SEIZING A WATERSHED MOMENT

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

Environmental Quality Incentives Program
State Report 7 of 10

ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP

APPENDIX – STATE REPORTS

MISSISSIPPI
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

Mississippi received an average of $18.6 million in EQIP funds for technical and financial assistance per year from 2003 to 2007, ranking it 6th out of the 10 states that border the Mississippi River for EQIP funds. Approximately 90 percent of MS-EQIP funds are allocated to the state's 82 counties while the remaining funds are held at the state level to address statewide issues including Poultry Litter Distribution and Small Scale Farmers.

Applications to participate in EQIP are evaluated using multiple ranking sheets that include: (1) national priorities (2) state issues and (3) a cost- efficiency score. Local Work Groups have the option of adding local issues questions to any of the ranking sheets. MS-EQIP uses 9 ranking criteria sheets to evaluate applications dealing with (1) animal waste, (2) sustainable forestry, (3) grazing land, (4) sedimentation, (5) water quantity, (6) small scale farmer initiatives on cropland, (7) small scale farmer initiatives on grazing land, (8) poultry litter transfer for cropland, and (9) poultry litter transfer for pasture.

Local Work Groups in Mississippi identify resource concerns and recommend practices, payment rates, cost-share levels and funding needs through a "conservation needs assessment" for the State Conservationist. The State Conservationist convenes the State Technical Committee to review the resource concerns and county requests. Eligible resource concerns, practices, payment rates, etc. are set at the state level. Counties may then choose which concerns will be addressed in their respective county and the percentage of county funding allocation to address those resource concerns. The counties may also reduce the number of eligible practices, further restrict practice requirements, and add any local criteria to the ranking sheets.

MISSISSIPPI EQIP WEBSITE

http://www.ms.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/2008StatewideEQIPProgramPriorities1.html

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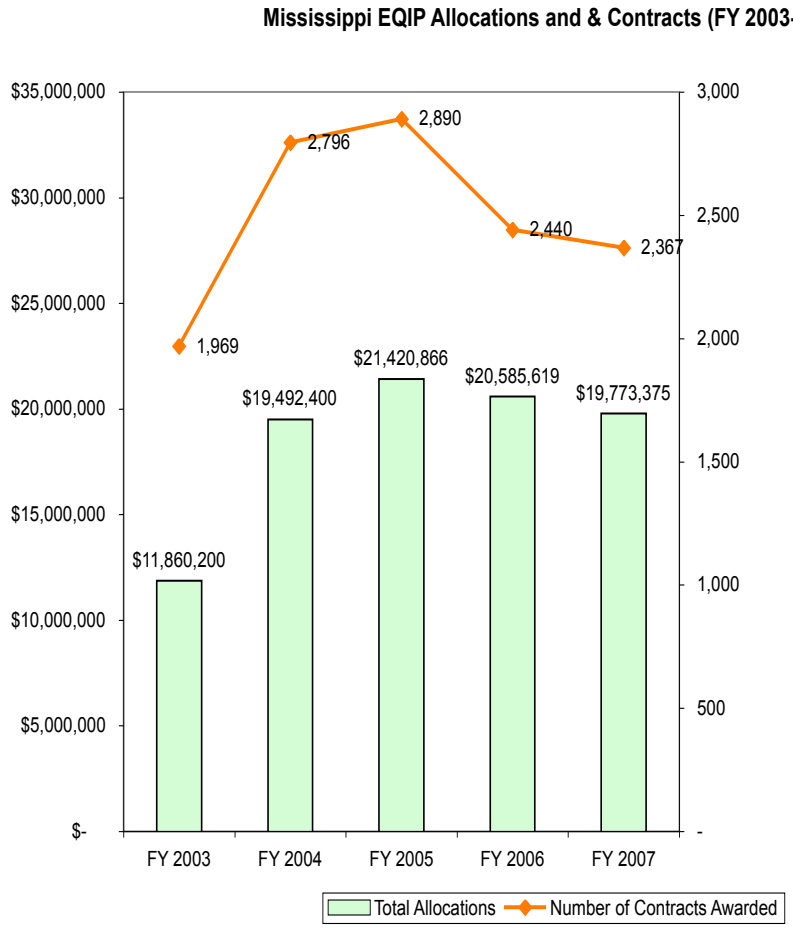
FUNDING AND REACH OF EQIP

EQIP funding is allocated to states using a national formula. The chart below shows the amount of financial and technical assistance Mississippi has received from FY2003 to 2007 and the number of contracts awarded each fiscal year. A total of 12,462 contracts have been entered into with producers between 2003 and 2007, providing $93.1 million and addressing 1,149,835 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 Mississippi 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

Mississippi EQIP's Poultry Litter Transport Program does set a goal of transporting excess poultry litter from 10 counties with high concentrations of poultry production and high soil phosphorus content to other areas that can safely use the litter.

Other than this program, EWG did not find evidence to suggest that Mississippi 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. Mississippi'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 Mississippi 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 Mississippi EQIP develop systems to track, evaluate, and report on the environmental performance of EQIP.

