

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE FY04 EQIP RANKING CRITERIA BIG BEND LOCAL WORK GROUP

Ranking the applications – Using the Worksheet

Important – Before granting points to an application for any item:

- 1) The modifier must apply to the area to be treated under the application.
- 2) The application must contain a conservation practice eligible for EQIP cost share or incentive payment that will address each modifier for which points are being awarded.
- 3) The total ranking score awarded for a given application category may not exceed the maximum score that application category.

The Local Work Group will apply a ratio system to all applications, as follows:

- 1) One application category scored – multiply the total category score by 1.0
- 2) Two application categories scored – multiply the total score for all categories by 0.50
- 3) Three application categories scored – multiply the total score for all categories by 0.34
- 4) Four application categories scored – multiply the total score for all categories by 0.25
- 5) Five application categories scored – multiply the total score for all categories by 0.20

Dry Crop (Maximum = 75 Points)

“Offer – predominant soil map unit – HEL - Cropland” (25 points)

For evaluation, use the predominant soil map unit for the cropland included in the application, and use the frozen HEL list and EI matrix in the Field Office Technical Guide. Points will be awarded if the predominant soil map unit is HEL.

“A buffer practice will be installed” (50 points)

Grant points if the application includes a buffer practice that will provide a water quality benefit. Filter strips, field borders, grassed waterways, hedgerow plantings, field windbreaks, shelterbelts, contour grass strips, grass buffer strips, and riparian forest buffers are all examples of conservation buffers. Evaluation may be based on aerial photos, topographic maps, and applicant interview.

“Proposed contract area is adjacent to a 303(d) listed stream or drains into it via a defined tributary” (Dry Crop: 0 – 25 points)

Grant points if the application has a 303(d) listed stream running through it, or is adjacent to such a stream, and the proposed treatment will address one or more identified water quality concerns of that listed stream. The 1998 list of 303(d) streams can be found at the following website:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/1998/wrias/1998_water_segs.pdf

If the application area is not adjacent to a listed stream, grant points if it is upstream and adjacent to a tributary (perennial or intermittent) of that stream as identified on a USGS quadrangle map, and the proposed treatment will address one or more identified water quality concerns of the listed stream. In these instances, the LWG may assign different points based on proximity to the listed stream.

Adjacent to stream segment	<u>25</u> pts
Upstream distance < ¼ mile	<u>25</u> pts
Upstream distance ¼ to ½ mile	<u>25</u> pts
Upstream distance ½ to ¾ mile	<u>25</u> pts
Upstream distance ¾ to 1 mile	<u>25</u> pts
Upstream distance > 1 mile	<u>0</u> pts

Irrigated land (Maximum = 325 Points)

“Irrigation induced erosion – Nomograph 2 pt. /ton” (0 – 50 points)

Following the instructions of NRCS Tech. Note 23, assign 2 points for each ton/ac saved. This is the difference between the before and after scenarios.

“Surface Irrigation will be converted to a more efficient system” (50 – 100 points)

Surface irrigation is the distribution of irrigation water by surface means such as furrows, borders, contour levees, or contour ditches. Grant points if the application includes conservation practices that directly improve irrigation efficiencies on land that is currently under surface irrigation. This includes the use of gated pipe, PAM, sprinkler, and trickle systems. Evaluation may be based on case file information and applicant interview. Different points may be assigned by the LWG based on the proposed system change.

Surface to Trickle	<u>100</u> pts
Surface to Pivot + IWM	<u>100</u> pts
Surface to Hand/Wheel + IWM	<u>75</u> pts
Buried pipe / gated pipe w / PAM + IWM	<u>50</u> pts
PAM with IWM	<u>100</u> pts

“Irrigated ground with Hydrologic Unit A” (200 points)

This applies to irrigated ground with Hydrologic Soil Class A.
Eligible fields identified on Hydrologic Unit Map

“Fish screens or by pass structures in irrigation delivery systems” (150 points)

Applies to structures that screen fish from entering on-farm irrigation systems and promote fish passage around in-stream or ditch diversion structures.

“Barriers to upstream fish passage and fish screens” (62 points)

Assign points for practices that will eliminate barriers or provide upstream passage to fish. Also assign points for installing fish screens or installing an irrigation delivery system bypassing creeks and streams, eliminating the need for a fish screen.

“A practice will be implemented to benefit terrestrial species occupying the proposed contract area” (25 points)

Grant points if the application includes one of the following conservation practices and provides direct wildlife benefit for terrestrial species that occupy the proposed contract area. Minimum of 5 acres or 1 pivot corner.

Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	<u>25</u> pts
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management	<u>25</u> pts

Grazed Land (Maximum = 225 Points)

“Surface Irrigation will be converted to a more efficient system” (100 points)

Surface irrigation is the distribution of irrigation water by surface means such as furrows, borders, contour levees, or contour ditches. Grant points if the application includes conservation practices that directly improve irrigation efficiencies on land that is currently under surface irrigation. This includes the use of gated pipe, PAM, sprinkler, and trickle systems. Evaluation may be based on case file information and applicant interview. Different points may be assigned by the LWG based on the proposed system change.

Surface to Trickle	<u>100</u> pts
Surface to Pivot + IWM	<u>100</u> pts
Surface to Hand/Wheel + IWM	<u>100</u> pts
Buried pipe / gated pipe w / PAM + IWM	<u>100</u> pts
PAM with IWM	<u>100</u> pts

“Livestock have uncontrolled access to riparian areas” (100 points)

Grant points if there are riparian areas that are not fenced and there is sufficient indication that grazing of domestic animals occur within these areas. Evaluation may be based on aerial photos, case file information, and applicant interview.

