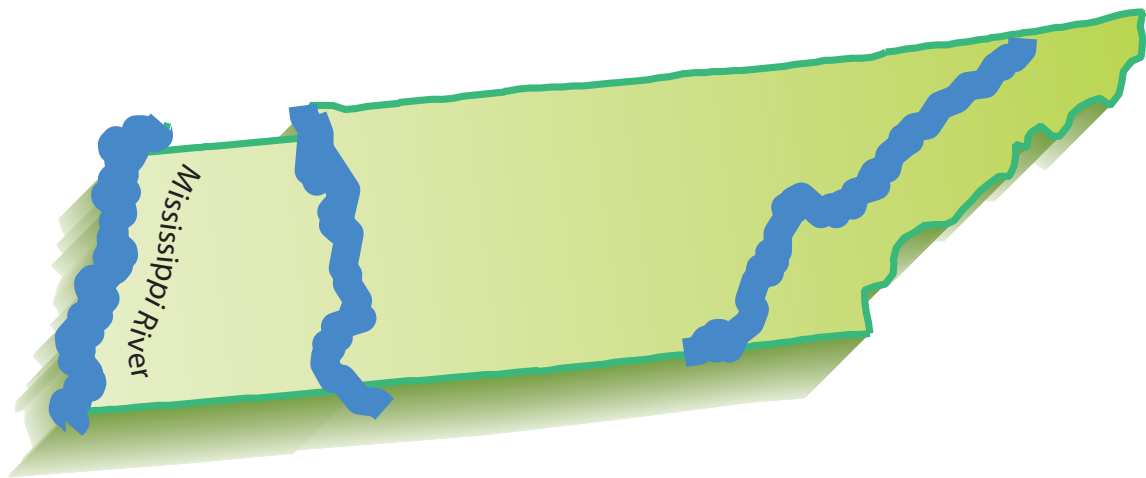


SEIZING A WATERSHED MOMENT

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



Tennessee

**Environmental Quality Incentives Program
State Report 9 of 10**



APPENDIX – STATE REPORTS

TENNESSEE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

Tennessee received an average of \$11.8 million in EQIP funds for technical and financial assistance per year from 2003 to 2007, ranking it 10th out of the 10 states that border the Mississippi River for EQIP funds. TN-EQIP distributes approximately half of its funds to its 95 counties and the remaining half is distributed among its 7 resource concerns: (1) AFO/CAFO, Water and Air Quality, (2) Aquatic At-Risk Species Habitat Conservation, (3) Cropland - Erosion/Sedimentation, (4) Forest Habitat Improvement, (5) Grassland At-Risk Species Habitat Conservation, (6) Invasive Species and (7) Limited Resource Farmer/Small-Scale Farmer.

Applicants to EQIP in Tennessee can choose to either apply to the county-based programs or to one or more of the 7 statewide funding categories, which are competitive on a statewide basis. Each of the 95 counties has a county-based ranking criteria document that contains different local issue ranking questions. The 7 state-level resource concern ranking criteria documents include: (1) national priorities, (2) state issues, (3) a cost-efficiency score, and (4) selected resource concerns and practice lists.

Tennessee EQIP's State Technical Committee identifies statewide resource concerns and develops the resource concern ranking criteria documents while the Local Work Groups identify each county's priority practices and develop their county's local ranking criteria document.