Fund Allocation

Approximately 92 percent of Mississippi EQIP funds are allocated to the state's 82 counties while the remaining funds are withheld at the state level to address the statewide issues (Poultry Litter Distribution Project and Small Scale Farmers Initiative).

Mississippi uses four factors that are not weighted to allocate funds to the counties:

1. County request
2. Previous funding demands and performance
3. Priority resource concerns
4. Other related factors

According to Al Garner, Mississippi's Assistant State Conservationist, "other related factors," include whether there are ample staff to handle contract administration, that is, the workload. This includes: number of existing contracts a field office has to service, whether practices are being applied on schedule, the type of practices (such as grade stabilization structures, which require significant time, versus some grazing practices like fencing and watering facilities, that do not require as much time), backlog of contracts, and the staff ability to assist participants.

EWG recommends that if funds are allocated directly to local jurisdictions, Mississippi 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.

There are 5 prioritized resource concerns for Mississippi EQIP and the table below shows a general breakdown of funding for these resource concerns and the statewide issue programs.

Mississippi EQIP funding categories and typical funding levels	
Funding categories	**Funding levels**
Water Quality – Animal Waste	10%
Water Quality - Sedimentation	30%
Water Quantity	20%
Grazing Lands	20%
Forestry	10%
Statewide Issues (Small Scale Farmers Initiatives and Poultry Litter Distribution Project)	10%
Total	100%

Source: Al Garner, MS-EQIP Assistant State Conservationist.

Thus, 40 percent of Mississippi EQIP funds typically goes towards the state's two water quality resource concerns: animal waste and sedimentation.

The state program manager sets the statewide funding categories. In general MS-EQIP allocates about $1 million for Small Scale Farmers and about $400,000 to $500,000 for Poultry Litter Distribution each year. EWG regards the Poultry Litter Transfer Program as a "Special Project" because it targets EQIP funds to specifically identified geographic areas. However, the level of funding is small; at about $450,000 per year, this is 2.4 percent of the $18.6 million Mississippi EQIP spends on average every year in technical and financial assistance.

Mississippi uses EQIP funds to transfer litter from: Newton, Neshoba, Jones, Smith, Wayne, Walthall, Simpson, Leake, Jasper, and Clark counties for use on cropland or pasture land outside these counties. According to Garner, "The counties were selected based upon the concentration of poultry production and their high soil phosphorus content. This program will ease the burden of land applying nutrients while dealing with a concentrated poultry industry and more challenging phosphorus regulations."

According to Garner, "Approximately 87 farmers have participated in the program since 2007, spreading litter on about 15,000 acres outside the high phosphorus prone watersheds. This is a partnership effort involving NRCS, Mississippi Farm Bureau, Mississippi Poultry Association and Mississippi State University. About 2.5% of the state's EQIP funds have been utilized for this effort (in 2007 and 2008 amounting to

$756,640). The effort will continue in 2009 addressing the water quality resource concerns in this poultry production belt."

The five resource concerns (animal waste, sustainable forestry, grazing land, sedimentation, water quantity) are funding categories at the discretion of the county Local Work Group (LWG). The LWG determines, within state guidelines, the percentage of their county allocation that will be distributed to each resource concern. The LWG may also reduce the number of eligible practices, further restrict practice requirements and add any local criteria to the 9 ranking sheets.

To better understand how each of the 82 counties in Mississippi intended to use their 2008 funds, see the Appendix for a table displaying this funding allocation by resource concern.

To show the wide variability in funding priorities in Mississippi counties, Adams County and Leak County's funding intentions by resource concern were chosen and reproduced below.

Percentage of 2008 Funds Addressing the 5 Statewide Resource Concerns in Two Mississippi Counties		
Resource Concerns	**Adams County**	**Leake County**
Water Quality – Animal Waste	0	65%
Water Quality – Sedimentation	25%	5%
Water Quantity	0	0
Grazing Lands	70%	20%
Forestry	5%	10%

EWG recommends that Mississippi 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 Mississippi EQIP allocate 60 percent of its EQIP funds to

watershed-based clean-up projects by 2012. Mississippi 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 multiple ranking sheets that include: (1) national priorities (2) state issues and (3) a cost- efficiency score. Local Work Groups have the option of adding local issues questions to any of the ranking sheets and about 60 percent of the counties use local issue questions.[1] MS-EQIP uses 9 ranking criteria sheets to evaluate applications dealing with (1) animal waste, (2) sustainable forestry, (3) grazing land, (4) sedimentation, (5) water quantity, (6) small scale farmer initiatives on cropland, (7) small scale farmer initiatives on grazing land, (8) poultry litter transfer for cropland, and (9) poultry litter transfer for pasture. Each sheet is called an "Application Ranking Summary."

Each of the 9 Summaries have the same 5 national priority issue questions while each document has a different set of state issue questions, numbering from 6 to 12, reflecting the resource concern, the initiative, or project of each Summary. Each county can add local issue questions for their specific county resource concern. All the ranking criteria questions are in a Yes/No format and no points are shown online.

