SEIZING A WATERSHED MOMENT

Making EQIP Work for Water Quality in 10 Mississippi River Border States

Environmental Quality Incentives Program
State Report 4 of 10

ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP

APPENDIX – STATE REPORTS

KENTUCKY
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

Kentucky received an average of $12.3 million in EQIP technical and financial assistance funds per year from 2003 to 2007, ranking it 9th out of the 10 states that border the Mississippi River for EQIP funds. Each of the 120 counties in Kentucky is grouped into one of 14 different pooling areas and all of the state's EQIP funds are distributed to these 14 geographic pooling areas.

Applications to participate in EQIP are evaluated using the specific ranking criteria document (called the Kentucky EQIP Application Field Worksheet) for the pooling area where the applicant's operation is located. Each of the 14 Worksheets has: (1) 5 questions, related to national EQIP priorities that are the same for each pooling area (2) 8 questions related to state criteria that are the same for each pooling area, (3) 9 to 10 different local issue questions specific to each of the 14 pooling areas, and (4) a cost-efficiency component.

The Kentucky State Technical Committee provides input on the funding allocation formula to the 14 pooling areas and the statewide priority resource concerns, recommends issues for the state level component of the Worksheet, and determines the weights of each section of the ranking criteria document. Local Work Groups in each of the 14 pooling areas identify and prioritize their resource concerns and create a list of "local issue" questions for use in the ranking tool. All local issue questions are reviewed and approved by the State Conservationist.

KENTUCKY EQIP WEBSITE

http://www.ky.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/EQIP2008/index2008.html

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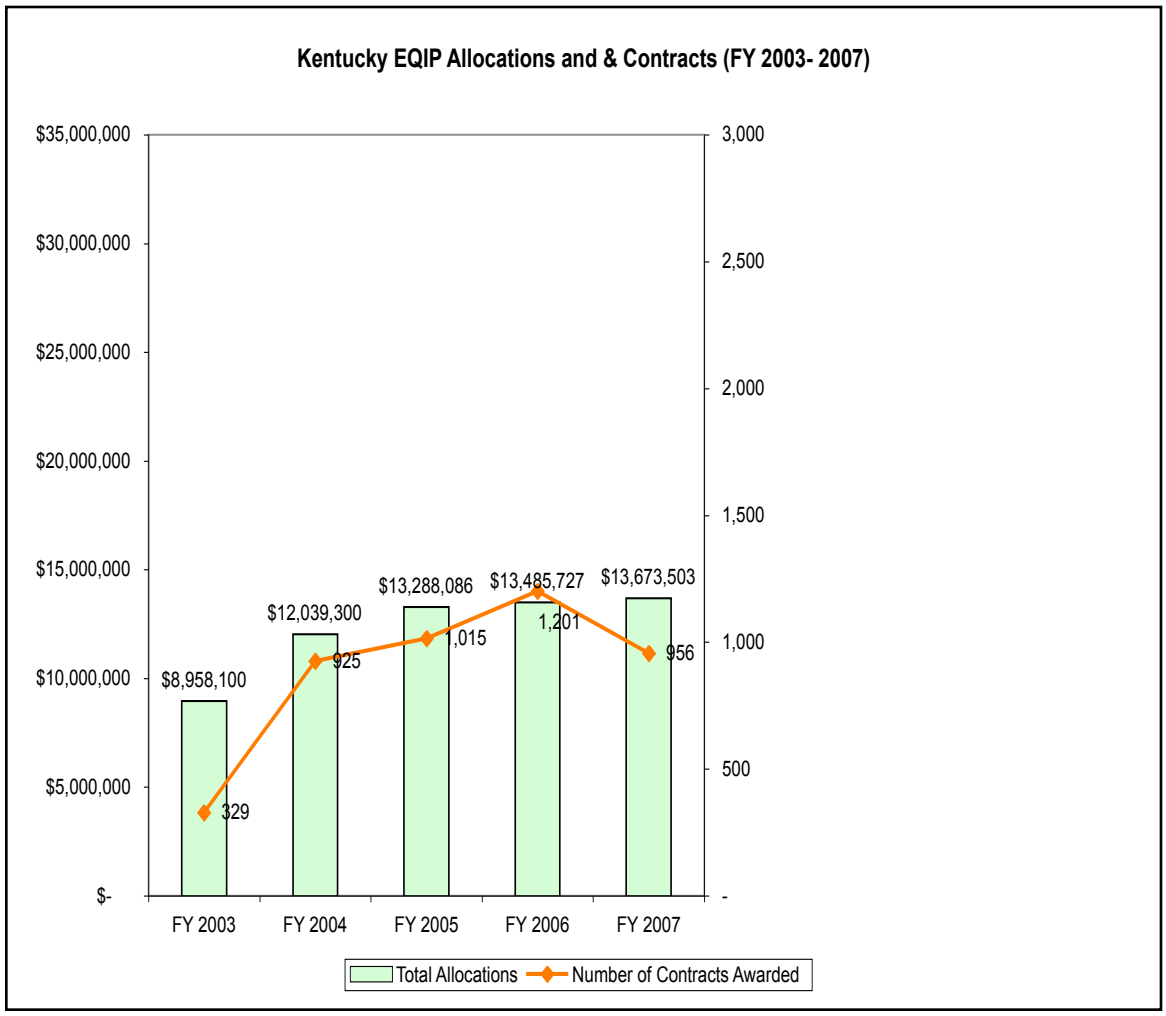
FUNDING AND REACH OF EQIP

