

**Natural Resources Conservation Service
Application Ranking Summary
FY17 Wildlife-Friendly Livestock Pond**

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Point(s)
If the application is for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering “Yes” to the following question. Answering “Yes” to question 1a will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the national priority category.	
1. a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is “Yes”, do not answer any other national level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250
Water Quality Degradation – Will the proposed project improve water quality by: (select all that apply)	
2. a. Implementing the practices in a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP)?	15
2. b. Implementing the practices in a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)?	10
2. c. Reducing impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides on land adjoining a designated “impaired water body” (TMDL, 303d listed waterbody, or other State designation)?	10
2. d. Reducing the impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides in a “non-impaired water body”?	10
2. e. Implementing practices that improve water quality through animal mortality and carcass management?	10
Water Conservation – Will the proposed project conserve water by: (select all that apply)	
3. a. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce aquifer overdraft.	15
3. b. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce on-farm water use?	10
3. c. Implementing practices in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	10
3. d. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm water use as a result of changing to crops with lower water consumptive use, the rotation of crops, or the modification of cultural operations?	10
Air Quality - Will the proposed project improve air quality by: (select all that apply)	
4. a. Meeting on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	10
4. b. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm emissions of particulate matter (PM2.5, PM10)?	10
4. c. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm generated greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), and nitrous oxide (N2O)?	10
4. d. Implementing practices that increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	10
Soil Health:– Will the proposed project improve soil health by: (select all that apply)	
5. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil “T”)?	10
5. b. Increasing organic matter and carbon content, and improving soil tilth and structure?	10
Wildlife Habitat – Will the proposed project improve wildlife habitat by: (select all that apply)	
6. a. Implementing practices benefitting threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern.	10
6. b. Implementing practices that retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or other set-aside program?	10
6. c. Implementing practices benefitting honey bee populations or other pollinators?	10
6. d. Implementing land-based practices that improve habitat for aquatic wildlife?	10
Plant and Animal Communities: Will the proposed project improve plant and animal communities by: (select all that apply)	
7. a. Implementing practices that result in the management control of noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10
7. b. Implementing practice in an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM)?	10

Energy Conservation– Will the proposed project reduce energy use by: (select all that apply)	
8. a. Reducing on-farm energy consumption?	10
8. b. Implementing practice(s) identified in an approved AgEMP or energy audit, which meet ASABE S612 criteria?	10
Business Lines – Will the practices to be scheduled in the “EQIP Plan of Operations” result in:	
9. a. Enhancement of existing conservation practice(s) or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is received?	10
State Issues Addressed	
Issue Questions	Point(s)
State Category One – Conservation Activity Plan If the application is for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering “Yes” to the following question. Answering “Yes” to question 1a will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the state priority category.	
1. a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is “Yes”, do not answer any other state level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250
State Category Two – Available Wetland Habitat Moist refuge for the California Red-legged frog (CRLF) may be a pond with open water, perennial creek, wetland, spring, spring box, vegetated seep, or leaf litter in riparian woodlands. (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
2. a. Moist refuge is present within 100 yards of breeding sites and/or water bodies occupied with CRLF.	65
2. b. Moist refuge is not currently present within 100 yards of breeding sites and/or water bodies occupied with CRLF. Conservation treatment will result in moist refuge availability within 100 yards of breeding sites and/or water bodies occupied with CRLF.	45
State Category Three – Upland Habitat Availability Suitable upland habitat for CRLF and/or California Tiger Salamander (CTS) is defined as predominantly grass and grass-like plants, and may include sparse stands of brush and riparian oak woodland. Habitat that meets the criteria for suitable upland habitat, but is isolated from breeding pond(s) by barriers, should not be counted. (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
3. a. Suitable habitat is present on 95 percent of the acreage surrounding a livestock pond within the 630 meter buffer zone associated with the application.	65
3. b. Suitable habitat is present on at least 75 percent of the acreage surrounding a livestock pond within the 630 meter buffer zone, associated with the application.	55
State Category Four – Upland Habitat Availability (Select "Yes," if applicable)	
4. a. CTS are currently present or known sightings occur within 1.6 miles of the livestock pond associated with the application. Burrows left by ground squirrels or gophers at a density of at least 5 per 30 square meters on average or soil cracks (minimum 1” wide) are present on suitable habitat surrounding any livestock pond associated with the application within a 630 meter buffer.	65
State Category Five– Suitable Upland Grassland Habitat Estimation of residual dry matter (RDM) levels for the treatment unit was determined using visual assessments as outlined in the publication, Monitoring Annual Grassland Residual Dry Matter – A Mulch Manager’s Guide for Monitoring Success, 2nd ed. (Brewster, Guenther and Hayes: Wildland Solutions Field Guide Series, Brochure 34 pp., 2008) (Select "Yes," if applicable)	
5. a. Current land management activities are meeting the target range RDM criteria within 25 to 300 yards from the edge of any livestock pond associated with the application to maintain soil health and control invasive plant species. The target range for RDM criteria is between 300-1200 lbs/acre to reduce cover and standing residual matter.	55

