SEIZING A WATERSHED MOMENT

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

Minnesota

Environmental Quality Incentives Program
State Report 6 of 10

ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP

APPENDIX – STATE REPORTS

MINNESOTA
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

Minnesota received an average of $29 million in EQIP funds for technical and financial assistance per year from 2003 to 2007, ranking it 1st out of the 10 states that border the Mississippi River for EQIP funds. Minnesota EQIP funds are allocated through the 91 Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) boundaries.

Applications to participate in EQIP are evaluated using multiple ranking sheets that include: (1) national priorities, (2) state issues, (3) local issues, and (4) a cost-efficiency score. There is a single "EQIP Application Ranking Summary" document, which includes a national priorities section and a state issues section. In addition, there are 91 local issues ranking criteria documents called "Local Work Group development of local EQIP."

Each NRCS field office, in conjunction with the SWCD and Local Work Group develops a local EQIP program and a set of local issues questions. Applications are scored, ranked, and selected at the local level (after review and approval by the State Conservationist). The State Technical Committee's EQIP subcommittee provides input to Minnesota's EQIP program by reviewing the prior year's accomplishments, suggesting changes and commenting on recommended changes, practices, and policies, etc.

MINNESOTA EQIP WEBSITE

http://www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/eqip2009.html

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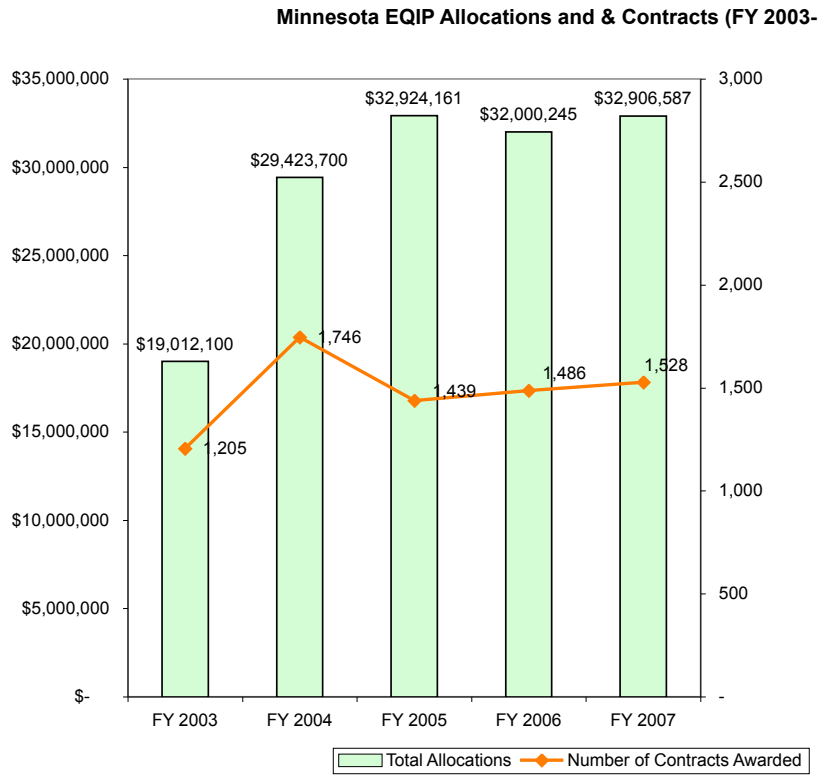
FUNDING AND REACH OF EQIP

EQIP funding is allocated to states using a national formula. The chart below shows the amount of financial and technical assistance Minnesota has received from FY 2003 to 2007 and the number of contracts awarded each fiscal year. A total of 7,404 contracts have been entered into with producers between 2003 and 2007 providing $146.3 million and addressing 1,783,431 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 Minnesota 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 managers.

Goals

Minnesota EQIP has implemented two watershed-based projects, which had goals of increasing adoption of soil conservation terrace practices. Both projects have been discontinued and Minnesota spent less than 1 percent of its EQIP funds on the projects.