EQIP funding is allocated to states using a national formula. The chart below shows the amount of financial and technical assistance Kentucky has received from FY 2003 to 2007 and the number of contracts awarded each fiscal year. A total of 4,426 contracts have been entered into with producers between 2003 and 2007 providing $61.4 million and addressing nearly 330,152 acres in the state.



Source: EWG compiled annual data from EQIP's "Allocation" and "Contract" tables found on the USDA NRCS website: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/EQIP/.

KEY FACTORS ANALYSIS

We analyzed the following factors for indications of the extent to which EQIP in Kentucky is focused on reducing sediment and nutrient loads to streams, lakes, and rivers: (1) the presence or absence of qualitative or quantitative goals for pollutant reductions, (2) methods used to allocate state-level funds to counties or other sub-state levels or to specific projects or priorities, and (3) the application ranking criteria used to

select participants in EQIP. We relied primarily on the information and data presented on the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) website to complete this analysis and followed up on our investigation with interviews of the state EQIP program manager.

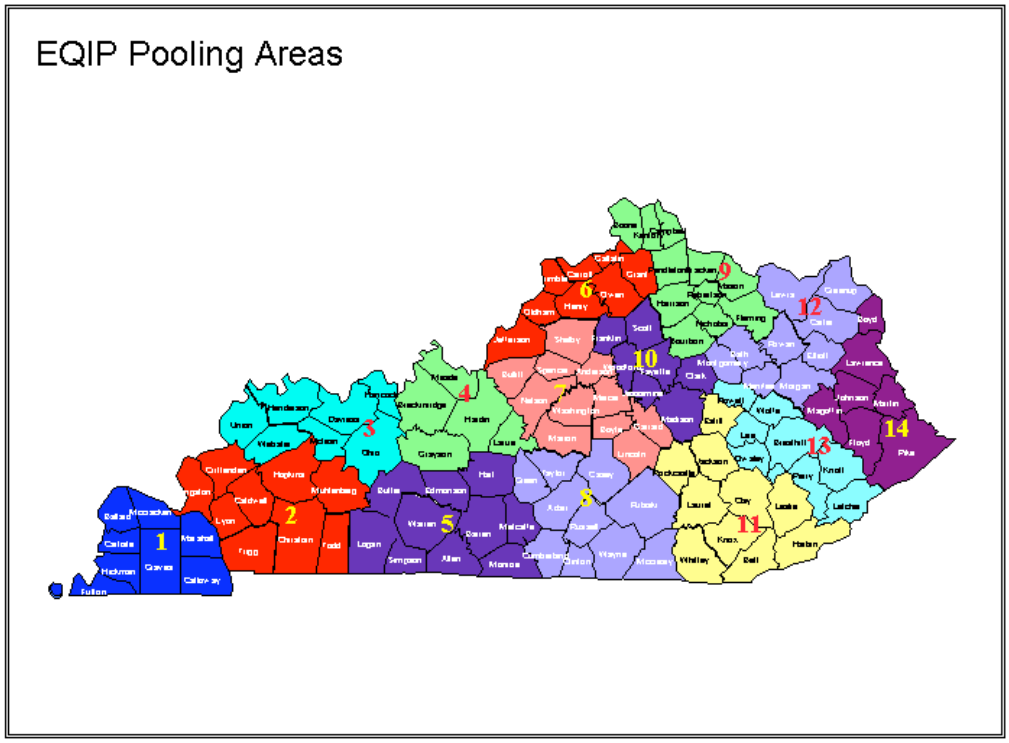
Goals

EWG did not find evidence to suggest that Kentucky EQIP has a) established explicit quantitative or qualitative goals for EQIP to clean up agricultural sources of pollution, b) identified which lakes, streams, or tributaries are priorities for improvement, c) set a timetable to achieve those goals, or d) established a means to track progress toward the goals. Kentucky's application ranking systems do create an implicit set of priorities for treating water quality, but measurable goals and timelines do not exist.