Points in each section are multiplied to achieve the following desired distribution of points in the Ranking Summaries: National: 13 to 23 percent, State: 33 to 43 percent, and Local: 24 to 34 percent. Points in each section, including the cost-efficiency section, are then summed to a final score. Applications that have the highest scores receive the highest rank. For information purposes, the multipliers for the national, state, and local issues scores are each 0.10. The multipliers for each resource concern are: Animal waste – 100, Forestry – 100, Sedimentation – 20, Grazing – 10, Water Quantity – 30, and Small Farmers Initiative - Cropland – 10 and Grazing Lands – 10. See Box 1 for background information on the cost-efficiency score.

Upon request, Garner provided us with FY2002 versions of the 9 Application Ranking Summaries that did display the points awarded to each question. (See the Appendix.)

[1] Information provided in writing by Al Garner, MS-EQIP Assistant State 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.

To determine how much emphasis Mississippi 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, unweighted 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 multipliers and the cost-efficiency score in the Ranking Criteria. In addition, 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. These complications are described in Box 2.

Regarding emphasis on geographic priorities, a review of the 9 Application Ranking Summaries indicates that Mississippi appears to give modest emphasis to geographic priorities.

In each of the 9 Summaries, the 5 National Priority Issues questions are identical. National Priorities Question 1 includes a reference to impaired watersheds, and Mississippi instructs applicants to only respond affirmatively to this question if their application occurs within the impaired watersheds identified in one or more of the state's 3 Impaired Waters Area Maps (See Appendix for maps). The maps show waters impaired for all three of the following pollutants - sediments, nutrients, and pesticides – and the pollutants are indistinguishable.

"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?"

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 State Issues sections of the 9 Summaries (which are not identical), only 2 Summaries award points for applications located in an impaired watershed. The Small Scale Farmer Initiative-Grazing Lands and the Small Scale Farmers Initiative – Cropland Summaries give 20 points each, or only about 7 percent of the 300 maximum possible points, in each of the Summaries' State sections to applications from impaired watersheds.

Two Summaries give points for excluding livestock from streams. The Small Scale Farmers Initiative – Grazing Lands and the Grazing Lands Summaries give 30 and 40 points, respectively, or 7 and 11 percent of the Summaries' maximum possible number of points.

The Animal Waste Summary gives 80 points for applications that include stream setbacks, or about 22 percent of the maximum possible number of points.

The Poultry Litter Distribution Ranking Summary gives the largest percentage of its points in the State Issues section to location-specific issues, including: 70 points for applications that transfer poultry litter out of one of 10 listed counties, 40 points for transferring the litter 100 miles or more from the county of origin, and 20 points if 50 percent or more of the receiving land has a soil test phosphorus rating of low. Thus,

130 out of the 250 maximum possible points (52 percent) in this Summary are provided for geographically specific priorities.

Regarding emphasis on reducing nutrient and sediment pollution, a review of Mississippi's General Application Ranking Summary does not provide clear answers about how much priority Mississippi 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 50 points (25 percent of the 200 total points available from the National Priorities section in each Summary) 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 nature of the Sedimentation and the Animal Waste Resource Concern Summaries indicate that they focus solely on soil erosion and sedimentation and on animal waste, respectively. Animal waste is a major source of nutrient pollution. In the state issues section of the Sedimentation Resource Concern Summary, the first 5 questions and the 9th question award 300 out of the 380 maximum potential raw points or 79 percent for addressing soil erosion and generic water quality issues (increasing the Soil Conditioning Index; installing field borders or hedgerow; reducing sheet and rill erosion above "T"; reducing gully erosion; cropland conversion to permanent cover; 4 or more conservation practices planned). The remaining 3 questions are of an administrative nature.

In the state issues section of the Animal Waste Resource Concern Summary, 3 of the 7 state issue questions give 200 of the maximum possible 360 points (56 percent) for practices that are likely to result in a reduction of nutrient pollution (stream setbacks; closure of waste impoundments; field borders or hedgerows) The remaining 4 questions are of an administrative nature.

Despite Mississippi EQIP appearing to give a large number of unweighted points in the reviewed Summaries to the most pressing concerns – nutrient and sediment pollution reduction in high priority areas – only about 7 percent of points are given to applications from priority watersheds and in only 2 of the 9 Summaries. Thus, it is unlikely that Mississippi'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 Mississippi 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 Mississippi 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, Mississippi 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 Mississippi EQIP Ranking Criteria
Percent of MS-EQIP Funds Allocated Towards 2008 Resource Concerns in Each County

2008 Resource Concerns and Percent Funds to Be Addressed by County						
	Forestry	Grazing	Water Quantity	Sedimen-tation	Animal Waste	TOTAL
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Adams	5	70		25		100%
Alcorn	10	55		35		100%
Amite	25	30		15	30	100%
Attala	30	35		20	15	100%
Benton	26	24		50		100%
Bolivar			70	30		100%
Calhoun	18	26		40	16	100%
Carroll	5	35		60		100%
Chickasaw	10	50		30	10	100%
Choctaw	40	45		5	10	100%
Claiborne	4	60		36		100%
Clarke	30	55		10	5	100%
Clay	25	45		30		100%
Coahoma			70	30		100%
Copiah	15	40		25	20	100%
Covington	15	35		5	45	100%
DeSoto		15		85		100%
Forrest	30	40		20	10	100%
Franklin	35	33		22	10	100%
George	40	50		10		100%
Greene	50	25		10	15	100%
Grenada	6	19		75		100%
Hancock	20	50		20	10	100%
Harrison	35	40		15	10	100%
Hinds	15	40		45		100%
Holmes	20	30	10	40		100%
Humphreys			50	50		100%
Issaquena			75	25		100%
Itawamba	31	40		29		100%
Jackson	20	65		15		100%
Jasper	40.5	39.5			20	100%
Jefferson		40		45	15	100%
Jeff Davis	28	40		10	22	100%
Jones	25	25		5	45	100%
Kemper	15	30		50	5	100%
Lafayette	10	40		50		100%
Leflore			50	50		100%
Lamar	10	40		10	40	100%
Lauderdale	41	39		16	4	100%
Lawrence	34	36		10	20	100%