TENNESSEE EQIP WEBSITE

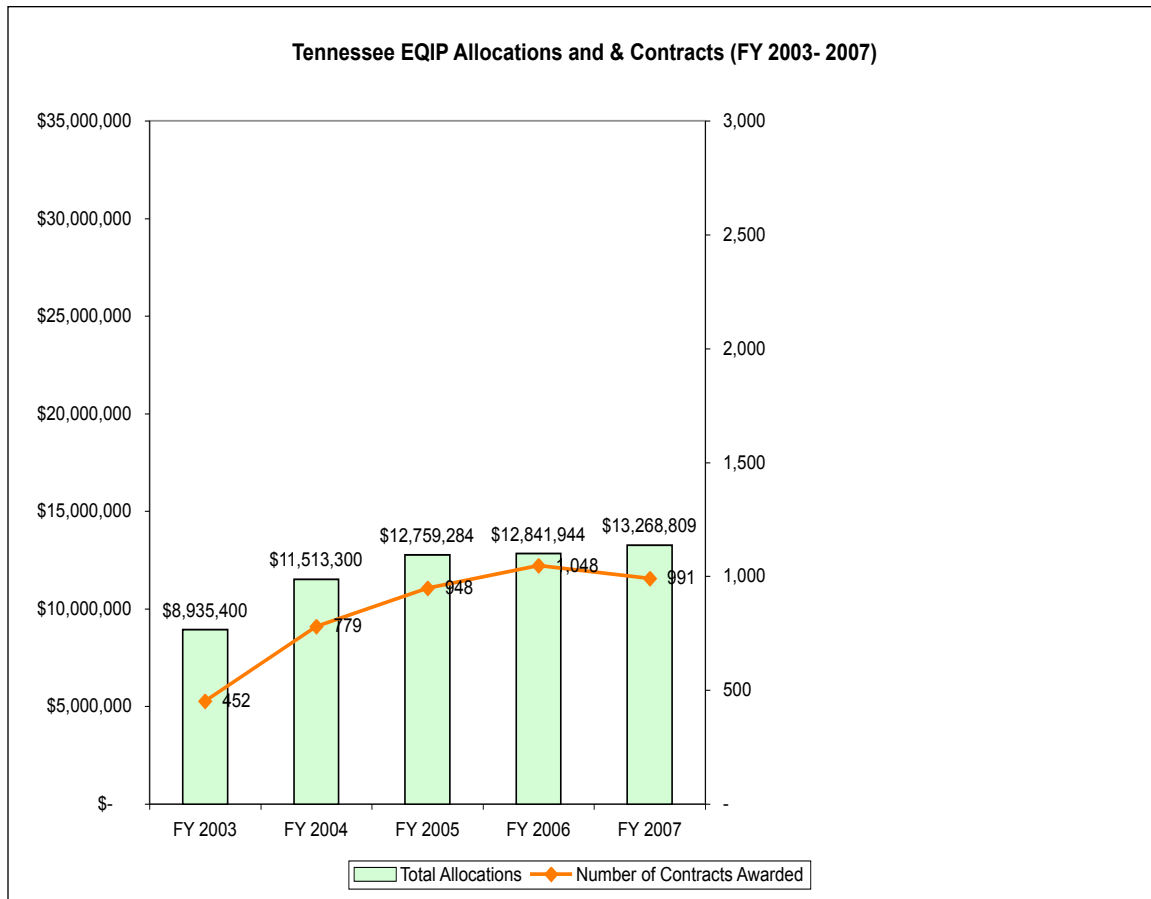
<http://www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip2009/index.html>

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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 Tennessee has received from FY 2003 to 2007 and the number of contracts awarded each fiscal year. A total of 4,218 contracts have been entered into with producers between 2003 and 2007 providing \$59.3 million and addressing 361,593 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 Tennessee 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) websites to complete this

analysis and followed up on our investigation with interviews of the state EQIP program manager.

Goals

Tennessee EQIP's Aquatic At-Risk Species funding category has a goal of protecting Threatened and Endangered Species and uses 7 percent of EQIP funds to reduce pollution to streams designated as "High," "Medium," and "Low" priorities.

Regarding the balance of Tennessee EQIP funds, EWG did not find evidence to suggest that Tennessee 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. Tennessee'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 Tennessee EQIP set clear and specific goals for how much of 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 Tennessee EQIP develop systems to track, evaluate, and report on the environmental performance of EQIP.

Fund Allocation

In FY2008, Tennessee EQIP distributed approximately half of its funds to its 95 counties and held back the remaining half for distribution amongst the 7 resource concern funding categories: (1) AFO/CAFO, Water and Air Quality, (2) Aquatic At-Risk Species Habitat Conservation, (3) Cropland - Erosion/Sedimentation, (4) Forest Habitat Improvement, (5) Grassland At-Risk Species Habitat Conservation, (6) Invasive Species and (7) Limited Resource Farmer/Small-Scale Farmer.

Tennessee EQIP does not have a formula for allocating funding to local jurisdictions like several other states that include various generic and resource concern factors and weights. According to John Rissler, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, "Initially we equally divide the funds (amongst the 95 counties). Some counties do not have enough applications to utilize their funds. Slippage from those counties is placed in counties with the least percent of applications funded."

