

**Natural Resources Conservation Service
Application Ranking Summary
FY17 Statewide - SFR - Cropland**

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 Ranking Criteria – 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 Ranking Criteria – SOIL EROSION: Sheet and Rill Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations promotes soil health and reduces sheet and rill erosion, as estimated by RUSLE2; and, includes a combination of vegetative and management practices such as residue and tillage management, cover crop, or conservation crop rotation where erosion is estimated at – (Select “Yes” to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
2. a. Greater than 2T; after treatment estimated soil loss will not exceed T.	20
2. b. Less than 2T; after treatment estimated soil loss will not exceed T.	5
State Category Three Ranking Criteria – SOIL EROSION: Wind Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations may include practices such as windbreak/shelterbelt establishment, windbreak/shelterbelt renovation or herbaceous wind barriers; or, may include practices that promote soil health such as residue and tillage management, cover crop, or conservation crop rotation. Treatment will reduce wind erosion as estimated by WEPS by – (Select “Yes” to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
3. a. Greater than 50 percent; and, total annual soil loss is estimated to not exceed T after treatment.	20
3. b. 20 to 49 percent; and, total annual soil loss is estimated to not exceed T after treatment.	10
3. c. Less than 20 percent; and, total annual soil loss is estimated to not exceed T after treatment.	5
State Category Four Ranking Criteria – SOIL QUALITY DEGRADATION: Organic Matter Depletion (Select “Yes” to All Applicable Answers)	
4. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations results in a STIR value reduced from a conventional tillage value to 20 or less. (If ‘Yes’ to 4.a. then 4.b. must be ‘No’).	40

4. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations results in a STIR value is reduced from a conventional tillage value to 80 or less. (If 'Yes' to 4.b. then 4.c. must be 'No').	35
4. c. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations results in SCI increased from a negative value to a positive value.	30
4. d. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes cover crops during times in the crop rotation that are seasonally fallowed, or when a cash crop is normally planted.	30
State Category Five Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excess Nutrients in Surface Water The Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List is found at the State Water Resources Control Board website: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/tmdl/integrated2010.shtml (Select "Yes, if applicable)	
5. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will minimize the transport of nutrients to a surface waterbody on the 303(d) list for the pollutant category, "Nutrients," where an existing pathway to the surface water exists; and, conservation treatment includes management	15
State Category Six Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excess Nutrients in Groundwater The California State Water Resources Control Board map, "Hydrogeologically Vulnerable Areas and High Use Groundwater Basins," map is available at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/docs/hydro_areas.pdf Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes management practice(s) and the treatment area is located within: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
6. a. A Hydrogeologically Vulnerable Area.	10
6. b. A High Use Ground Water Basin Area, but not a Hydrogeologically Vulnerable Area.	5
State Category Seven Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Pesticides Transported to Surface Water NRCS Agronomy Technical Note 5 (February 2011) is found at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1043138.pdf (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
7. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes any combination of NRCS conservation practices or IPM techniques from NRCS Agronomy Technical Note 5, Tables 1 and 2 (February 2011) that results in a reduction of the WIN-PST surface water hazard rating for at least one pesticide to 'Low' or 'Very Low' and adoption of a Year-Round University of California Integrated Pest Management (UC IPM), when available for the crop or other comparable protocol.	15
7. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes any combination of NRCS conservation practices or IPM techniques from NRCS Agronomy Technical Note 5, Tables 1 and 2 (February 2011) that results in a reduction of the WIN-PST surface water hazard rating to 'Low' or 'Very Low' for at least one pesticide.	10
State Category Eight Ranking Criteria – WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excessive Sediment in Surface Water The Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program website: http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/agriculture/ The Clean Water Act Section 303(d) List is found at the State Water Resources Control Board website: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/tmdl/integrated2010.shtml (Select "Yes" to All Applicable Answers)	
8. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will minimize and mitigate water quality impacts associated with sediments in runoff water from the treatment unit to a surface water body on the 303(d) list for the pollutant category 'Sediments' or to a surface water body under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program.	15

8. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes vegetative practices to minimize the potential of sediment delivery into a surface water body.	15
8. c. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes structural practices to minimize the potential of sediment delivery into a surface water body.	15
State Category Nine Ranking Criteria – INADEQUATE HABITAT FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE: Habitat Degradation Food, Water, Cover/Shelter, Habitat Continuity/Space Evaluated using either the Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide (WHEG) or Pollinator Habitat Assessment (PHA). The 'planned' assessment score must be greater than or equal to 0.5 (≥ 0.5) for the WHEG or greater than or equal to 90 points (≥ 90 points) for the PHA. (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
9. a. Fish or wildlife habitat improvements in the EQIP schedule of operations directly benefit Federal or State threatened, endangered, rare, proposed, candidate, fully protected and selected species (selected species included: Tricolored blackbird, Western burrowing owl, Foothill yellow-legged frog, Steelhead, Western pond turtle and pollinators) and the WHEG or PHA the 'planned assessment score is met.	10
9. b. Fish or wildlife habitat improvements in the EQIP schedule of operations directly benefit habitat for Species of Special Concern (as identified in Section II under Special Environmental Concerns) animals and the WHEG or PHA the 'planned assessment score is met.	5
State Category Ten Ranking Criteria – INEFFICIENT ENERGY USE: Farming/Ranching and Field Operations (Select "Yes," if applicable).	
10. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations results in implementation of farming, ranching, and field operations practices that result in at least 10 percent reduction in energy use. Practices include those that state "reduce energy use" in the purpose section of the standard.	15
Local Issues Addressed	
Issue Questions	Point(s)
Local Category One - SOIL EROSION: Sheet and Rill Soil loss tolerance, T, is based on soil type. (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
1. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations decreases soil loss from greater than T to less than T.	75
1. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations results in soil loss reduced by 50 percent from the benchmark condition.	65
1. c. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations reduces sheet and rill erosion.	55
Local Category Two - SOIL QUALITY DEGRADATION: Organic Matter Depletion Soil organic matter is assessed through the Soil Condition Index (SCI) score. (Select "Yes," to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
2. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations increases a Soil Condition Index (SCI) score from a negative score to a positive score.	140
2. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations increases SCI and includes at least one of the following: Cover Crop, Mulch, Residue and Tillage Management, Conservation Crop Rotation or Conservation Cover.	125

