

What does NRCS mean by “resource concerns”?

In 2020 NRCS Alaska, with input from local partners across the state, adopted four over-arching goals for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP):

- Increase freshwater fish habitat and populations
- Protect and enhance traditionally and culturally used resources
- Promote forestland health and reduce wildfire hazard
- Improve soil health

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/ak/programs/financial/eqip/>

EQIP funds “**conservation practices**,” specific activities that landowners can implement on-the-ground to address specific natural resource concerns. In NRCS lingo, a “**resource concern**” is a condition of the soil, water, air, plant, animal or energy resource base that does not meet minimum acceptable standards established by NRCS, a condition that impairs the sustainability or intended used of the resource.

In Alaska, NRCS groups natural resource concerns into the following 17 categories:

- Air quality emissions
- Aquatic habitat
- Concentrated erosion
- Degraded plant condition
- Field pesticide loss
- Field sediment, nutrient & pathogen loss
- Fire management
- Inefficient energy use
- Livestock production limitation
- Pest pressure
- Salt losses to water
- Soil quality limitations
- Source water depletion
- Storage and handling of pollutants
- Terrestrial habitat
- Weather resilience
- Wind and water erosion

Each category encompasses a number of related resource concerns, as shown on the reverse.

For further description of NRCS resource concerns and the planning criteria by which they are measured, see [National Resource Concern List and Planning Criteria \(NRCS, October 2020\)](#).

RESOURCE CONCERNS WITHIN CATEGORIES

Air quality emissions

Emission of airborne reactive nitrogen
 Emission of greenhouse gases - GHG's
 Emission of ozone precursors
 Emission of particulate matter (PM) and PM precursors
 Objectionable odor

Aquatic habitat

Aquatic habitat for fish and other organisms
 Elevated water temperature

Concentrated erosion

Bank erosion from streams, shorelines or water conveyance channels
 Classic gully erosion
 Ephemeral gully erosion

Degraded plant condition

Plant productivity and health
 Plant structure and composition

Field pesticide loss

Pesticides transported to groundwater
 Pesticides transported to surface water

Field sediment, nutrient and pathogen loss

Nutrients transported to groundwater
 Nutrients transported to surface water
 Pathogens and chemical from manure, biosolids or compost applications transported to groundwater
 Pathogens and chemical from manure, biosolids or compost applications transported to surface water

Fire management

Wildfire hazard from biomass accumulation

Inefficient energy use

Energy efficiency of equipment and facilities
 Energy efficiency of farming/ranching practices and field operations

Livestock production limitation

Feed and forage balance
 Inadequate livestock shelter
 Inadequate livestock water quality, quantity and distribution

Pest pressure

Plant pest pressure

Salt losses to water

Salts transported to groundwater
 Salts transported to surface water

Soil quality limitations

Aggregate instability
 Compaction
 Concentration of salts or other chemicals
 Organic matter depletion
 Soil organism habitat loss or degradation
 Subsidence

Source water depletion

Ground water depletion
 Inefficient irrigation water use
 Surface water depletion

Storage and handling of pollutants

Nutrients transported to groundwater
 Nutrients transported to surface water
 Pesticides transported to surface water
 Petroleum, heavy metals and other pollutants transported to groundwater
 Petroleum, heavy metals and other pollutants transported to surface water

Terrestrial habitat

Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates

Weather resilience

Drifted snow
 Naturally available moisture use
 Ponding and flooding
 Seasonal high water table
 Seeps

Wind and water erosion

Sheet and rill erosion
 Wind erosion