Other than these two projects, EWG did not find evidence to suggest that Minnesota 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. Minnesota'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 Minnesota 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 Minnesota EQIP develop systems to track, evaluate, and report on the environmental performance of EQIP.

Fund Allocation

Minnesota EQIP funds are distributed through each of the 91 Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) boundaries. According to Tim Koehler, Assistant State Conservationist, Minnesota EQIP funds are distributed to the SWCDs based largely on the:

1. Historic use of EQIP funding in these counties, but also considering
2. Current needs and
3. Resource concerns such as land use characteristics and erosion potential.

According to Koehler, the allocations to each SWCD are not rigid and funds can be moved to different conservation districts after the initial allocations are made if an unexpected number of applications are received in a particular area.

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

Applications are scored, ranked, and selected at the local level (after review and approval by the State Conservationist) given the local priorities and the local allocation. Each local office may develop specific funding pools to target funds to land uses or

issues, including prescribed grazing systems or Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans.

Minnesota EQIP identified two watersheds that received state level priority: Whitewater Watershed and the Kanaranzi-Little Rock Watershed (K-LR Watershed). The federal Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act program (known as PL-566), which is primarily a flood prevention program, identified these two watersheds as priority areas. Due to limited funding under the PL-566 program, EQIP provided some funding for the two watersheds for the installation of cropland terraces to achieve flood protection and water quality benefits but has since stopped funding the project. In FY2008, Minnesota EQIP obligated $223,000 to the K-LR watershed and $161,000 to the Whitewater watershed or less than 1 percent of the total EQIP funding of almost $34 million.[1]

Minnesota EQIP also sets aside funds for use in a state-initiated program called the Nutrient Management Initiative.[2] The Initiative helps farmers evaluate their own nutrient management practices compared with nutrient rate guidance promoted by the USDA-NRCS. The project is open to only farmers in the southern portion of the state and "results will assist the USDA-NRCS in assessing their nutrient management guidance on a regional scale." This project was initially allocated $100,000 in 2008, but due to low levels of participation by farmers, only $37,000 worth of projects was funded, even though the NRCS funded every application that was submitted.

Minnesota EQIP had four funding pools that are unlikely to continue in FY 2009:

- The American Indian pool emphasized tribal resources (FY 08 obligated $83,000 and there are no unfunded tribal applications left pending)
- The Drought Assistance pool provided funds to drought designated counties in northwestern Minnesota (FY 07 and 08: $1.1 million)
- The Flood Assistance pool provided funds for designated counties in the southeastern corner of the state (FY 08: $471,000)
- Minnesota participated in the national 2008 Midwest Flood fund with a separate pool for those designated counties (FY 08: $380,000)

EWG recommends that Minnesota 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

[1] Written comments provided by Koehler and Cornelius, Minnesota NRCS.
[2] Minnesota's Nutrient Management Initiative. http://www.mda.state.mn.us/protecting/soilprotection/nmi.htm

watershed-based clean-up projects would dramatically increase the effectiveness of the program.

EWG recommends that Minnesota EQIP allocate 60 percent of its EQIP funds to watershed-based clean-up projects by 2012. Minnesota 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 Minnesota EQIP are evaluated using ranking sheets that include: (1) national priorities, (2) state issues, (3) local issues, and (4) a cost-efficiency score. There is a single "EQIP Application Ranking Summary" document, which includes a national priorities section and a state issues section. In addition, there are local issues questions in 91 local issues ranking criteria documents called "Local Work Group development of local EQIP." Each NRCS field office, in conjunction with its SWCD and Local Work Group develops a local EQIP program and determines local priorities. All the ranking criteria questions are in a Yes/No format. There are no points provided online for the national and state issues questions but there are points provided online for the local issues questions.

Each of the 91 local issue EQIP ranking sheets, are instructed to (1) list local resource concerns, (2) list geographic regions and their respective resource concern within the District to receive priority and (3) develop a list of 3 to 12 yes/no questions to determine if an application is addressing these high priority concerns. Anoka County's ranking sheet was randomly chosen for review. Anoka has 9 questions worth 40 points.

