

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Application Ranking Summary
OAI-Ogallala Aquifer Initiative
National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
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 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
2. b. Implementing the practices in a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)?	10 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
2. d. Reducing the impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides in a "non-impaired water body"?	10 Point(s)
2. e. Implementing practices that improve water quality through animal mortality and carcass management?	10 Point(s)
Water Conservation – Will the proposed project conserve water by: (select all that apply)	
3. a. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce aquifer overdraft.	15 Point(s)
3. b. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce on-farm water use?	10 Point(s)
3. c. Implementing practices in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	10 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
4. b. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm emissions of particulate matter (PM2.5, PM10)?	10 Point(s)
4. c. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm generated greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), and nitrous oxide (N2O)?	10 Point(s)
4. d. Implementing practices that increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	10 Point(s)
Soil Health:- Will the proposed project improve soil health by: (select all that apply)	
5. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	10 Point(s)
5. b. Increasing organic matter and carbon content, and improving soil tilth and structure?	10 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
6. b. Implementing practices that retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or other set-aside program?	10 Point(s)
6. c. Implementing practices benefitting honey bee populations or other pollinators?	10 Point(s)
6. d. Implementing land-based practices that improve habitat for aquatic wildlife?	10 Point(s)
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 Point(s)
7. b. Implementing practice in an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM)?	10 Point(s)
Energy Conservation– Will the proposed project reduce energy use by: (select all that apply)	
8. a. Reducing on-farm energy consumption?	10 Point(s)
8. b. Implementing practice(s) identified in an approved AgEMP or energy audit, which meet ASABE S612 criteria?	10 Point(s)
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 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
Conservation Activity Plans _ If this application is for the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) answer this question only and set the application type to "Planning" or "Plan Organic".	
1. a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) developed by a registered TSP? If the answer is "Yes," do not answer any other state level questions. If the answer is "No," proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250 Point(s)
Soil Erosion	
2. a. Will the proposed contract include conservation practices to address sheet, rill and/or wind erosion where soil loss is greater than "T" and the proposed contract will include conservation practices that will reduce sheet, rill or wind erosion below "T" on at least 25% of the contracted acres (based on before and after RUSLE2 or WEPS calculations).?	45 Point(s)
2. b. Will the proposed contract include conservation practices to address concentrated flow erosion and include conservation practices that will control and prevent active ephemeral gullies on cropland?	25 Point(s)
Excess/Insufficient Water-Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water. Answer all of questions 6a through 6e that apply. Answer only one of 6f or 6g.	
3. a. Will the proposed contract activities reduce the gross amount of water applied on an operation that is currently drawing water from the Ogallala Aquifer or the Altus Lugert Irrigation District?	45 Point(s)
3. b. Will the proposed contract activities reduce the acres of irrigated cropland on an operation?	25 Point(s)
3. c. Will the proposed contract activities result in implementing practices that reduce irrigation water applied due to a change in the existing crop rotation that includes non irrigated crop or fallow period?	20 Point(s)

3. d. Will the proposed contract activities result in implementing practices that reduce irrigation water applied as a result of changing existing crop rotation to a crop rotation with lower water consumptive use or rotation of crops?	20 Point(s)
3. e. Will the proposed contract activities include the implementation of Well Decommissioning (351) and/or will the producer agree to destroy the existing irrigation system which is being replaced by a more efficient system?	20 Point(s)
3. f. Will the proposed contract activities result in an estimated 20% or more reduction of gross water applied?	20 Point(s)
3. g. Will the proposed contract activities result in an estimated 10-19% reduction of gross water applied?	15 Point(s)
Business Lines	
4. a. Will the proposed contract be scheduled for completion within 2 years of obligation?	10 Point(s)
4. b. Will the proposed contract include activities identified in an existing conservation plan as needed to complete or enhance an existing conservation system?	25 Point(s)
4. c. Has the applicant had a previous EQIP contract that was terminated in the past 3 years or is currently in non-compliance?	-10 Point(s)