EWG recommends that if funds are allocated directly to local jurisdictions, Tennessee 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 yet solvable environmental problems associated with agriculture.

The figure below shows a breakdown of TN-EQIP funds.

Funding Distribution to Resource Concerns in Tennessee for 2008	
Resource Concern/Program Area	Distribution of EQIP Funds
County Allocation	50%
AFO/CAFO, Water and Air Quality	16%
Cropland Erosion/Sedimentation	13%
Aquatic At-Risk Species	7%
Limited Resource Farmer and Small Scale Farmer	6%
Grassland At-Risk Species	4.5%
Forest Habitat Improvement	2%
Invasive Species- Kudzu	1.5%
Total	100%

Source: John Rissler, Assistant State Conservationist for Tennessee.

Note that 36 percent FY2008 TN-EQIP funds went to 3 funding categories that are likely to result in a reduction of nutrient and sediment pollution: AFO/CAFO Water and Air Quality, Cropland – Erosion / Sedimentation, and Aquatic At-Risk Species.

Unfortunately, Tennessee EQIP does not provide a breakdown by resource concern for approximately half of its funds that go to the county-based program so it is difficult to know how much of a priority it is to Tennessee to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution. However, according to Rissler, “a majority of the funds going to counties goes to fencing with a priority on excluding livestock from streams and other sensitive areas.” This is an important practice for reducing nutrient and sediment pollution.

EWG found that Tennessee EQIP’s “Aquatic At-Risk Species Habitat Conservation” funding category approaches a watershed-based clean-up project because it focuses EQIP funds on reducing water quality pollution in a discrete number of priority watersheds. TN-EQIP uses an Aquatic Priority List to prioritize applications from three sets of watershed categories. Applications in the watersheds that rank “High” receive higher priority over watersheds that are ranked “Medium” or “Low.” The state designates 7 percent or about \$800,000 per year out of the \$11 million annual average of EQIP funds to this funding pool.

Rissler provided the following description of the funding pool for Aquatic At-Risk Species Habitat Conservation in a written response to EWG’s inquiries.

“The Aquatic fund pool is intended to protect Tennessee streams and the threatened and endangered species that live in the streams. It is an attempt at providing protection to the streams that are not already degraded beyond repair. Streams that are already so degraded that they no longer have Threatened and Endangered (T&E) species are not likely to receive funding in this fund pool. Tennessee has more T&E species than any other non-coastal

state in the nation. Priority is given to streams that have known populations of aquatic T&E species. Within that priority you will find that excluding livestock from streams and riparian forest buffers receive the majority of points. I would venture to say that in order to receive funding producers had to exclude livestock and put in a riparian forest buffer to score high enough to receive funding in this very competitive funding pool.”

EWG recommends that Tennessee 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 Tennessee EQIP allocate 60 percent of its EQIP funds to watershed-based clean-up projects by 2012. Tennessee 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

Tennessee EQIP makes available on their website the 7 state-wide resource concern program ranking criteria sheets and 95 county ranking sheets and each sheet shows the amount of points awarded per question. The 7 Ranking Tool Summaries are (1) AFO/CAFO, Water and Air Quality, (2) Aquatic At-Risk Species Habitat Conservation, (3) Cropland – Erosion / Sedimentation, (4) Forest Habitat Improvement, (5) Grassland At-Risk Species Habitat Conservation, (6) Invasive Species and (7) Limited Resource Farmer/Small-Scale Farmer.

Applicants to EQIP in Tennessee can choose to either apply to the county-based program or to 1 or more of the statewide resource concern funding categories. Applications to the county-based program compete against each other within each

county while applications to the statewide resource concern programs compete within each program on a statewide basis.

All applications are entered, ranked and selected using the NRCS ProTracts software with the highest scores receiving funding first. The county-based program applications are selected at the field level with oversight at the Area Office level and assistance from the State Office Program Staff. Applications to the statewide programs are selected for funding at the state office.