Minnesota EQIP uses the national Application Evaluation Ranking Tool (AERT) that includes multipliers for each section being scored. Minnesota sets the points and multipliers in each of its sections so that each section receives a certain percentage of the final application score: the national issues section receives 20 to 25 percent of the final score, state issues get 20 to 25 percent, local issues receive approximately 40 percent, and the cost-efficiency score gets about 10 to 15 percent of the final score.[3] The multipliers are: 0.79 for the national priorities score, 0.64 for the state score, 1.73 for the local score, and 198.00 for the efficiency score. See Box 1 for background information on the cost-efficiency score.

[3] Written comments from Sid Cornelius, Minnesota EQIP Resource Conservationist.

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.

Upon request, Sid Cornelius, Minnesota Resource Conservationist, provided EWG with a version of the FY2008 Ranking Tool Summary that had points listed. To determine how much emphasis Minnesota 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 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.

Regarding emphasis on geographic priorities, a review of the FY 2008 Ranking Tool Summary (see Appendix) indicates that Minnesota places a modest emphasis on geographic priorities. In the National Ranking Factors section, Minnesota 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.

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.

In Minnesota's State Issues section, there are two questions that give points to applications that are located in geographically important areas providing 12 out of 61 maximum possible State section points (20 percent):

"WATER QUALITY - Sensitive Water Bodies - the application is located within – a watershed impaired by turbidity, fecal coliform, or excess nutrients – a Source Water Assessment Area – a Drinking Water Supply Management Area with medium to very high vulnerability - a high to high Sensitivity Aquifer AND the practice will be implemented to address a water quality concern." (8 points)

"WATER QUALITY - Distance to a Receiving Water – the application addresses soil erosion or non-point source pollution and is less than 100 feet from a receiving water." (4 points)

For a review of the local ranking factors, Anoka County's Local Issues section was randomly selected. Anoka County asked three questions about geographic priorities providing 12 out 40 maximum possible Local section points (30 percent):

> "Water Quality: Is the practice located <100 ft of receiving water (surface water)?" (5 points)
>
> "Water Quality: Is the practice located 100 to 500 feet of receiving water (surface water)?" (3 points)
>
> "Water Quality: For questions 1,2,3, 4, 7 and 8 above, is the practice located in the Rum and Sunrise Watershed? (4 points)

The 24 total possible points for these 5 geographic priority factors represent 16 percent of the 151 maximum points in the entire ranking system of National, State, and Local Issues.

Regarding emphasis on reducing nutrient and sediment pollution, a review of Minnesota's Ranking sheet does not provide clear answers about how much priority Minnesota 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 10 points (20 percent of the 50 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?"

The State Issues section awards 14 of the section's 61 maximum possible points (23 percent) to 3 questions related to soil erosion. 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.

> "SOIL EROSION – greater than 4 tons/ac/yr will be saved by the installed practices from sheet and rill and/or wind erosion" (6 points)
>
> "SOIL EROSION – the Soil Conditioning Index changes from negative to at least 0.0 on the field." (2 points)

> "SOIL EROSION – structural practices Diversion (362), Grade Stabilization Structure (410), Grassed Waterway (412), Water and Sediment Control Basin (638), Dam (402) or other structural practices will be installed to control ephemeral or gully erosion." (6 points)

Three more questions in the State Issues section are likely to address nutrient pollution providing 15 of the 61 possible points (25 percent):

> "NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - Nutrient management (590) will be implemented." (8 points)
>
> "NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION – Waste storage will be implemented to eliminate a groundwater pollution problem where a feedlot runoff problem does not exist." (6 points)
>
> "NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION – Animal Mortality Facility (316), Silage Leachate Abatement system, or Milkhouse Wastewater system will be implemented as part of a complete Wastewater and Feedlot Runoff Control system." (1 point)

In Anoka County's Local Issues section, one question focused on reducing sheet and rill erosion to less than "T" (the soil loss tolerance factor) and awarded 5 out of the 40 points (12.5 percent). Two questions focused on water quality providing 9 of the 40 points (22.5 percent) for reducing "nutrient loading, sediment loading or manure impacts to surface water" and "practices that filter contaminants that may enter open waterbodies."