2008 Resource Concerns and Percent Funds to Be Addressed by County						
	Forestry	Grazing	Water Quantity	Sedimen-tation	Animal Waste	TOTAL
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Leake	10	20		5	65	100%
Lee	15	34		51		100%
Lincoln	32	38		16	14	100%
Lowndes	20	40		40		100%
Madison	15	40		45		100%
Marion	15	50		10	25	100%
Marshall	10	10		80		100%
Monroe	5	44	5	46		100%
Montgomery	10	30		60		100%
Neshoba	25	30		5	40	100%
Newton	25	35		4	36	100%
Noxubee		30	30	40		100%
Oktibbeha	25	45	17	13		100%
Panola		40		60		100%
Pearl River	35	55		10		100%
Perry	30	40		20	10	100%
Pike	20	30		20	30	100%
Pontotoc	26	24		50		100%
Prentiss	30	32		38		100%
Quitman			60	40		100%
Rankin	18	50		2	30	100%
Scott	5	25		15	55	100%
Sharkey			70	30		100%
Simpson	15	40		10	35	100%
Smith	10	45		15	30	100%
Stone	20	70		10		100%
Sunflower			65	35		100%
Tallahatchie	10	30	20	40		100%
Tate	5			95		100%
Tippah	10	30		60		100%
Tishomingo	32	33		35		100%
Tunica			50	50		100%
Union	14	42		44		100%
Walthall	25	30		22	23	100%
Warren		20	5	75		100%
Washington			60	40		100%
Wayne	25	15		10	50	100%
Webster	26	24		50		100%
Wilkinson	15	25		60		100%

2008 Resource Concerns and Percent Funds to Be Addressed by County						
	Forestry	Grazing	Water Quantity	Sedimen-tation	Animal Waste	TOTAL
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Winston	25	60		5	10	100%
Yalobusha	20	45		35		100%
Yazoo	10	35	15	40		100%

MS-EQIP FY 2008 Application Ranking Summaries

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Summary
Litter Distribution Project-Cropland

Program: EQIP 2002	Ranking Date:
Ranking Tool: Litter Distribution Project-Cropland	
Final Ranking Score:	
Planner:	
Farm Location:	

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
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?	50 Point(s)
2. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	50 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
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?	50 Point(s)
5. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	40 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Will the poultry litter be transferred from one of the following counties: Newton; Neshoba; Jones; Smith; Wayne; Walthall; Simpson; Leake; Jasper; or Clark?	70 Point(s)
2. Will the litter be incorporated?	40 Point(s)
3. Will the litter be transferred 100 miles or greater from the county of origin?	40 Point(s)
4. Will the litter be transferred between 75 to 99 miles from the county of origin?	25 Point(s)
5. Will the litter be transferred between 50 to 74 miles from the county of origin?	15 Point(s)
6. Has applicant had a previous contract and not completed items on schedule?	-20 Point(s)
7. Has applicant self certified as a limited resource farmer (LRF)?	20 Point(s)
8. Will this contract be for two years or less?	60 Point(s)
Questions 9-11: Answer only one.	

9. Does the predominance (greater than 50%) of the land application have a soil test Phosphorus Rating of Low?	20 Point(s)
10. Does the predominance (greater than 50%) of the land application have a soil test Phosphorus Rating of Medium?	10 Point(s)
11. Does the predominance (greater than 50%) of the land application have a soil test Phosphorus Rating of High?	0 Point(s)

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Summary
Small Scale Farmer Initiative-Grazing Lands

Program: EQIP 2002	Ranking Date:
Ranking Tool: Small Scale Farmer Initiative-Grazing Lands	
Final Ranking Score:	
Planner:	
Farm Location:	

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
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?	59 Point(s)
2. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	50 Point(s)
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?	1 Point(s)
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?	50 Point(s)
5. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	40 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Will treatment increase the number of grazing cells?	25 Point(s)
2. Will treatment result in adequate watering facilities in each grazing cell?	25 Point(s)
3. Will treatment result in livestock being restricted from streams?	30 Point(s)
4. Will treatment result in a safe new or existing watering facility?	20 Point(s)