Each of the 95 counties in Tennessee have a local ranking criteria document called "County Based Funding Practices and Ranking Questions developed by Local Work Group for FY 2008." This document lists different local issue ranking questions in a Yes/No format with points for answering Yes. None of the county applications answer national priority questions and there is only one single state issue question included in the county-based applications. That question provides the applicant an opportunity of a "tie-breaker" if they agree to complete a Conservation Security Program self-assessment for their operation.¹

The 7 state-level resource concern ranking criteria documents are called "Ranking Tool Summary" sheets which include 4 sections: (1) national priorities questions, (2) state issues questions, (3) a cost-efficiency score, and (4) selected resource concerns and practice lists. There are no local issue questions in any of these 7 Ranking Tool Summaries. The list of selected resource concerns and practice lists in each Ranking Summary is tailored to reflect the specific statewide resource concerns of each of the 7 Ranking Summaries. Applications that receive a greater total point score get a higher priority for participation in EQIP. See Box 1 for background information on the cost-efficiency score.

On each of the 7 statewide Ranking Tool Summaries, Tennessee assigns a Scoring Multiplier of 1 to the Efficiency Score, 10 to the National Priorities, and 10 to the State Issues.

To determine how much emphasis Tennessee 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 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. Those complications are described in Box 2.

¹ Written comments provided by John Rissler, Assistant State Conservationist (Programs), Tennessee EQIP.

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)

$$\frac{\text{Conservation Practice Physical Effects (CPPE) value(s)} \\ \times \text{Service life of the practice(s)}}{\text{Average cost of installing and maintaining the practice(s)}}$$

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.

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.

Since the "AFO/CAFO Water and Air Quality" and "Cropland Erosion/Sedimentation" Ranking Tool Summaries focus implicitly and explicitly on nutrient and sediment pollution and because these 2 funding categories receive nearly a third of the state's funding, we will review these 2 ranking sheets. For a review of local issue ranking factors, we randomly chose Anderson County's ranking criteria document.

Regarding emphasis on geographic priorities, a review of the FY 2008 "AFO/CAFO Water and Air Quality" and "Cropland Erosion / Sedimentation" Ranking Tool Summaries (see Appendix) indicates that Tennessee does not appear to give much emphasis to geographic priorities. The National Priorities Question 1 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.

In the State Issue sections of the two Ranking Summaries, there is a clearer emphasis for applications in geographic priority areas though the emphasis is minor. In the "AFO/CAFO Water and Air Quality" Summary, 1,000 of the 7,535 maximum possible number of points (13 percent) in the State section is given to livestock operation applications located in a watershed of a 303 (d) listed stream. In addition, 200 points are provided (3 percent) if all livestock will be fenced from streams or have limited access to streams according to NRCS Standards.

As for the State Issue section in the "Cropland Erosion / Sedimentation" Summary, 100 of the 735 maximum possible number of points (14 percent) is provided if the practices to be installed reduce sediment load to a 303 (d) stream.

In contrast, the Local Issues section of Anderson County's ranking sheet provides a major emphasis on geographically important locations: a) 100 points are provided if the application results in the exclusion of livestock from all water bodies on the farm and b) 90 points are provided if the application results in the maintenance or the installation of a conservation buffer (including livestock use exclusion) of 35 feet or more in width beside waterbodies. Thus, 190 out of the 335 maximum possible points in the Local section (57 percent) are provided for geographic priorities.

Regarding emphasis on reducing nutrient and sediment pollution, as would be expected of Ranking Tool Summaries labeled AFO/CAFO Water and Air Quality

and Cropland Erosion / Sedimentation, Tennessee appears to place a major emphasis on these two specific impairments to water quality. However, the ranking criteria lack specificity. 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 5 points (20 percent of the 25 total points available from the National Priorities section of both Ranking Summaries) 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 of the AFO/CAFO Water and Air Quality Summary, of the 7,535 points given (the largest set of points found among the 10 states evaluated), 5,000 points (66 percent) are given if the application seeks only to develop a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP). Indeed, this Summary even announces “Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) only applications will receive a high priority and be funded first.”

In the State Issues section of the Cropland Erosion / Sedimentation Summary, 300 points (41 percent of the 735 maximum possible points) are provided for practices that are likely to reduce soil erosion and may reduce sediment pollution: a) planting of Highly Erodible Land (HEL) cropland to permanent vegetation – 150 points, b) converting cropland to permanent vegetation – 50 points, and c) establishing a buffer on fields adjacent to streams – 100 points. 100 points (14 percent) are provided if the applicant will practice nutrient management according to NRCS specifications, which is likely to result in a reduction of nutrient pollution.