Thus, when the national, state, and local sections in this illustrative exercise are combined, 77 out of a maximum 151 possible points or 51 percent were provided for applications that are likely to reduce sediment and nutrient pollution and occur in geographically important locations. This evaluation of the raw, un-weighted points is incomplete as it does not include the effect of the multipliers for the national, state, and local sections nor does it include an analysis of the effect of the cost-efficiency score. Due to a lack of information about the cost-efficiency section of the ranking sheet, EWG did not evaluate the likely impact of that score on the final score.

EWG was able to use Minnesota EQIP's multipliers (national: 0.79, state: 0.64, and local: 1.73) to observe the effect these multipliers might have on raw, un-weighted points and percentages awarded for activities that might result in a reduction of sedimentation and nutrient pollution and occur in geographic priority areas. We found that the multipliers did not significantly change the percentages of points awarded to these three priority issues.

After the multipliers were applied, the 51 percent of raw, un-weighted points (77 out of 151) in the Ranking Tool Summary that were awarded for reducing the priority problems and prioritizing locations did not change significantly but was raised to 54 percent (25 out of 46.7 weighted points). The percentage of points awarded in the national section for our priority issues rose from 20 percent (10 out of 50 points) to 40 percent (2.5 out of 12.5 weighted points) when the multiplier for the national section was applied. The percentage of points awarded in the state section, 67 percent (41 out of 61 points) remained the same with when the multiplier was applied: 67 percent (8.2 out of 12.2 points). The percentage of points in the local section, 65 percent (26 out of 40 points), also remained the same when the multiplier was applied: 65 percent (14.3 out of 22 weighted points).

Despite Minnesota EQIP appearing to give about half the unweighted points in the reviewed Summary to the most pressing concerns – nutrient and sediment pollution reduction in high priority areas – only about 8 percent of points are given to applications from priority watersheds. Thus, it is unlikely that Minnesota'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 Minnesota 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 Minnesota 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, Minnesota 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—2008 Minnesota EQIP Ranking Criteria

Ranking Tool Summary
for FY2008 - EQIP General FA
(Draft)

Description:

Statewide template

Land Uses:

Crop, Forest, Grazed Forest, Hay, Headquarters, Pasture, Wildlife

Efficiency Score:

Scoring Multiplier: 198.00

Optional Notes:

National Priorities:

Scoring Multiplier: 0.79
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, groundwater contamination or point source contamination from confined animal feeding operations?	10
2	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	10
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?	10
5	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	10
	Total Points	50

State Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 0.64
Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
1		Sheet and Rill and /or Wind Erosion - answer only 1 of next 3	
	1	SOIL EROSION - less than 3 tons/ac/yr will be saved by the installed practices from sheet and rill and /or wind erosion	1
	2	SOIL EROSION - 3 to 5 tons/ac/yr soil will be saved by the installed practices from sheet and rill and/or wind erosion	3
	3	SOIL EROSION - greater than 5 tons/ac/yr will be saved by the installed practices from sheet and rill and/or wind erosion	6
2		Soil Conditioning Index	
	4	SOIL EROSION - the Soil Conditioning Index changes from negative to at least 0.0 on the field	2
3		Classic or Ephemeral Gully Erosion	
	5	SOIL EROSION - structural practices Diversion (362), Grade Stabilization Structure (410), Grassed Waterway (412), Water and Sediment Control Basin	6