EWG recommends that Kentucky EQIP set clear and specific goals for how much and what types of agricultural pollution need to be reduced, which lakes, streams or tributaries are priorities for improvement, and a timetable to achieve those goals. EWG also recommends that Kentucky EQIP develop systems to track, evaluate, and report on the environmental performance of EQIP.

Fund Allocation

All of Kentucky's EQIP funds are distributed to the 14 pooling areas.



Source: http://www.ky.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/EQIP2008/map142007.html

Kentucky's 120 counties are grouped into one of the 14 pooling areas with about 6 to 11 counties comprising each pool. While each of the 14-pooled areas is guaranteed to receive funding, individual counties within each pooling area are not guaranteed funding. According to Tony Nott, Kentucky EQIP Principal, the State Technical Committee sets up the pooling areas and determines the regional formulas to allocate funds.

A state allocation formula is used to allocate funds to each of these 14 pooling areas. The formula is based on a variety of factors, including:

1. Number of livestock
2. Number of farms
3. Acres of prime farmland
4. Water quality concerns*
5. Wildlife concerns.

*The water quality concerns include the consideration of the Kentucky Department of Water's 305b report, agricultural-impaired waters, Outstanding Resource Waters, wild rivers, karst basin areas, wells and public water supply areas in each pooling area. The last time Kentucky EQIP reviewed this allocation formula was 2004 and Nott anticipates a new review of the formula soon.

EWG recommends that if funds are allocated directly to local jurisdictions, Kentucky EQIP should use allocation formulas based primarily on natural resource and environmental factors (rather than generic production factors) to channel more funding to localities with significant environmental problems associated with agriculture.

EWG recommends that Kentucky EQIP's best opportunity for improving water quality is to fund well-designed, watershed-based clean-up projects. This approach encourages multiple farmers within a watershed to reduce pollution to a specific lake, stream, or tributary to the Mississippi River.

The problem-solving advantages of this approach are well understood. They include focusing resources in specific locations to solve well-defined problems using a strategy that directs funding to those farmers within the watershed who can do the most to reduce pollution. Ideally, such water quality improvement projects include developing monitoring and evaluation systems to adjust the strategy and resource allocations based on the results that are being realized. Ramping up the emphasis in EQIP on such watershed-based clean-up projects would dramatically increase the effectiveness of the program.

EWG recommends that Kentucky EQIP allocate 60 percent of its EQIP funds to watershed-based clean-up projects by 2012. Kentucky EQIP should then allocate the remaining 40 percent of funds by 2012 to funding pools that target high priority natural

resource and environmental problems. These state-level funding pools create important opportunities to focus EQIP on the most pressing designated problems. The funding pools allow EQIP managers to select the best applications from all the applications proposing to address the same natural resource or environmental problem.

Application Ranking Criteria

Applications to participate in EQIP are evaluated using the specific ranking criteria document (called the Kentucky EQIP Application Field Worksheet) for the pooling area where the applicant's operation is located. Each of the 14 Worksheets has: (1) 5 questions, related to national EQIP priorities that are the same for each pooling area (2) 8 questions related to state criteria that are identical in each pooling area, (3) 7 to 10 different local issue questions specific to each of the 14 pooling areas, and (4) a cost-efficiency component. See Box 1 for background information on the cost-efficiency score.

Box 1. The Cost-Efficiency Score

A cost-efficiency score is generated for each application to determine how effective the cost-shared practices will be at addressing the priority resource concerns (soil, water, air, plant, animal, and human). The cost-efficiency score is calculated by multiplying the practice(s)'

Conservation Practice Physical Effects (CPPE) value(s)
x Service life of the practice(s)
/ Average cost of installing and maintaining the practice(s)

NRCS maintains a national database of each practice's CPPE value. CPPE values range from -5 to + 5 reflecting the practice's ability to worsen or improve each resource concern. The CPPE value can be modified by the state or local jurisdiction to reflect the soil, weather, topographic, and other state or local conditions that may impact the effectiveness of the practice.

All 10 Mississippi River border states are using the NRCS Pro-Tracts Cost-Efficiency software to calculate a Cost-Efficiency score for each application. However, because the Cost-Efficiency score is embedded in the software, this step in the ranking process is not transparent since the state EQIP managers were unable to fulfill our request of reviewing the CPPE values given to practices funded by EQIP.