Despite Tennessee 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 13 to 14 percent of points from the State Issues sections are given to applications from priority watersheds. Thus, it is unlikely that Tennessee’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 Tennessee 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 Tennessee 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, Tennessee 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—Tennessee EQIP Ranking Criteria

Ranking Tool Summary for FY2008 – AFO/CAFO Water and Air Quality

Ranking Tool Summary for FY2008 - AFO/CAFO Water and Air Quality (Released 10/12/2007)

Description:

This funding pool is used to assist landowners interested in the EQIP 2008 AFO-CAFO - State Resource Concerns. The primary resource concerns are Water and Air Quality resulting from the livestock operations and the storage and use of waste materials produced by concentrated animal feeding operations. Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP) only applications will receive a high priority and be funded first. Applicants can submit more than one application to this funding pool.

Land Uses:

Crop, Hay, Headquarters, Pasture

Efficiency Score:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.00

Optional Notes:

National Priorities:

Scoring Multiplier: 10.00

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?	5
2	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	5
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?	5
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?	5
5	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	5
Total Points		25

State Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 10.00

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
	1	Is this application only for the development of a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) by Technical Service Provider (TSP) ?	5000
	2	Is this a livestock operation that has been in business for more than two	1000

		years and is located in a watershed of a 303(d) listed stream?	
3		Is this a livestock operation that has been in business for more than two years and is NOT located in a watershed of a 303(d) listed stream?	500
4		Are you a new operation in business less than two years?	50
5		Is this a livestock operation where less than 50% of the nutrient requirements of the livestock is provided from grazing?	750
6		After implementation of this contract, will all livestock be fenced from streams or have limited access to streams according to NRCS Standards?	200
7		Are you applying to install practices that are identified in your approved CNMP? (to answer yes, your CNMP must meet your planned or current operation and NRCS specifications.)	75
8		Have you ever terminated or cancelled an EQIP CONTRACT (does not apply to an EQIP application cancellation)?	-50
9		Has the applicant completed and submitted a Conservation Security Program (CSP) Self Assessment?	10
		Maximum Points: Total Points	7535

Local Issues:

Selected Resource Concerns and Practices:

- Air Quality: Ammonia (NH3)
 - Animal Mortality Facility (316)
 - Closure of Waste Impoundment (360)
 - Composting Facility (317)
 - Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (100)
 - Heavy Use Area Protection (561)
 - Irrigation System, Sprinkler (442)
 - Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline, H (430DD)
 - Mulching (484)
 - Nutrient Management (590)
 - Pipeline (516)
 - Roof Runoff Structure (558)
 - Solid/Liquid Waste Separation Facility (632)
 - Waste Storage Facility (313)
 - Waste Utilization (633)
- Air Quality: Chemical Drift
 - Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (100)
 - Filter Strip (393)
 - Heavy Use Area Protection (561)
 - Irrigation System, Sprinkler (442)
 - Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline, H (430DD)
 - Nutrient Management (590)
 - Pest Management (595)
 - Pipeline (516)
 - Waste Storage Facility (313)
- Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH4 (methane)
 - Animal Mortality Facility (316)
 - Closure of Waste Impoundment (360)
 - Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (100)
 - Irrigation System, Sprinkler (442)
 - Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline, H (430DD)
 - Nutrient Management (590)
 - Pipeline (516)
 - Waste Utilization (633)
- Air Quality: Objectionable Odors
 - Closure of Waste Impoundment (360)

Ranking Tool Summary for FY2008 – Cropland Soil Erosion/Sedimentation

Ranking Tool Summary

for FY2008 - Cropland - Erosion/Sedimentation

(Released 10/12/2007)

Description:

This funding pool is used in ranking EQIP applications for Cropland - Erosion/Sedimentation for Fiscal Year 2008. The beginning land use must be cropland, but cropland converting to grass is eligible for this funding pool also. Irrigation and Precision Farming (Nutrient Management) are added this year. Irrigation history must be verified (two out of the last five years) according to Conservation Programs Manual (CPM) 440-V-NCPM Amendment TN14, Jan. 2006 (Part 515).