		(638), Dam (402) or other structural practices will be installled to control ephemeral or gully erosion	
4		Water Resource Protection - answer only 1 of next 3	
	6	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - Nutrient management (590) will be implemented	8
	7	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - Conservation Crop Rotation-Organic (328b), Well Decommissioning (351), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Filter Strip (393), Pest Management on Cropland (595), Sinkhole Treatment (725) or Access Control in a riparian area (472) will be implemented	6
	8	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - Contour Buffer Strips (332), Field Border (386), Irrigation Water Management (449), Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580), Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (100), or, when installed to improve water quality but not part of a complete runoff control system: Diversion (362), Roof Runoff Management (558), and Closure of Waste Impoundment (360) will be implemented	4
5		Livestock Waste - answer only 1 of next 7	
	9	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - existing MinnFARM rating is 1 to 10	1
	10	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - existing MinnFARM rating is 11 to 25	2
	11	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - existing MinnFARM rating is 26 to 49	4
	12	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - existing MinnFARM rating is greater than 49	6
	13	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - waste storage will be implemented to eliminate a groundwater pollution problem where a feedlot runoff problem does not exist	6
	14	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - storage or composting of manure is required ONLY to eliminate a land-spreading problem	3
	15	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - Animal Mortality Facility (316), Silage Leachate Abatement system, or Milkhouse Wastewater system will be implemented to address a single problem.	4
6		Livestock Waste add on	
	16	NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION - Animal Mortality Facility (316), Silage Leachate Abatement system, or Milkhouse Wastewater system will be implemented as part of a complete Wastewater and Feedlot Runoff Control system	1
7		Wildlife Habitat - answer all that apply	
	17	HABITAT CONSERVTION - Prescribed Burning (338), Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380), Stream Habitat Improvement (395), Restoration and Management of Declining Habitat (643), Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645), Early Successional Habitat Development (647), Wetland Restoration (657), Pond for wildlife (402) or Invasive Plant Species Pest Management (797) will be implemented	6
	18	HABITAT CONSERVATION - A wildlife practice will be implemented that benefits a threatened and endangered species according to MN eFOTG Section II.D	1
	19	HABITAT CONSERVATION - A practice will be implemented that benefits native pollinators according to Native Habitat Development for Pollinators-Minnesota guidelines	1
8		Air Quality - answer only 1 of next 2	
	20	AIR QUALITY - A practice will be implemented specifically to improve air quality	6
	21	AIR QUALITY - A practice will be implemented to address other resource concerns, but also addresses air quality as a secondary concern	1
9		Sensitive Water Bodies	
	22	WATER QUALITY - Sensitive Water Bodies - the application is located within: -a watershed impaired by turbidity, fecal coliform, or excess nutrients -a Source Water Assessment Area -a Drinking Water Supply Management Area with medium to very high vulnerablity -a very high to high Sensitivity Aquifer AND the practice will be implemented to address a water quality concern	8
10		Distance to a Receiving Water - answer only 1 of next 7	
	23	WATER QUALITY - Distance to a receiving water - the application addresses soil erosion or non-point source pollution and is less than 100 feet from a receiving water	4
	24	WATER QUALITY - Distance to a receiving water - the application addresses soil erosion or non-point source pollution and is 100 to 500 feet from a receiving water	3

	25	WATER QUALITY - Distance to a receiving water - the application addresses soil erosion or non-point source pollution and is 501 to 1000 feet from a receiving water	2
	26	WATER QUALITY - Distance to a receiving water - the application addresses soil erosion or non-point source pollution and is 1001 to 2000 feet from a receiving water	1
	27	WATER QUALITY - Distance to a recieving water - the application addresses only habitat conservation, grazing systems, or forest management and is less than 100 feet from a receiving water	3
	28	WATER QUALITY - Distance to a receiving water - the application addresses only habitat conservation, grazing systems, or forest management and is 100 to 500 feet from a receiving water	2
	29	WATER QUALITY - Distance to a receiving water - the application addresses only habitat conservation, grazing systems, or forest management and is 501 to 1000 feet from a receiving water	1
11		Grazing Practices	
	30	GRAZING SYSTEMS - Prescribed Grazing (528) including Organic systems will be implemented	6
12		Forest Practices	
	31	FOREST MANAGEMENT - Forest Stand Improvement (666), or Tree Planing (612) will be implemented	6
		Maximum Points: 61 Total Points	114

Local Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.73

Selected Resource Concerns and Practices:

Air Quality: Chemical Drift
- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Pest Management (595)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)

Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH4 (methane)
- Anaerobic Digestor, Controlled Temp. (366)
- Animal Mortality Facility (316)
- Closure of Waste Impoundment (360)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Waste Facility Cover (367)