Kentucky assigns 15 percent of the total ranking score to the national issues section, 20 percent to the state issues section, 30 percent to the local issues section, and 35 percent to the cost effectiveness factor. For information purposes, to achieve the aforementioned percentage of the total ranking score specified, the total points in the national section are multiplied by 0.6, the total points in the state section are multiplied by 0.8, and the total points in the local section are multiplied by 0.6. These multipliers

are used to adjust the points in each section to achieve the desired percentage of points for each section. After each section's total points has been added up and adjusted by the weighting system, applications that receive a greater total point score get a higher priority for selection.

According to Nott, the EQIP application process usually begins with a farmer inquiring at one of the 120 Soil Conservation and Water Quality Districts (SWCD) about a particular practice or problem they're experiencing. One of the Soil Conservationists or the District Conservationists would open up a case file of the farmer, complete an application, do a field visit with the farmer and fill out the Application Field Worksheet. The Conservationist then enters the results of the Worksheet into the national ProTracts database system.

Applications are collected at the SWCDs, ranked at the 90 or so Farm Service Agency Centers, and then sent to the State Conservationist's office where the ranked applications are then pooled into the 14 pooling areas. The EQIP personnel and the State Conservationist will determine a ranking cut-off score for each pool based on the funding available for each pool. Applications that have ranking scores lower than the cut-off score will be deemed ineligible for competition for funds in that pooling area. Applications will be awarded contracts in order of their ranking score. If there are funds leftover in one pooling area, they can be shifted to fund applications in another pooling area rather than fund applications that are below the cut-off score.

Each of the 14 Field Worksheets is a two-page document. (See Appendix for the Worksheet for Pooling Area 1 for FY2007, which was the most recent one available online) The first page lists National, State, and Local Issue questions. The second page is a checklist of 40 resource concerns and 40 eligible practices. However not all 40 resource concerns or practices are considered priorities in each pooling area. Thus, applications that pick the resource concerns and the practices that are priorities in each pooling area will receive greater ranking priority.

All the ranking criteria questions are in a Yes/No format and no points are provided online. Nott provided a version of the FY 2007 Application Field Worksheet for Pooling Area 1 with the points displayed.

To determine how much emphasis Kentucky EQIP places on the reduction of nutrient and sediment pollution and on geographic priority areas, we attempted a rough estimate of the percentage of raw, un-weighted points assigned to questions that appear to address these priorities. We acknowledge that this approach is incomplete and potentially misleading, as it does not account for the effect of the cost-efficiency score in the ranking criteria. We did not evaluate the cost-efficiency score since it is necessary to know which practices will be funded by EQIP in each application. We did include a review of the effect of the multipliers on the points provided in each National, State, and Local Issues section.

Overall, the lack of specificity in the ranking criteria made it difficult to identify points for reducing sediment and nutrient pollution and points for applications located in priority areas. Those complications are described in Box 2.

Box 2. The Lack of Specificity in Ranking Criteria

The ranking criteria in all 10 Mississippi River border states lacked sufficient specificity for us to determine with real certainty the emphasis each state was giving in its ranking sheets to the reduction of sediment and nutrient pollution and to areas of geographic importance. For example, many ranking factors do not specify the particular source of natural resource or environmental problems, such as sediment or nutrient loss from cropland. Instead, the ranking factors refer to more generic sources of problems, such as nonpoint source pollution.

In those cases where more specific types of pollutants like sediments or nutrients were cited, they were usually included in a longer list of pollutants, such as pathogens, pesticides, or excess salinity, making determination of the priorities implicit in the ranking criteria difficult. A similar lack of specificity hampered our ability to determine the emphasis placed on location of an application within a priority watershed or other geographic unit.

Despite these difficulties, it is clear that the factors used in ranking criteria and the priority assigned those factors through point allocations and multipliers are critical determinants of effectiveness of EQIP in reducing sediment and nutrient pollution.

Regarding emphasis on geographic priorities, a review of the FY 2007 Application Field Worksheet for Pooling Area 1 with the points displayed (see Appendix) indicates that Kentucky does not appear to give much emphasis to geographic priorities. In the National Issues section, Kentucky asks National Priorities Question 1 which includes a reference to impaired watersheds:

> "Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in considerable reductions of non-point source pollution, such as nutrients, sediment, pesticides, excess salinity in impaired watersheds, groundwater contamination or point source contamination from confined animal feeding operations?"

This question does give some priority to an application located in an impaired watershed as part of a larger priority for addressing nonpoint and point source pollution.

The State Issues section of Kentucky's Pooling Area 1 ranking sheet clearly gives points for two geographic priority areas:

> "Is the majority of the application's acreage included in either a Kentucky Department of Water (DOW) identified watershed or high quality waters / classified stream?" (7 out of 100 total state section points or 7 percent)
>
> "Is the majority of the application's acreage included in either a well head protection area or karst area as identified by DOW?" (also 7 out of 100 total state section points or 7 percent).