Land Uses:

Crop

Efficiency Score:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.00

Optional Notes:

National Priorities:

Scoring Multiplier: 10.00

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?	5
2	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable amount of ground or surface water conservation?	5
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?	5
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?	5
5	Will the treatment you intend to implement using EQIP result in a considerable increase in the promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation?	5
Total Points		25

State Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 10.00

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
	1	Are you or will you produce crops in one or more of the following cropping systems on this tract? a. No till high residue crops annually (corn, small grains) b. No till cotton in no more than 2 consecutive years followed by	200

		high residue crops c. No till corn silage in a rotation with small grains d. Low residue crops with winter cover crops	
	2	Does the applicant plan to plant Highly Erodible Land (HEL) cropland to permanent vegetation?	150
	3	If you convert cropland to permanent vegetation, will you plant native vegetation?	50
	4	Will the practice(s) to be installed reduce sediment load to a 303(d) stream?	100
	5	Do you have or will you establish a buffer on fields adjacent to streams?	100
	6	Do you currently have land enrolled in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) buffers or field borders on this tract?	25
	7	Are you or will you practice nutrient management according to NRCS specifications?	100
	8	Has the applicant completed and submitted a Conservation Security Program (CSP) Self Assessment?	10
		Maximum Points:	Total Points
			735

Local Issues:

Selected Resource Concerns and Practices:

Air Quality: Chemical Drift

- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Field Border (386)
- Filter Strip (393)
- Irrigation System, Microirrigation (441)
- Irrigation System, Sprinkler (442)
- Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery (447)
- Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline, H (430DD)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Pasture and Hay Planting (512)
- Pest Management (595)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)

Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)

- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Contour Buffer Strips (332)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Field Border (386)
- Filter Strip (393)
- Grassed Waterway (412)
- Mulching (484)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Pasture and Hay Planting (512)
- Pest Management (595)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
- Use Exclusion (472)

Domestic Animals: Inadequate Quantities and Quality of Feed and Forage

- Conservation Crop Rotation (328)
- Contour Buffer Strips (332)
- Cover Crop (340)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Field Border (386)

Anderson County's ranking criteria document

County Based Funding Practices and Ranking Questions developed by Local Work Group (LWG) For FY2008				
1.	County name			Anderson
	The Beginning Farmer Payment Schedule Rate for this county is			50%
2.	PRAC CODE	CONSERVATION PRACTICE NAME	UNITS	The Local work Group Recommended Using These Practices <small>(A "yes" has been entered for those practices available in this funding pool to use in your county. Blank practices are not available with this ranking tool but may be available from other funding pools.)</small>
	560	Access Rd (Ft)	FT	YES
	316	Animal Mortality Facility (No)	No	YES
	575	Animal Trails and Walkways (Ft)	FT	YES
	584	Channel Stabilization (Ft)	CY or Ton	YES
	360	Closure of Waste Impoundments (No)	CY	YES
	100	CNMP	No	YES
	317	Composting Facility (No)	SF	YES
	328	Conservation Crop Rotation (Ac)	Ac	YES
	340	Cover Crop (Ac)	Ac	YES
	342	Critical Area Planting (Ac)	Ac	YES
	362	Diversion (Ft)	CY	YES
	382	Fence (Ft)	FT or Strand/ft	YES
	386	Field Border (Ft)	Ac	YES
	393	Filter Strip (Ac)	Ac	YES
	410	Grade Stabilization Structure (No)	CY or DIFT or Ton	YES
	412	Grassed Waterway (Ac)	Ac	YES
	561	Heavy Use Area Protection (Ac)	SF	YES
	422	Hedgerow Planting (Ft)	FT	YES
	464	Irrigation Land Leveling (Ac)	CY	YES
	436	Irrigation Storage Reservoir (No & AcFt)	CY	YES
	441	Irrigation System, Microirrigation (No & Ac)	Ac	YES
	442	Irrigation System, Sprinkler (Ac)	Ac	YES
	447	Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery (No)	CY	YES
	430DD	Irrigation Water Conveyance, High-Pressure, Underground, Plastic Pipeline (Ft)	DIFT	YES
	449	Irrigation Water Management (Ac)	Ac	YES
	460	Land Clearing (Ac)	Ac	YES