Air Quality: Objectionable Odors
- Anaerobic Digestor, Controlled Temp. (366)
- Animal Mortality Facility (316)
- Closure of Waste Impoundment (360)
- Composting Facility (317)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Pest Management (595)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
- Waste Facility Cover (367)
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)

Air Quality: Particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM 10)
- Access Control (472)
- Animal Mortality Facility (316)
- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Contour Buffer Strips (332)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Early Successional Habitat Development/M (647)
- Field Border (386)
- Filter Strip (393)
- Heavy Use Area Protection (561)
- Irrigation System, Sprinkler (442)

Anoka Soil and Water Conservation District FY08 EQIP – Local Work Group development of local EQIP.

Local Work Group development of local EQIP.

Anoka Soil and Water Conservation District FY08 EQIP

1. **List the local resource concerns that EQIP can address:**

Surface Water:
- Nutrient loading
- Soil runoff
- Bacteria growth

Groundwater:
- Nitrate contamination and
- Bacteria growth
- Infiltration of pesticides

Habitat:
- Improve habitat within identified greenway corridors

Soil Loss:
- Sedimentation of lakes, rivers and wetlands.

2. **If applicable, list any geographic regions (i.e. watersheds, townships, etc.) and their respective resource concerns within the District to receive priority:**

Elk River Watershed: nutrients, sedimentation, manure, riparian habitat, impaired waters (IBI and turbidity), drained wetlands and degraded wetland habitat

Delineated drinking water supply management areas: nitrates, pesticides, irrigation management
Rum River watershed
Sunrise River watershed and
Adjacent Lake Watersheds:
1. George Lake
2. East Twin Lake
3. Martin Lake
4. Coon Lake
5. Linwood Lake

3. **From items 1 & 2 above prioritize the local resource concerns to be addressed with EQIP funding for the district. Describe a minimum of 3 categories of the highest priority applications which you would want to receive funding.**

Prioritize Local Resource Concerns
1. Nutrient loading
2. Soil runoff
3. Nitrate contamination
4. Improve habitat within identified greenway corridors
5. Sedimentation
6. Bacteria growth
7. Infiltration of pesticides

4. **Develop a minimum of 3 and maximum of 12 yes/no questions to determine if an application is addressing the high priority concerns described in item 3.**

	Question:	Points
1.	Soil Erosion: Will the practice reduce sheet and rill erosion < T?	5
2.	Water Quality: Will the practice reduce nutrient loading, sediment loading or manure impacts to surface water?	5
3.	Water Quality: Is the practice located < 100 ft of receiving water (surface water)?	5
4.	Water Quality: Is the practice located 100 to 500 ft of receiving water (surface water)?	3
5.	Habitat: Improve habitat within identified greenway corridor?	5
6.	Habitat: Will the practice improve riparian habitat?	4
7.	Habitat: Will drained or degraded wetlands be addressed?	5
8.	Water Quality: For questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 above, is the practice located in the Rum and Sunrise Watershed?	4
9.	Water Quality: Does practice filter contaminants that may enter adjacent open waterbodies?	4
	Total	**40**

5. **Assign points to the questions in Item #4 as desired to reflect local priorities. The total points assigned to the questions must equal exactly 40 points.**

   Refer to question 4, column 3

6. **Submit this worksheet to your respective ASTC(FO). After approval from the state office, the questions will be entered into the Local Issues section of the ranking tool.**

   Worksheet submitted to Timothy Wilson, ASTC(FO) of Area 4.

7. **List any recommended practices to be deleted from the state Conservation Practice Payment Document.**

   None

The local EQIP program description, cost-share docket changes, and ranking worksheet must be reviewed and approved by the State Conservationist before any EQIP contract is approved and signed.

This document serves as the Local Work Group recommendation for FY 08 EQIP. Below is a roster of participation in the Local Work Group.

Chris Lord — 10-15-07

Chair, Local Work Group — **Date**

Roster:
Kim Kovich
Sean Sullivan
Mary Jo Trushon
Vicki Nass
Chris Lord
Kathy Berkness
George Montgomery