The Local Issues section does give 10 points for the following geographic priority:

> "Does all fencing in this application exclude livestock by a minimum of 20' from sensitive areas such as water, woods, and wetlands?"

The 24 points for these 3 geographic priority factors represent just 6 percent of the 400 total points in the entire ranking system.

Regarding emphasis on reducing nutrient and sediment pollution, a review of Kentucky's Pooling Area 1 ranking sheet does not provide clear answers about how much priority Kentucky EQIP places on these two specific water quality impairments. For example, the National Priority Question 1 does mention the words "nutrients" and "sediment" but the question lacks sufficient specificity for us to distinguish between points awarded for treatment of nutrients and sediments versus points awarded for reducing excess salinity or pesticides.

The National Priorities Question 4 does allocate 24 points (24 percent of the 100 total points available from the National Priorities section) for applications that specifically address soil erosion and sedimentation.

> "Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation from unacceptable levels on agricultural land?"

In the State Issues section, there is one question related to water quality (installing buffers along surface waters and/or limiting livestock access to streams) and it receives the highest number of points, 20 out of 100 possible points (20 percent). Another question asks if the planned practices on cropland will reduce erosion and it receives 15 out 100 points (15 percent). However, there is no indication that the erosion occurring on the applicant's cropland may be causing a sedimentation problem in a body of water.

In the Local Issues Section of Worksheet for Pooling Area 1[1] (which is the only pooling area that is contiguous with the Mississippi River), there are 9 local questions. Three of

[1] ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/KY/EQIP/EQIP2007/PA01.pdf

the 9 questions provide points for addressing soil erosion: a) gully erosion – 70 points, b) ALL actively eroding gullies – 50 points, and c) streambank erosion – 8 points. Again, there is no discussion of whether these erosion problems are causing sedimentation problems. Three other questions relate to protecting water quality: a) inclusion of filter strips, buffers, borders – 30 points, b) fencing of livestock 20' from sensitive areas – 10 points, and c) stream crossing protection – 4 points. In total, these 6 out of 9 questions are likely to result in a reduction in sediment and nutrient pollution and provide 172 of the 200 possible local section points (86 percent).

Thus, 255 out of 400 maximum possible points (64 percent) in Kentucky's Pooling Area 1 Application Field Worksheet are provided for applications that are likely to reduce sedimentation and nutrient pollution and are located in geographically important areas. This evaluation of raw, un-weighted points is incomplete as it excludes the potential impact of the ranking criteria multipliers.

EWG applied the multipliers for the national (0.6), state (0.8) and local (0.6) issues section to the raw points estimated above and found that the points changed significantly. The multipliers slightly reduced the 64 percent of the raw, un-weighted points (255 out of 400) in the Pooling Area 1 Worksheet awarded for addressing the priority problems in priority areas to 62 percent (81 out of 130 weighted points). The percentage of points awarded in the national section for our priority issues was 24 percent (24 out of 100 points) and remained 24 percent (7.2 out of 30 weighted points) when the multiplier was applied. The 49 percent of points (49 out of 100 points) in the state section for the priority issues dropped to 48 percent (19.2 out of 40 weighted points) when the multiplier was applied. And the 91 percent of points (182 out of 200 points) in the local section remained at 91 percent (54.6 out of 60 weighted points) when the multiplier was applied.

Despite Kentucky EQIP appearing to give about 60 percent of unweighted points in the reviewed Worksheet to the most pressing concerns – nutrient and sediment pollution reduction in high priority areas – only about 2 percent of points are given to applications from priority watersheds. Thus, it is unlikely that Kentucky's ranking system can ensure that applications in the priority watersheds will rise to the top of the ranking list and get selected for funding.

EWG recommends that Kentucky EQIP revise their ranking systems to increase the priority given to applications located in high priority watersheds that will reduce sediment and nutrient pollution. Sediment and nutrient pollution are the two most important pollutants of streams, lakes, and reservoirs in the 10 states bordering the Mississippi River, the main stem of the Mississippi River, and the Dead Zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

Conclusion

We find that EQIP has not been deployed as effectively as it could be in Kentucky or any of the 9 states that border the Mississippi River. The methods used to decide how to spend EQIP dollars within the state and which farmers will get those dollars are more likely to result in diffuse and fragmented efforts to reduce pollution from farms rather than the focused and coordinated effort needed to solve both local and regional water pollution problems.

