined by USDA?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
6. Are the majority of the crops produced by the applicant distributed to residents living in a food desert?
 - a. Yes, LI and LA at 1 and 10 miles
 - b. Yes, LI and LA at ½ and 10 miles
 - c. No
 - d. Not applicable
7. Does the applicant sell directly at a Farmers Market or to a School?
 - a. Yes, to both
 - b. Yes, to a School only
 - c. Yes, to a Farmers Market only
 - d. No
8. What type of crops does the applicant produce?
 - a. Specialty Crops Only
 - b. Combination of Specialty and Traditional Crops
 - c. Traditional Crops Only

National Initiatives

FY21 Air Quality National

- 1) Will the application will result in annual Nox reductions greater than 1 ton/year?
- 2) Will the application result in on-farm PM10 reductions greater than 75% from existing conditions?
- 3) Is the application located within 1/2 mile of a public use area such as a school, hospital, senior center, residential area?
- 4) Will the application result in the implementation of 2 or more planned conservation practices on at least 75% of the offered acres?
- 5) Choose the most appropriate response below regarding the location of the project with regard to EPA National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) designations for the area.
 - a. EQIP project is located in a county that has an EPA NAAQS non-attainment designation for PM2.5, PM10 and Ozone (all 3).
 - b. EQIP project is located in a county that has an EPA NAAQS non-attainment designation for 2 out of of these pollutants (PM2.5, PM10 and Ozone).
 - c. EQIP project is located in a county that has an EPA NAAQS non-attainment designation for 1 out of 3 of these pollutants (PM2.5, PM10 and Ozone)
 - d. EQIP project is not located in a county that has an EPA NAAQS non-attainment designation (PM2.5, PM10 and Ozone)
- 6) If the EQIP application is located in an ozone nonattainment area, choose the most appropriate response below regarding the location of the project with regard to the EPA National Ambient Air Standards (NAAQS) ozone designation for the area.

- 7) If the EQIP application is located in a PM10 nonattainment or maintenance area, choose the most appropriate response below regarding the location of the project with regard to the EPA NAAQS PM10 designation for the area.
 - a. EQIP project is located in an area that is designated as serious nonattainment by the EPA for PM10 or is a PM10 maintenance area that was previously designated as serious nonattainment. (Maricopa, Pinal Counties)
 - b. EQIP project is located in an area that is designated as moderate nonattainment by the EPA for PM10. (Cochise, Gila, Pima, Santa Cruz, Yuma Counties)
 - c. EQIP project is not located in either of these areas
- 8) Choose the most appropriate response below regarding the potential for the EQIP application to replace existing diesel engines used on farm - All retired engines must be destroyed according to requirements outlined in the Combustion System Improvement practice standard.
 - a. The EQIP project results in replacement of one or more existing diesel engine(s) with energy efficient electric motor(s).
 - b. The EQIP project results in replacement of one existing pre-1980 diesel engine with the most current Tier-level diesel engine.
 - c. The EQIP project results in replacement of one existing 1980 or newer diesel engine with the most current Tier-level diesel engine
 - d. The EQIP project will not result in replacement of any diesel engines.
- 9) If the EQIP application includes irrigation system improvements, please answer all of the following questions.
 - a. Irrigation runoff will be less than 20% and the potential for Irrigation Induced Erosion will be reduced to Low or Very Low from Moderate or greater
 - b. More than three practices will be implemented that include crop rotation, cover crops, residue and tillage management practices, nutrient management, pest management, pollinator plantings, and irrigation water management
 - c. The proposed project will include a flow measuring device and irrigation water management.
 - d. None of the previous conditions is true.

Working Lands for Wildlife

- 1) What is the improvement score ("after" minus "bench" score) on the SWFL WHEG?
 - a. >0.5, and the "after" score is 0.5 or greater 150
 - b. >0.4, and the "after" score is 0.49 or greater 120
 - c. 0.3 - 0.39, and the "after" score is 0.5 or greater 90
 - d. 0.2 - 0.29, and the "after" score is 0.5 or greater 60
 - e. 0.1 - 0.19, and the "after" score is 0.5 or greater 30
 - f. 0 - 0.1, and the "after" score is 0.5 or greater 0
 - g. the "after" score is less than 0.5 -100
- 2) What is the "after" SWFL WHEG score?
 - a. >0.9 100
 - b. >0.8 to 0.9 75
 - c. >0.7 to 0.8 50
 - d. >0.6 to 0.7 25
 - e. >0.5 to 0.6 0
- 3) Is there credible verification of species occurrence (for example, photos, Heritage Database, USFWS, NRCS or State fish and wildlife agency documentation)?
- 4) Based upon available species occurrence data and information, can the target species reasonably be assumed to occur within the offered area?
- 5) The offered area shares a common border with an area with known populations of the target species.
- 6) The offered area is proximal to an area with a known population of the target species. Proximal means within the accepted normal species dispersal ability.
- 7) Will 75% or more of the practices be located within the Focal Area?