5. Will invasive and/or noxious species be treated?	30 Point(s)
6. Will legumes be inter-seeded on a minimum of 30% of offered pasture acres?	20 Point(s)
7. Will treatment result in conversion to native grasses?	35 Point(s)
8. Is applicant located in an impaired watershed?	20 Point(s)
9. Will treatments result in the establishment of silvopasture?	15 Point(s)
10. Is this land pasture / idle land being converted to trees?	20 Point(s)
11. Will conversion treatment require no site preparation or only light site preparation?	20 Point(s)
12. Will conversion treatment require medium site preparation?	10 Point(s)
13. Will treatment of grazing lands include pest management removal of woody vegetation on two acres or less?	20 Point(s)
14. Will treatment of grazing lands include pest management removal of woody vegetation on more than two acres ?	10 Point(s)

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Summary
Small Scale Farmer Initiative-Cropland

Program: EQIP 2002	Ranking Date:
Ranking Tool: Small Scale Farmer Initiative-Cropland	
Final Ranking Score:	
Planner:	
Farm Location:	

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
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?	59 Point(s)
2. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	50 Point(s)
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?	1 Point(s)
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?	50 Point(s)

5. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	40 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Will treatment increase SCI on cropland?	30 Point(s)
2. Will treatment include conservation buffers?	20 Point(s)
3. Will sheet and rill erosion above acceptable levels (T) be treated?	30 Point(s)
4. Will all active gullies be treated? (gully erosion)	30 Point(s)
5. Will cropland be converted to permanent cover? (permanent grass or trees)	30 Point(s)
6. Does application include practices with a lifespan greater than one year?	20 Point(s)
7. Is applicant located in an impaired watershed?	20 Point(s)
8. Will treatment include installation of an irrigation system ? (441,442)	60 Point(s)
9. Has applicant grown alternative crops for at least two of the last five years?	30 Point(s)
10. Is applicant's alternative crop production greater than 20% of their cropland acreage?	30 Point(s)

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Summary
Sedimentation Resource Concern

Program: EQIP 2002	Ranking Date:
Ranking Tool: Sedimentation Resource Concern	
Final Ranking Score:	
Planner:	
Farm Location:	

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
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?	50 Point(s)
2. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	50 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
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?	50 Point(s)

5. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	40 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Will treatment increase SCI on cropland?	60 Point(s)
2. Will treatment include field borders or hedgerows?	60 Point(s)
3. Will sheet and rill erosion above acceptable levels (T) be treated?	60 Point(s)
4. Will gully erosion be treated?	60 Point(s)
5. Will cropland be converted to permanent cover?	40 Point(s)
6. Has applicant self certified as a limited resource farmer?	20 Point(s)
7. Has applicant had a previous contract and failed to complete items according to schedule?	-20 Point(s)
8. Will this contract be for two years or less?	60 Point(s)
Questions 9-11: If participant is planning to apply multiple conservation practices, answer only one.	
9. Are 4 or more conservation practices planned?	20 Point(s)
10. Are 2 to 3 conservation practices planned?	10 Point(s)
11. Is 1 conservation practice planned?	5 Point(s)

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Summary
Water Quantity Resource Concern

Program: EQIP 2002	Ranking Date:
Ranking Tool: Water Quantity Resource Concern	
Final Ranking Score:	
Planner:	
Farm Location:	

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
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?	50 Point(s)
2. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	50 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
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?	50 Point(s)

5. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	40 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Is applicant located in Aquifer Decline Area #1?	50 Point(s)
2. Is applicant located in Aquifer Decline Area #2?	40 Point(s)
3. Is applicant located in Aquifer Decline Area #3?	30 Point(s)
4. Is applicant located in Aquifer Decline Area #4	25 Point(s)
5. Has applicant had a previous contract and not completed items on schedule?	-20 Point(s)
6. Has applicant self certified as a limited resource farmer?	20 Point(s)
7. Will treatment result in negative water savings? (Example: Center Pivot System changed to Surface Application)	-20 Point(s)
8. Will treatment result in savings of 0-2 acre-inch/acre/year?	20 Point(s)
9. Will treatment result in savings of >2-6 acre-inch/acre/year?	30 Point(s)
10. Will treatment result in savings of >6-12 acre-inch/acre/year?	35 Point(s)
11. Will treatment result in savings of >12 acre-inch/acre/year?	50 Point(s)
12. Will this contract be for two years or less?	60 Point(s)

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Summary
Grazing Lands Resource Concern

Program: EQIP 2002	Ranking Date:
Ranking Tool: Grazing Lands Resource Concern	
Final Ranking Score:	
Planner:	
Farm Location:	

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
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?	50 Point(s)
2. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	50 Point(s)
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 Point(s)

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?	50 Point(s)
5. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	40 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Will treatment increase the number of grazing cells?	40 Point(s)
2. Will treatment result in adequate watering facilities in each grazing cell?	35 Point(s)
3. Will treatment result in livestock being restricted from streams?	40 Point(s)
4. Will treatment result in a safe new or existing watering facility?	30 Point(s)
5. Will invasive species be treated?	30 Point(s)
6. Will legumes be inter-seeded on a minimum of 30% of offered pasture acres?	30 Point(s)
7. Will treatment result in conversion to native grasses?	35 Point(s)
8. Has applicant self certified as a limited resource farmer?	20 Point(s)
9. Has applicant had a previous contract and not completed contract items according to schedule?	-20 Point(s)
10. Will treatment include establishment of field borders or hedgerows?	40 Point(s)
11. Will this contract be for two years or less?	60 Point(s)
Questions 12-14: If Nutrient Management (590) is being planned, answer only one.	
12. Are fertilizer AND lime needed?	20 Point(s)
13. Is only lime needed?	10 Point(s)
14. Is only fertilizer needed?	5 Point(s)