Watershed-based water quality clean-up projects are the best use of federal taxpayer resources and offer the greatest hope for cleaning up the unintended environmental damage of agriculture. These projects entail setting goals to clean up specific bodies of water that are deemed the highest priorities, determining how many of the most cost effective practices are needed, and persuading key farmers to participate in the project.

To quickly ramp up the effectiveness of EQIP, Kentucky NRCS should:

1. Set clear and specific goals for how much pollution needs to be reduced, which lakes, streams or tributaries are priorities for improvement, and a timetable to achieve those goals.

2. Use 60 percent of EQIP dollars by 2012 to fund watershed-based water quality clean-up projects that encourage multiple farmers within selected watersheds to reduce pollution to specific lakes, streams, or tributaries to the Mississippi River.

3. Use 40 percent of EQIP funds by 2012 in state-level funding pools to target the highest priority natural resource and environmental problems in each state.

4. Select farmers to participate in EQIP who can do the most to contribute to watershed-based clean-up projects or solve high priority problems.

APPENDIX—2007 Kentucky EQIP Ranking Criteria

Pooling Area 1

Kentucky Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

2007 Application Field Worksheet

Applicant(s):

Contract Number: Date:

Answer each question below, considering conservation practices planned to receive EQIP financial assistance. All applicants must sign a CCC-1200 in addition to this form to be considered for EQIP Funding.

	National Issues		
1	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in considerable reductions of non-point source pollution, such as nutrients, sediment, pesticides, excess salinity in impaired watersheds consistent with TMDL's where available as well as the reduction of groundwater contamination or point source such as contamination from confined animal feeding operations?	Yes	No
2	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the conservation of a considerable amount of ground or surface water resources?	Yes	No
3	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction of emissions, such as particulate matter, nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds, and ozone precursors and depleters that contribute to air quality impairment violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards?	Yes	No
4	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation from unacceptable levels on agricultural land?	Yes	No
5	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	Yes	No
	State Issues		
1	Planned EQIP practice(s) include installing buffers on perennial or intermittent streams, wetland, sinkholes, or permanent waterbodies and/or limiting or excluding livestock access to streams.	Yes	No
2	Application includes EQIP planned practice(s) that will improve grazing efficiency through a prescribed grazing system.	Yes	No
3	Will the practice benefit federally listed threatened or endangered species?	Yes	No
4	EQIP planned practice(s) on offered cropland acres include a conservation practice(s) that will reduce sheet and rill and/or gully erosion from the existing condition.	Yes	No
5	Will the offered acres be in a grassland bird conservation area identified in KY's Wildlife Action Plan including at least two practices identified in the State EQIP Handbook.	Yes	No
6	Application includes planned forest stand improvement to improve forest health species diversity and/or planned treatment of eroding areas on forest land.	Yes	No
7	Is the majority of the application acreage's included in either a DOW identified watershed or high quality waters/classified stream?	Yes	No
8	Is the majority of the application's acreage included in either a well head protection area or karst area as identified by DOW?	Yes	No
	Local Issues		
1	Does this application address gully erosion?	Yes	No
2	Are ALL actively eroding gullies being addressed in ALL fields included in this application?	Yes	No
3	Does this application include Filter Strips, Riparian Buffers and/or Field Borders?	Yes	No
4	Will planned EQIP practices include livestock watering facilities and/or fencing development practices to improve livestock grazing distribution?	Yes	No
5	Does all fencing in this application exclude livestock by a minimum of 20' from sensitive areas such as water, woods, and wetlands?	Yes	No
6	Does this application address streambank erosion concerns?	Yes	No
7	Does this application include the conversion of fescue to other species (or endophyte free fescue) and legumes to improve forage quality?	Yes	No
8	Does this application protect stream crossing areas to enhance water quality?	Yes	No
9	Does this application include the establishment of wildlife friendly plants?	Yes	No

Comments:

Pooling Area 1

Kentucky Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

2007 Application Field Worksheet

Resource Concerns

Select the appropriate resource concerns that will be addressed through this EQIP application.