Local Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
Conservation Activity Plans (CAP) - If the application is for the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) answer this questions only and set the application type to "Planning" or "Plan Organic".	
1. a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) developed by a registered TSP? If the answer is "Yes" do not answer any other local level questions. If the answer is "No" proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	400 Point(s)
Insufficient Water : Answer all of the questions below which apply	
2. a. Will the proposed contract activities include conversion of cropland to permanent vegetation? (Must be whole field planted using 550 or 512)	350 Point(s)
2. b. Will the conversion of cropland include planting native species?	30 Point(s)
2. c. Will currently irrigated land be taken out of irrigation resulting in a reduction of irrigated acres on the entire operation (dryland operation - whole field or whole system)?	80 Point(s)
2. d. Will the participant agree not to use water savings to bring additional land under irrigation or to switch to a crop that has a lower water use efficiency than the rotation currently being grown?	10 Point(s)
Insufficient Water - Inefficient use of Irrigation Water: Answer yes to only one of the following 3 questions on Irrigation Improvements as documented by the Farm Irrigation Rating Index (FIRI).	
3. a. Will the proposed contract activities result in an estimated greater than 40% or more reduction of gross water applied on the operation?	30 Point(s)
3. b. Will the proposed contract activities result in an estimated 20-40% reduction of gross water applied on the operation?	20 Point(s)
3. c. Will the proposed contract activities result in an estimated 10-20% reduction of gross water applied on the operation?	10 Point(s)
Insufficient Water - Inefficient Moisture Management: Irrigation Water Management (Answer yes to any or all of the next 2 questions as applicable)	
4. a. Will the proposed contract activities include the installation of Soil Moisture Monitoring Equipment which will be utilized according to an approved Irrigation water management plan and maintained for the practice lifespan on all irrigated land scored in this application?	20 Point(s)
4. b. Will the proposed contract activities include the installation of a Continuous Flow Measurement tool which will be utilized according to an approved irrigation water management plan and maintained for the practice lifespan on all irrigated land scored in this application?	20 Point(s)
Insufficient Water - Inefficient Moisture Management-Soil Health (Answer yes to any or all of the next 4 questions as applicable)	
5. a. Will the proposed contract activities include conservation tillage, no-till (in addition to irrigation system conversions or modifications or conversion to dryland) on all cultivated land under contract for a minimum of 3 consecutive years?	50 Point(s)
5. b. Will the proposed project introduce a high residue crop (corn, millet, small grains, or sorghum) to an existing crop rotation that includes only low residue crops (Cotton, soybeans, canola, sesame, corn-silage, small grains-silage or straw, sunflower, vegetables, etc.)	40 Point(s)
5. c. Will the proposed project introduce a multi-crop rotation that includes both warm and cool season crops?	30 Point(s)
5. d. Will the proposed Project Introduce a cover crop?	20 Point(s)
Insufficient Water - Inefficient Moisture Management-Water Quality Degradation	
6. a. Will the proposed contract activities include prescribed grazing on grassland converted from cropland to permanent vegetation?	30 Point(s)
Water Quality Degradation - Nutrients in Groundwater Answer all that apply	
7. a. Will the proposed contract activities include Well Decommissioning of an irrigation well that will protect water quality of ground and surface water?	20 Point(s)
7. b. Will the proposed contract activities include Well Decommissioning of a livestock or domestic well that will protect water quality of ground and surface water?	5 Point(s)
Water Quality Degradation - Nutrients in Surface and/or Groundwater -Answer yes to the one question that best describes the activities on the majority of the contracted acres.	
8. a. Will the proposed contract activities include the adoption of an "advanced" nutrient management system, which goes beyond the "enhanced" or "precision" systems where management zones include specialized precision techniques to apply nitrogen fertilizer at the highest resolution level; <1 acre, (in addition to irrigation system conversion or modifications) for the length of the contract on the cultivated land included in the contract?	15 Point(s)
8. b. Will the proposed contract activities include the adoption of a "precision" nutrient management system, which includes methods that more concisely enable scheduling of appropriate fertilizer applications at a mid level resolution, (in addition to irrigation system conversion or modifications) for the length of the contract on the cultivated land included in the contract?	10 Point(s)
8. c. Will the proposed contract activities include the adoption of an "enhanced" nutrient management system, which includes methods that more concisely enable scheduling of appropriate nitrogen fertilizer application at the lowest resolution level; by field or subfield, (in addition to irrigation system conversion or modifications) for the length of the contract on the cultivated land included in the contract?	5 Point(s)
Business Lines	
9. a. Other: If a new irrigation system is being planned to replace a less efficient system, will the producer agree to destroy the existing system?	50 Point(s)
9. b. Other: Has the applicant ever had a previous USDA contract that was not fulfilled (canceled, terminated, currently out of compliance)?	-50 Point(s)