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Summary
Sustainable Forestry Resource Concern

Program: EQIP 2002	Ranking Date:
Ranking Tool: Sustainable Forestry Resource Concern	
Final Ranking Score:	
Planner:	
Farm Location:	

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
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?	50 Point(s)

2. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	50 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
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?	50 Point(s)
5. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	40 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Is this treatment pastureland/idle land conversion?	30 Point(s)
2. Will native vegetation be left along stream corridors (SMZs) in accordance with the MS BMP Handbook for forestry guidelines?	60 Point(s)
3. Will all offered land suited for longleaf pines or hardwoods be planted to these type trees?	60 Point(s)
4. Will treatments address erosion on roads, skid trails, and landings?	50 Point(s)
5. Will treatment result in control of mid-story hardwoods (QVM) in pine stands?	40 Point(s)
6. Will invasive species be treated on offered acres?	40 Point(s)
7. Has applicant self certified as a limited resource farmer?	20 Point(s)
8. Has applicant had a previous contract and not completed items according to schedule?	-20 Point(s)
9. Will this contract be for two years or less?	60 Point(s)

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Application Ranking Summary
Animal Waste Resource Concern

Program: EQIP 2002	Ranking Date:
Ranking Tool: Animal Waste Resource Concern	
Final Ranking Score:	
Planner:	
Farm Location:	

National Priorities Addressed

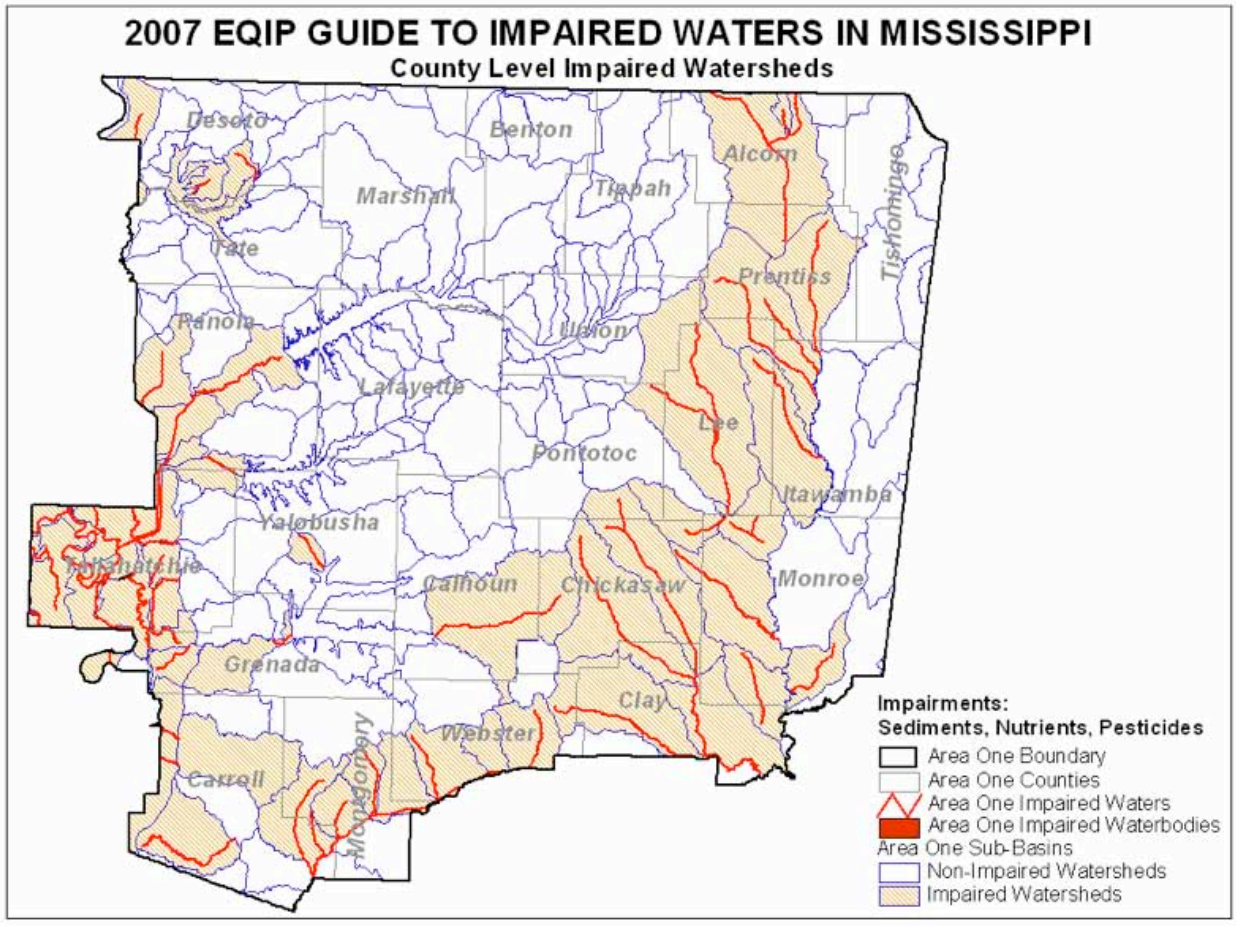
Issue Questions	Responses
1. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in considerable reductions of non-point source pollution, such as nutrients, sediment, pesticides, excess salinity in impaired watersheds, groundwater contamination or point source contamination from confined animal feeding operations?	50 Point(s)

2. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	50 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
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?	50 Point(s)
5. Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	40 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Is this an existing or expanding operation?	80 Point(s)
2. Will stream set backs be present on this application?	80 Point(s)
3. Will Closure of Waste Impoundments be one of the treatments for this application?	60 Point(s)
4. Has applicant self certified as a limited resource farmer?	20 Point(s)
5. Has applicant on previous program contracts failed to complete contract items on schedule?	-20 Point(s)
6. Will treatment include establishment of field borders or hedgerows?	60 Point(s)
7. Will this contract be for two years or less?	60 Point(s)

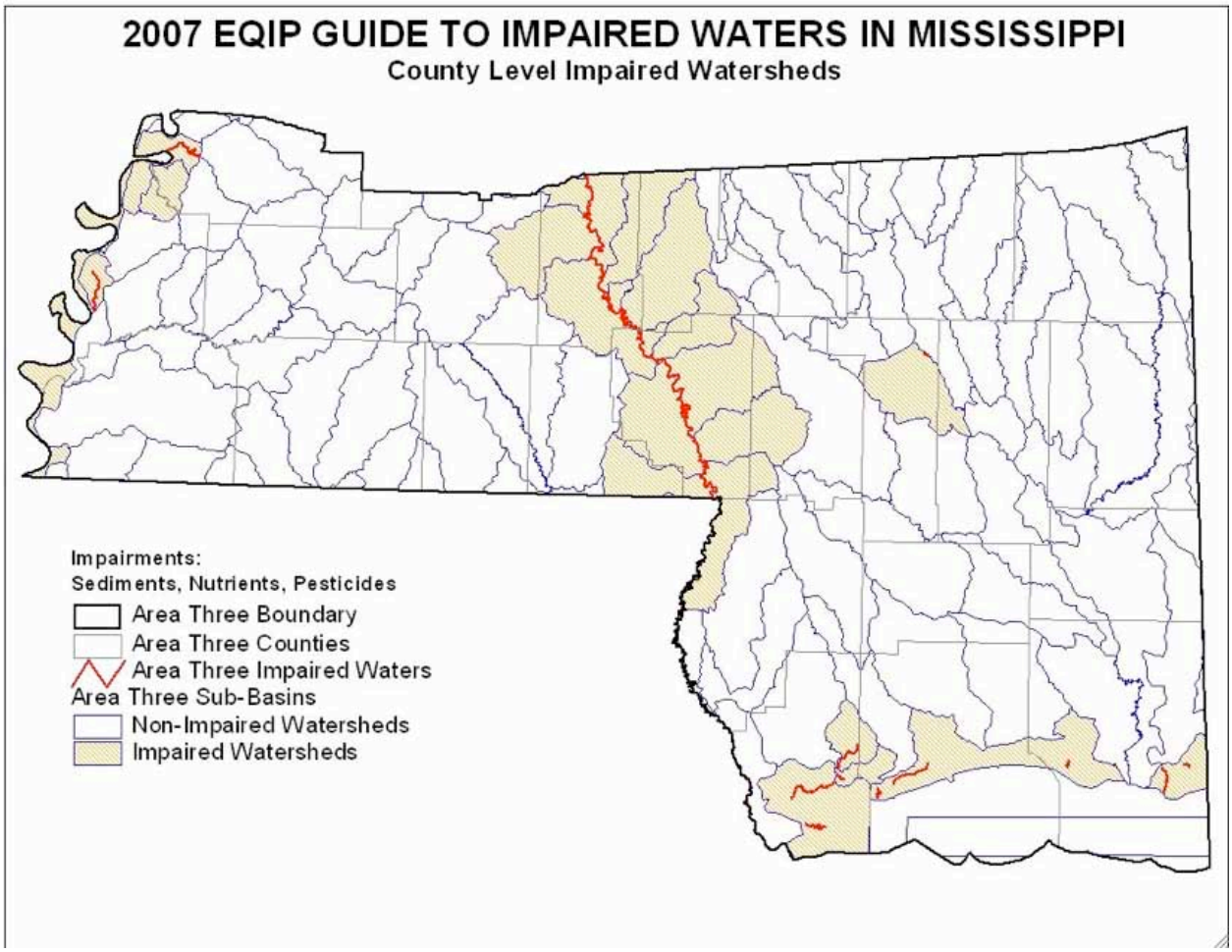
Mississippi Impaired Waters Maps
Area 1



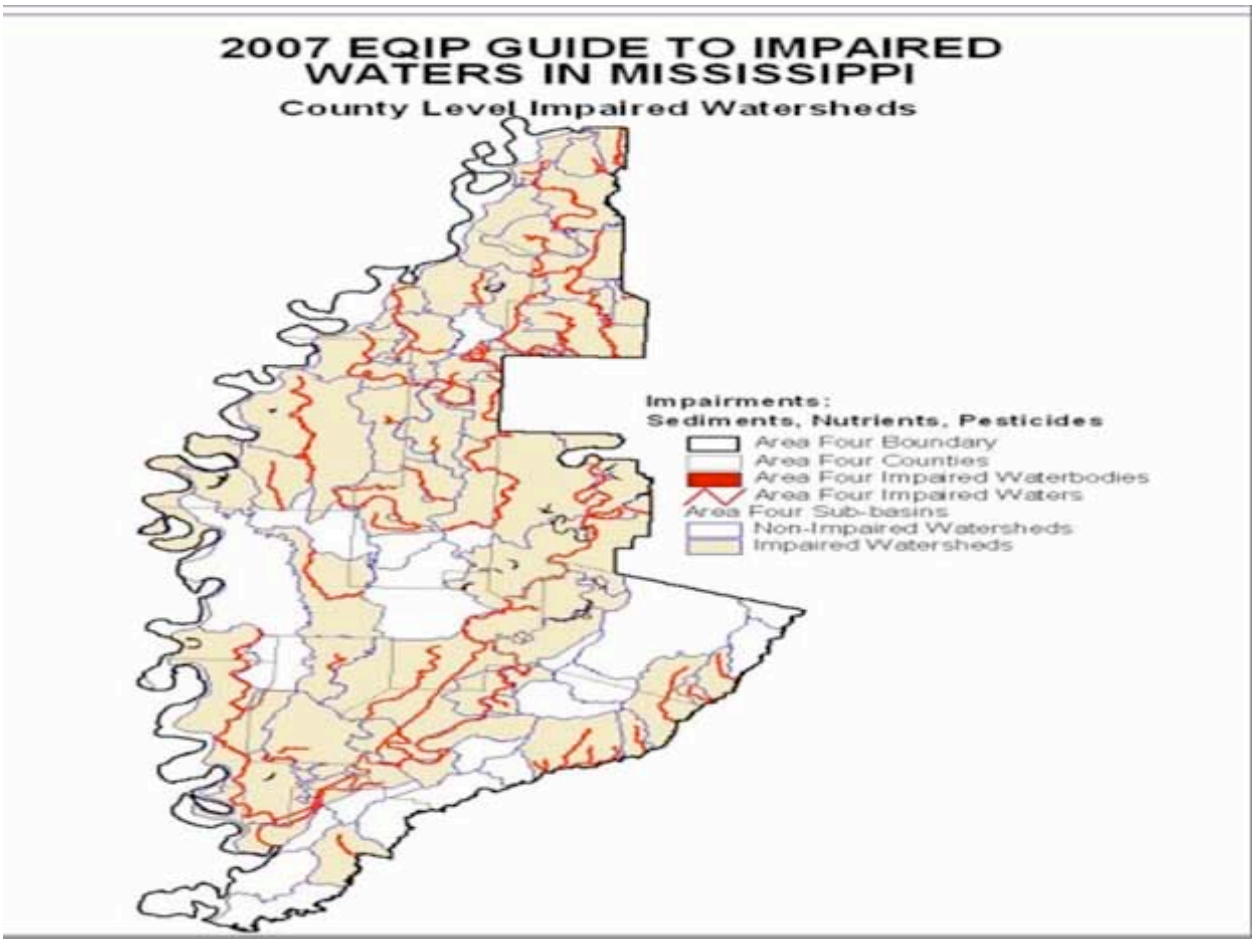
Area 2