_____ Adverse Air Temperature
_____ Excessive Greenhouse Gas – CO2
_____ Objectionable Odors
_____ Inadequate Quantities and Quality of Feed and Forage
_____ Inadequate Stock Water
_____ Stress and Mortality
_____ Habitat Fragmentation
_____ Inadequate Cover/Shelter
_____ Inadequate Food
_____ Inadequate Water
_____ T&E Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern
_____ Threatened and Endangered Fish and Wildlife Species
_____ Forage Quality and Palatability
_____ Noxious and Invasive Plants
_____ Plants not adapted or suited
_____ Productivity, Health and Vigor
_____ Compaction
_____ Contaminants – Animal Waste and Other Organics – N
_____ Contaminants – Animal Waste and Other Organics – P
_____ Contaminants – Commercial Fertilizer – N
_____ Contaminants – Commercial Fertilizer – P
_____ Damage from Sediment Deposition
_____ Organic Matter Depletion
_____ Classic Gully
_____ Ephemeral Gully
_____ Mass Movement
_____ Sheet and Rill
_____ Streambank
_____ Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Groundwater
_____ Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water
_____ Excessive Suspended Sediment and Turbidity in Surface Water
_____ Harmful Levels of Pathogens in Groundwater
_____ Harmful Levels of Pathogens in Surface Water
_____ Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Groundwater
_____ Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Surface Water
_____ Harmful Temperatures of Surface Water
_____ Excessive Runoff, Flooding, or Ponding
_____ Inadequate Outlets
_____ Reduced Capacity of Conveyances by Sediment Deposition
_____ Reduced Storage of Water Bodies by Sediment Accumulation

Planned Conservation Practices

The following list contains every conservation practice eligible for 2007 EQIP. List the field(s) and acres or extent for each conservation practice(s) that is planned for financial assistance through this EQIP application.

_____ Animal Trails and Walkways
_____ Composting Facility
_____ Conservation Cover
_____ Contour Buffer Strips
_____ Critical Area Planting
_____ Diversion
_____ Fence
_____ Field Border
_____ Filter Strip
_____ Forest Stand Improvement
_____ Forest Trails and Landings
_____ Grade Stabilization Structure
_____ Grassed Waterway
_____ Heavy Use Area Protection
_____ Hedgerow Planting
_____ Lined Waterway or Outlet
_____ Nutrient Management
_____ Pasture and Hay Planting
_____ Pipeline
_____ Pond
_____ Prescribed Grazing
_____ Restoration & Mgt of Declining Habitats
_____ Riparian Forest Buffer
_____ Shallow Water Management for Wildlife
_____ Silvopasture Establishment
_____ Sinkhole and Sinkhole Area Treatment
_____ Spring Development
_____ Stream Crossing
_____ Management
_____ Streambank and Shoreline Protection
_____ Terrace
_____ Tree/Shrub Establishment
_____ Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
_____ Use Exclusion
_____ Waste Storage Facility
_____ Waste Treatment Lagoon
_____ Water and Sediment Control Basin
_____ Water Well
_____ Watering Facility
_____ Wildlife Watering Facility

Applicant Signature

I am submitting this Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) application to NRCS for consideration. I understand that any practices started prior to an application being selected for funding and approved as a contract are not eligible for EQIP funding.

_____ **Signature of Applicant** _____ **Date**

_____ **Signature of NRCS Technical Representative** _____ **Date**

KY-EQIP Ranking Tool Summary for FY2007 – Priority Area 1 – provided by Tony Nott.

Ranking Tool Summary

for FY2007 - PA 1

(Released 02/27/2007)

Description:

2007 EQIP Programs Ranking Tool for Pooling Area 1.

Land Uses:

Crop, Forest, Hay, Headquarters, Mined, Pasture, Recreation, Wildlife

Efficiency Score:

Scoring Multiplier: 72.00

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 400 - 144	Medium: 143 - 20	Low: 19 - 0
Cost of requested practice(s) provide a high level of environmental benefits per program dollars invested. Requested practices fully treat the identified natural resource concerns.	Cost of requested practice(s) provide an average level of environmental benefits per program dollars invested. Requested practices may not fully treat the identified natural resource concerns.	Cost of requested practice(s) provide a low level of environmental benefits per program dollars invested. Requested practices may not treat the identified natural resource concerns.

Optional Notes:

National Priorities:

Scoring Multiplier: 0.60

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 60 - 15	Medium: 14 - 6	Low: 5 - 0
High score range for this element is 60-15 pts. Applications evaluated in this scoring range have addressed two or more of the national priorities.	Medium score range for this element is 14-6 pts. Applications evaluated in this scoring range have addressed at least one of the national priorities.	A low score for this element is 0 pts. Applications evaluated have not addressed any of the national priorities.