WaterSMART Grover Hills Irrigation District Area

1. Will the proposed project address the resource concern Insufficient Water- Inefficient use of irrigation water?
For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to above 95%? (40 Pts)
 - b. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to 86-95%? (30 Pts)
 - c. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to 80-85%? (20 Pts)
2. Will system efficiency of irrigation system be improved by greater than 20%
 - a. Yes (50 PTS)
 - b. No (0 PTS)
3. Will the proposed project include a flow measuring device and irrigation water management?
 - a. Yes (50 PTS)
 - b. No (0 PTS)

WaterSMART Upper Verde Watershed and Prescott AMA

1. Will the proposed project address the resource concern Insufficient Water- Inefficient use of irrigation water?
For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to above 95%? (40 Pts)
 - b. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to 86-95%? (30 Pts)
 - c. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to 80-85%? (20 Pts)
2. Will system efficiency of irrigation system be improved by greater than 20%
 - a. Yes (50 PTS)
 - b. No (0 PTS)
3. Will the proposed project include a flow measuring device and irrigation water management?
 - a. Yes (50 PTS)
 - b. No (0 PTS)
1. Are practices located on or near one of the priority ranch projects identified in WRMPP? (60 pnts)
 - a. Yes, located on a priority ranch (60 pnts)
 - b. Yes, located within 1 mile of priority ranch projects (40 pnts)
 - c. Yes located within 1-3 miles of priority ranch projects (20 pnts)
 - d. No, located greater than 3 miles from a priority ranch (0 pnts)
2. How many priority resources concerns (Surface Water Depletion, Groundwater Depletion, Inefficient Irrigation Water Use, or Naturally Available Moisture Use) will be addressed? (40 pnts)
 - a. 1 (20 pnts)
 - b. 2 (40 pnts)
 - c. 3 (60 pnts)
 - d. All (80 pnts)
 - e. None (0 pnts)
3. How many related resource concerns will be addressed (Terrestrial Habitat for Wildlife and Invertebrates or Sediment transported to surface waters)? (30 pnts)
 - a. 1 (15 pnts)
 - b. All (30 pnts)

- c. None (0 pnts)
- 4. Is grade stabilization or rare and declining habitats (zuni bowls, one-rock dams, etc.) planned in the life of the contract? (range/forest) (50 pnts)
 - a. Yes (50 pnts)
 - b. No (0 pnts)
- 4.

WaterSMART Roosevelt Irrigation Water Supply District

1. Will the proposed project address the resource concern Insufficient Water- Inefficient use of irrigation water?
For the next 3 questions, answer yes to only one.
 - a. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to above 95%? (40 Pts)
 - b. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to 86-95%? (30 Pts)
 - c. On the contracted field(s), will the planned farm irrigation rating index max percent rating be improved to 80-85%? (20 Pts)
2. Will system efficiency of irrigation system be improved by greater than 20%
 - a. Yes (50 PTS)
 - b. No (0 PTS)
3. Will the proposed project include a flow measuring device and irrigation water management?
 - a. Yes (50 PTS)
 - b. No (0 PTS)

Joint Chiefs Bradshaw Cross Boundary

- 1) Is a vegetation management practice being applied to address an excessive wildfire hazard resource concern (60% of maximum points)
- 2) Do the practices included in the application address a resource concern associated with wildlife habitat fragmentation (20% of maximum points)
- 3) Are more than 75% of the practices included in the application directly addressing either excessive wildlife hazard or wildlife habitat (20% of maximum points)

Joint Chiefs Sentinel Landscape

- 1) Does the application encourage reduction of hazardous fuels by considering other techniques such as hand thinning, mastication, and herbicide treatments? Does the application work with State and Federal partners to implement recovery plans for federally-listed species Does the application work with willing public and private landowners to preserve and enhance appropriate habitat areas for listed species?
- 2) Does the application utilize cross boundary treatments to reduce hazardous fuels, accomplish ecological goals, and provide for public safety?
- 3) Does the application work with willing public and private landowners to preserve and enhance appropriate habitat areas for listed species?
- 4) Does the application utilize cross boundary treatments to reduce hazardous fuels, accomplish ecological goals, and provide for public safety?
- 5) The proposed practices will address the primary resource concern within 1 mile of an existing treatment or treatment planned for implementation within 2 years