2007 EQIP GUIDE TO IMPAIRED WATERS IN MISSISSIPPI
County Level Impaired Watersheds
Impairments:
Sediments, Nutrients, Pesticides
Area Two Boundary
Area Two Counties
Area Two Impaired Waters
Aea Two Sub-Basins
Non-Impaired Watersheds
Impaired Watersheds
Oktibbeha
Lowndes
Choctaw
Attala
Winston
Noxubee
Leake
Neshoba
Kemper
Madison
Scott
Newton
Lauderdale
Hinds
Rankin
Claiborne
Smith
Jasper
Clarke
Copiah
Simpson

Area 3


2007 EQIP GUIDE TO IMPAIRED WATERS IN MISSISSIPPI
County Level Impaired Watersheds
Impairments:
Sediments, Nutrients, Pesticides
Area Three Boundary
Area Three Counties
Area Three Impaired Waters
Area Three Sub-Basins
Non-Impaired Watersheds
Impaired Watersheds

Area 4


2007 EQIP GUIDE TO IMPAIRED WATERS IN MISSISSIPPI
County Level Impaired Watersheds
Impairments:
Sediments, Nutrients, Pesticides
Area Four Boundary
Area Four Counties
Area Four Impaired Waterbodies
Area Four Impaired Waters
Area Four Sub-basins
Non-Impaired Watersheds
Impaired Watersheds