Local Issues Addressed	
Issue Questions	Point(s)
<p>Local Category One – Conservation Activity Plan</p> <p>If the application is for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering “Yes” to the following question.</p> <p>Answering “Yes” to question 1a will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the local priority category.</p>	
<p>1. a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is “Yes”, do not answer any other local level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.</p>	400
<p>Local Category Two – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excessive Sediments in Surface Water (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)</p>	
<p>2. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will reduce sediment delivery to the identified pond through structural and/or vegetative improvements AND will reduce downstream erosion to drainages through structural and/or vegetative improvements.</p>	75
<p>2. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will reduce sediment delivery to the identified pond through structural and/or vegetative improvements.</p>	50
<p>2. c. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will reduce downstream erosion to drainages through structural and/or vegetative improvements.</p>	50
<p>Local Category Three – INADEQUATE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE: Habitat Degradation – Water (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)</p>	
<p>3. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations is planned for a pond with known occurrences of predatory species, such as Bullfrog or non-native fish; however, full and permanent removal of predatory species is expected as part of planned conservation treatment installation and implementation. CRLF and/or CTS are not currently present in the identified pond.</p>	35
<p>3. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations is planned for a pond with known occurrences of predatory species, such as Bullfrog or non-native fish; however, full and permanent removal of predatory species is expected as part of planned conservation treatment installation and implementation. CRLF and/or CTS are present in the identified pond.</p>	55
<p>3. c. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations is planned for a pond without known occurrences of predatory species, such as Bullfrog or non-native fish, such as, but not limited, to sunfish, mosquito fish, bass, perch, catfish, carp, etc. CRLF and/or CTS are know to occur in the identified pond.</p>	80
<p>3. d. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations is planned for a pond without known occurrences of predatory species, such as Bullfrog or non-native fish, such as, but not limited, to sunfish, mosquito fish, bass, perch, catfish, carp, etc. CRLF and/or CTS are know to occur in the identified pond.</p>	55
<p>3. e. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations is planned for a pond with known occurrences of predatory species, such as Bullfrog or non-native fish. Full and permanent removal of predatory species is not possible, but populations of CTS and/or CRLF are currently co-existing and will continue to do so in the identified the pond.</p>	20
<p>Local Category Four – INADEQUATE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE: Habitat Degradation – Cover/Shelter Estimation of residual dry matter (RDM) levels for the treatment unit was determined using visual assessments as outlined in the publication, Monitoring Annual Grassland Residual Dry Matter – A Mulch Manager’s Guide for Monitoring Success, 2nd ed. (Brewster, Guenther and Hayes: Wildland Solutions Field Guide Series, Brochure 34 pp., 2008) (Select "Yes," if applicable)</p>	
<p>4. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will result in the target range RDM levels managed at 300 to 1200 lbs/acre to reduce cover and standing residual matter within 25 to 300 yards from the edge of any livestock pond associated with the application to maintain soil heath and control invasive plant species.</p>	45
<p>Local Category Five – INADEQUATE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE: Habitat Degradation – Habitat Continuity/Space (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)</p>	

5. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations is planned within a Core Recovery Area or Critical Habitat Designations for CRLF and/or CTS.	40
5. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations is planned within 3.0 miles of a Core Recovery Area or Critical Habitat Designations for CRLF and/or CTS.	20
Local Category Six – INADEQUATE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE: Habitat Degradation – Habitat Continuity/Space Connectivity between known breeding sites is available to CRLF and/or CTS to encourage variation in the genetics of metapopulations. If more than one pond is included in the application then only one pond is required to meet the criteria. Distance to other known breeding sites is only valid if no physical barriers (ex. major roads, highways, developments) are present to restrict upland movement. (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
6. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations is within 0.6 miles of other known occurrences of CRLF and/or CTS.	80
6. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations is within 1.6 miles of other known occurrences of CRLF and/or CTS.	60
6. c. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations is within 3.0 miles of other known occurrences of CRLF and/or CTS.	20
Local Category Seven – INADEQUATE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE: Habitat Degradation – Habitat Continuity/Space (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
7. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes an additional practice or practices to directly benefit other native wildlife species, in addition to CRLF and/or CTS. The benefits to these species are specifically documented in the applicant's Wildlife Habitat Management Plan. Examples of additional practices include, but are not limited to, basking structures for Western pond turtles and duck nest boxes.	30
Local Category Eight – INADEQUATE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE: Habitat Degradation – Habitat Continuity/Space (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
8. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes a practice to directly remove sediment from the identified pond(s) in order to restore the available aquatic breeding habitat for CRLF and/or CTS, and/or includes a practice to directly repair the spillway and/or embankment of the identified pond in order to preserve or repair the pond functions.	50