468	Lined Waterway or Outlet (Ft)	LF or SF	YES
634	Manure Transfer (No)	DIFT or Gal or LF	YES
484	Mulching (Ac)	Ac or Sq Yd	YES
590	Nutrient Management (Ac)	Ac	YES
512	Pasture and Hay Planting (Ac)	Ac	YES
595	Pest Management	Ac	YES
516	Pipeline (Ft)	DIFT	YES
378	Pond (No)	CY	YES
521A	Pond Sealing and Lining, Flexible Membrane (No)	SF	YES
521D	Pond Sealing or Lining, Compacted Clay Treatment (No)	CY	YES
338	Prescribed Burning (Ac)	Ac	YES
409	Prescribed Forestry (Ac)	Ac or Ea	YES
528	Prescribed Grazing (Ac)	Ac	YES
533	Pumping Plant (No)	Each or HP	YES
391	Riparian Forest Buffer (Ac)	Ac	YES
558	Roof Runoff Structure (No)	LF	YES
350	Sediment Basin (No)	CY	YES
632	Solid/Liquid Waste Separation Facility (No)	CF or CY or NO	YES
574	Spring Development (No)	Each	YES
578	Stream Crossing (No)	SF	YES
580	Streambank & Shoreline Protection (Ft)	CY or Ton	YES
606	Subsurface Drain (Ft)	DIFT	YES
600	Terrace (Ft)	CY	YES
612	Tree/Shrub Establishment (Ac)	Ac	YES
490	Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (Ac) formerly-Forest Site Preparation	Ac	YES
620	Underground Outlet (Ft)	DIFT	YES
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (Ac)	Ac	YES
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (Ac) (Early Successional...)	Ac	YES
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (Ac) (Early Successional...)	Ac	YES
472	Use Exclusion (Ac)	strand-ft	YES
313	Waste Storage Facility (No)	CF or SF	YES
633	Waste Utilization (Ac)	Ac	YES
638	Water & Sediment Control Basin (No)	CY	YES
614	Water Facility (No)	Each	YES
642	Water Well (Ft)	LF or NO	YES
351	Well Decommissioning (No)	LF	YES

3. LOCAL ISSUES: Your Local Work Group developed the following yes or no questions to be used in the County Base Ranking Tool. Points will only be awarded with a Yes Answer.			
Question #	Question	Points	Responses
1	Will this application result in the exclusion of livestock from all waterbodies on the farm (example: Creeks, Streams, Lakes, and/or Springs)? (If answer is Yes, then questions # 2, # 6, and # 12 are No)	100	Yes No
2	Will this application result in the installation of an alternative watering system in conjunction to exclusion of livestock from all waterbodies on the farm (example: Creeks, Streams, Lakes, and/or Springs)? (If answer is Yes, then questions # 1, # 6, and # 12 are No)	95	Yes No
3	Will this application result in the maintenance or the installation of a conservation buffer, (including livestock use exclusion), of 35 feet or more in width beside waterbodies? (example: Creeks, Streams, Lakes, and/or Springs)	90	Yes No
4	Blank	85	Yes No
5	Will this application result in an installation of a 5 paddock (or more) rotational grazing system and includes payment schedule for practice code 528 and will follow Prescribed Grazing Requirements? (If answer is Yes, then question #14 is No)	80	Yes No
6	Will this application result in the installation of an alternative watering system in conjunction to exclusion of livestock from some of the waterbodies on the farm but not all of the waterbodies on the farm? (example: Creeks, Streams, Lakes, and/or Springs)? (If answer is Yes, then questions # 1, # 2, and # 12 are No)	75	Yes No
7	Blank	70	Yes No
8	Blank	65	Yes No
9	Blank	60	Yes No
10	Blank	55	Yes No
11	Blank	50	Yes No
12	Will this application result in the installation of a watering system for livestock and does not include the installation of a pond? (If answer is Yes, then questions # 1, # 2, and # 6 are No)	45	Yes No
13	Blank	40	Yes No
14	Will this application result in an increase in paddocks for rotating livestock? (If answer is Yes, then question # 5 is No)	35	Yes No
15	Blank	30	Yes No
16	Blank	25	Yes No
17	Blank	20	Yes No
18	Will this application result in the completion of Practice Code (512) Pasture Planting and does landowner agree to follow the Requirements for Pasture Renovation and Prescribed Grazing? (see requirements sheet)	15	Yes No
19	Will this application result in the completion of Practice Code (342) Critical Area Planting?	10	Yes No
20	If this application is funded, will it be the first time since 1-1-2002 you would have received cost share funds and / or installed structural conservation practices on this or any farm?	5	Yes No