<p>Local Category Three - INSUFFICIENT WATER: Inefficient Use of Irrigation Water California Irrigation Water Savings Tool found in the California eFOTG Section 1, Resource Assessment Tools. Level I = Basic Irrigation Water Management; Level 2 = Intermediate Irrigation Water Management; Level III = Advanced Irrigation Water Management Conservation treatment (structural and/or management) results in attainment of 449 – Irrigation Water Management: (Select "Yes" to One Answer, if applicable)</p>	
<p>3. a. Conservation treatment will achieve Level II or III irrigation water management according to NRCS CA Bulletin 201-11-3, and the farm operation ranks as "High" in need for 449 – Irrigation Water Management as determined from the Irrigation Scheduling planning tool.</p>	25
<p>3. b. Conservation treatment will achieve Level II or III irrigation water management according to NRCS CA Bulletin 201-11-3, and the farm operation ranks as "Medium" or "Low" in need for 449 – Irrigation Water Management as determined from the Irrigation Scheduling planning tool.</p>	15
<p>3. c. Conservation treatment will achieve Level I irrigation water management according to NRCS CA Bulletin 201-11-3.</p>	10
<p>Local Category Four - WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excess Nutrients in Surface Water Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes management practices that minimize the amount of nutrients material leaving the treated area; management practices may include NRCS conservation practice, 590 - Nutrient Management and/or 449 - Irrigation Water Management. The hydrologic soil group for the treatment unit is predominately: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)</p>	
<p>4. a. C, soils with slow infiltration rates, and/or D, soils with very slow infiltration rates.</p>	20
<p>4. b. B, soils with moderate infiltration rates.</p>	15
<p>4. c. A, soils with high infiltration rates.</p>	5
<p>Local Category Five - WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excess Nutrients in Surface Water Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes practices that minimize the amount of nutrients material leaving the treated area to a surface water body where an existing pathway to the waterbody exists. The hydrologic soil group for the treatment unit is predominately: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)</p>	
<p>5. a. C, soils with slow infiltration rates, and/or D, soils with very slow infiltration rates.</p>	35
<p>5. b. B, soils with moderate infiltration rates.</p>	20
<p>5. c. A, soils with high infiltration rates.</p>	5
<p>Local Category Six - WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Pesticides Transported to Surface Water The Windows Pesticide Screening Tool (Win-PST) hazard rating is greater than 'Low' for the treatment unit and mitigation is needed. NRCS Agronomy Technical Note 5 (February 2011) is found at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1043138.pdf Conservation treatment includes any combination of NRCS conservation practices or IPM techniques from NRCS Agronomy Technical Note 5, Tables 1 and 2 (February 2011) that results in a reduction of the Win-PST pesticide hazard rating for surface water to 'Low' or 'Very Low' for at least one pesticide, and – (Select "Yes" to All Applicable Answers)</p>	
<p>6. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes mitigation measure(s) outlined in NRCS Agronomy Technical Note No. 5 to be implemented according to NRCS conservation practice standard, 595 - Integrated Pest Management. Mitigation measures may include techniques such as changing the timing of application, product substitution, or using precision application equipment.</p>	10
<p>6. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations results in development and implementation of an irrigation water management plan according to NRCS conservation practice standard, 449 –Irrigation Water Management, where irrigation runoff is identified as a pathway for pesticide loss.</p>	10

6. c. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes vegetative conservation practices are planned to mitigate for pesticide risks.	10
6. d. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations results in adoption of a Year-Round University of California Integrated Pest Management (UC IPM) Program, when available for the crop, or other comparable protocol.	10
6. e. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will reduce the potential for pesticides to enter a surface water body under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program.	10
Local Category Seven - WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Pesticides Transported to Groundwater The Windows Pesticide Screening Tool (WIN-PST) hazard rating is greater than 'Low' for the treatment unit and mitigation strategies are needed. NRCS Agronomy Technical Note 5 (February 2011) is found at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1043138.pdf Conservation treatment includes any combination of NRCS conservation practices or IPM techniques from NRCS Agronomy Technical Note 5, Tables 1 and 2, (February 2011) that results in a reduction of the WIN-PST pesticide hazard rating to 'Low' or 'Very Low' and – (Select "Yes" to All Applicable Answers)	
7. a. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will address a local priority pesticide of concern used to manage pests on the treatment area within the last two years.	5
7. b. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations will result in a pest monitoring plan implemented for at least one pesticide.	5
7. c. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations includes vegetative conservation practices are planned to mitigate for pesticide risks.	5
7. d. Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations results in adoption of a Year-Round University of California Integrated Pest Management (UC IPM) Program, when available for the crop, or other comparable protocol.	5
Local Category Eight - WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION: Excessive Sediment in Surface Water Conservation treatment in the EQIP schedule of operations results in implementation of mitigating practices on slopes: (Select "Yes" to One Answer Only, if applicable)	
8. a. greater than 5 percent such as, but not limited to, filter strips, conservation cover, cover crop, critical area planting, field border, grassed waterway, riparian forest buffer and riparian herbaceous cover to minimize the potential for surface water runoff to transport sediment to an adjacent water body.	35
8. b. less than 5 percent such as, but not limited to, filter strips, conservation cover, cover crop, critical area planting, field border, grassed waterway, riparian forest buffer and riparian herbaceous cover to minimize the potential for surface water runoff to transport sediment to an adjacent water body.	25