Questions:

Number	Question	Points
1	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in considerable reductions of non-point source pollution, such as nutrients, sediment, pesticides, excess salinity in impaired watersheds consistent with TMDL's where available as well as the reduction of groundwater contamination or point source such as contamination from confined animal feeding operations?	30
2	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in the conservation of a considerable amount of ground or surface water resources?	16
3	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction of emissions, such as particulate matter, nitrogen oxides (NOx), volatile organic compounds, and ozone precursors and depleters that contribute to air quality impairment violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standards?	10
4	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation from unacceptable levels on agricultural land?	24
5	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	20
	Total Points	100

State Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 0.80

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 80 - 28	Medium: 27 - 17	Low: 16 - 0

High score range for this element is 80-28 pts. Applications evaluated in this scoring range have addressed two of the state's top four priorities or any other four priorities.	Medium score range for this element is 27-17 pts. Applications evaluated in this scoring range have addressed at least one of the state's top four priorities and one other lesser priority or three or more of the lesser priorities.	Low score range for this element is 16-0 pts. Applications evaluated in this scoring range have addressed none of the of the state's top four priorities and no more than one of the lesser priorities.

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
	1	Planned EQIP practice(s) include installing buffers on perennial or intermittent streams, wetland, sinkholes, or permanent waterbodies and/or limiting or excluding livestock access to streams.	20
	2	Application includes EQIP planned practice(s) that will improve grazing efficiency through a prescribed grazing system.	15
	3	EQIP planned practice(s) on offered cropland acres include a conservation practice(s) that will reduce sheet and rill and/or gully erosion from the existing condition.	15
	4	Will the practice benefit federally listed threatened or endangered species?	15
	5	Will the offered acres be in a grassland bird conservation area identified in KY's Wildlife Action Plan including at least two practices identified in the State EQIP Handbook.	12
	6	Application includes planned forest stand improvement to improve forest health species diversity and/or planned treatment of eroding areas on forest land.	9
	7	Is the majority of the application's acreage included in either a well head protection area or karst area as identified by DOW?	7
	8	Is the majority of the application acreage's included in either a DOW identified watershed or high quality waters/classified stream?	7
		Maximum Points: Total Points	100

Local Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 0.60

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 120 - 30	Medium: 29 - 15	Low: 14 - 0
High score range for this element is 120-30 pts. Applications evaluated in this scoring range have addressed at least two or more of the top three priorities or one of the top three local priorities and two or more of the lower priorities.	Medium score range for this element is 29-15 pts. Applications evaluated in this scoring range have addressed one of the top four local priorities and at least one of the top seven priorities or three or more of the top seven priorities.	Low score range for this element is 14-0 pts. Applications evaluated in this scoring range have addressed none of the top five local priorities.

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
	1	Does this application address gully erosion?	70
	2	Are ALL actively eroding gullies being addressed in ALL fields included in this application?	50
	3	Does this application include Filter Strips, Riparian Buffers and/or Field Borders?	30
	4	Will planed EQIP practices include livestock watering facilities and/or fencing development practices to improve livestock grazing distribution?	20
	5	Does all fencing in this application exclude livestock by a minimum of 20' from sensitive areas such as water, woods, and wetlands?	10
	6	Does this application address streambank erosion concerns?	8
	7	Does this application include the conversion of fescue to other species (or endophyte free fescue) and legumes to improve forage quality?	6
	8	Does this application protect stream crossing areas to enhance water quality?	4
	9	Does this application include the establishment of wildlife friendly plants?	2
		Maximum Points: Total Points	200

Selected Resource Concerns and Practices:

Air Quality: Adverse Air Temperature
- Hedgerow Planting (422)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Silvopasture Establishment (381)
- Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
- Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)

Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)
- Forest Stand Improvement (666)
- Prescribed Grazing (528)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Silvopasture Establishment (381)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
- Waste Treatment Lagoon (359)

Air Quality: Objectionable Odors
- Composting Facility (317)
- Hedgerow Planting (422)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)

Domestic Animals: Inadequate Quantities and Quality of Feed and Forage
- Fence (382)
- Forest Stand Improvement (666)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Pasture and Hay Planting (512)
- Pipeline (516)
- Pond (378)
- Prescribed Grazing (528)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Silvopasture Establishment (381)
- Spring Development (574)
- Stream Crossing (578)
- Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
- Use Exclusion (472)
- Watering Facility (614)

Domestic Animals: Inadequate Stock Water
- Fence (382)
- Pipeline (516)
- Pond (378)
- Spring Development (574)
- Stream Crossing (578)
- Water Well (642)
- Watering Facility (614)

Domestic Animals: Stress and Mortality
- Forest Stand Improvement (666)
- Heavy Use Area Protection (561)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Pasture and Hay Planting (512)
- Pipeline (516)
- Pond (378)
- Prescribed Grazing (528)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Spring Development (574)
- Stream Crossing (578)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
- Use Exclusion (472)
- Water Well (642)
- Watering Facility (614)

Fish and Wildlife: Habitat Fragmentation
- Conservation Cover (327)
- Contour Buffer Strips (332)
- Field Border (386)
- Filter Strip (393)
- Forest Stand Improvement (666)