“Prescribed grazing will be applied” (25 points)

Points will be awarded if the applicant agrees to apply prescribed grazing on the proposed contract acres. The definition of prescribed grazing is the controlled harvest of vegetation with grazing animals managed with the intent to achieve a specified objective. The purposes are: to improve or maintain the health & vigor of the desired plant community; maintain or improve water quality and quantity, reduce soil erosion and maintain or improve soil condition; and improve or maintain animal health and productivity. It includes developing a grazing schedule for the operating unit to document expected quantity and quality of forage for each pasture; number of livestock by kinds and class, and periods of grazing, resting and other treatment for each management unit.

“Proposed contract area is adjacent to a 303(d) listed stream or drains into it via a defined tributary” (Grazed Land: 0 – 50 points)

Grant points if the application has a 303(d) listed stream running through it, or is adjacent to such a stream, and the proposed treatment will address one or more identified water quality concerns of that listed stream. The 1998 list of 303(d) streams can be found at the following website:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/1998/wrias/1998_water_segs.pdf

If the application area is not adjacent to a listed stream, grant points if it is upstream and adjacent to a tributary (perennial or intermittent) of that stream as identified on a USGS quadrangle map, and the proposed treatment will address one or more identified water quality concerns of the listed stream. In these instances, the LWG may assign different points based on proximity to the listed stream.

Adjacent to stream segment	<u>50</u> pts
Upstream distance < ¼ mile	<u>50</u> pts
Upstream distance ¼ to ½ mile	<u>50</u> pts
Upstream distance ½ to ¾ mile	<u>50</u> pts
Upstream distance ¾ to 1 mile	<u>50</u> pts
Upstream distance > 1 mile	<u>0</u> pts

“Proposed contract area is adjacent to a stream which supports listed salmonid.” (50 points)

Grant points if the application has a stream which supports listed salmonids running through it, or is adjacent to such a stream as identified on the map (*Distribution of Federally-Listed Salmon, Trout, and Char on Private and Tribal Lands* dated September 2002).

“Water Development is a factor for proper grazing distribution” (100 points)

Grant points if there is sufficient indication that lack of adequate water quantity or availability are limiting factors for achieving proper grazing distribution. Evaluation may be based on aerial photos, case file information, the National Range and Pasture Handbook, and applicant interview.

Forest Land (Maximum = 75 Points)

“Forest access roads deliver sediment to salmonid-bearing streams” (0 – 50 points)

Grant points if there is sufficient indication that forest (private, non-industrial) access roads are delivering sediment directly or indirectly to salmonid-bearing streams. Evaluation may be based on the applicant’s Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan, aerial photography, topographic maps, and applicant interview. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) definition for stream Types 1, 2, or 3 shall be the basis for determining if the stream is salmonid bearing. Use either DNR Typing Maps or fish presence maps developed locally through the Limiting Factors Analysis. LWG may assign points based on proximity.

Road adjacent to or crossing stream	<u>50</u> pts
Road within 1/8 mile of stream	<u>50</u> pts
Road within ¼ mile of stream	<u>50</u> pts
Road within ½ mile of stream	<u>50</u> pts
Road more than ½ mile of stream	<u>0</u> pts

“Forest stand improvement will be applied” (25 points)

Points will be awarded if the applicant agrees to apply forest stand improvement on the proposed contract acres. The definition of forest stand improvement is to manipulate species composition and stocking by cutting or killing selected trees and understory vegetation. The purposes are: to improve understory forage production, aesthetics, wildlife & fish habitat, recreation, hydrologic conditions; to improve or sustain timber production; to initiate forest stand regeneration; or a combination of purposes. Documentation for this practice includes: the extent and size of the treatment area; spacing, density and numbers of preferred species and understory species; stocking rates in terms of basal area, spacing or trees per acre by species and size class distribution; and the method, felling direction and timing of tree cutting.

“There are instream structures known to be barriers to upstream passage of salmonid fish on forest land” (50 points)

Grant points if there is sufficient indication that instream structures, including road culverts, on forestland (private, non-industrial) are impairing upstream passage of salmonid fish. Evaluation may be based on the applicant’s Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan, aerial photography, topographic maps, and applicant interview. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) definition for stream Types 1, 2, or 3 shall be the basis for determining if the stream is salmonid bearing. Use either DNR Typing Maps or fish presence maps developed locally through the Limiting Factors Analysis.

“Planned practices will assist the producer in complying with laws/regulations” (0 – 25 points)

Grant points if the application includes practices that will assist the person in complying with the Dairy Waste Law, AFO/CAFO regulations, or the Forest Practices Act. In order to qualify for points, compliance must be enforceable by an agency with the ability to impose fines or sanctions for violation. Points may not be granted if the applicant is under a court order to carry out a plan. Nor can EQIP be used to assist applicant come into compliance in sodbusting or swampbusting situations. Evaluation may be based on case file information and applicant interview. LWG may assign points based on regulation type.

Dairy Waste Law	<u>0</u> pts
AFO/CAFO	<u>25</u> pts
Forest Practices Act	<u>25</u> pts

“Priority wildlife impact” (0 to 75 points)

Assign points if terrestrial species are within 1 mile or priority aquatic species are within 1 mile up stream of the proposed contract area. Scale using according to WDFW Habitat and Species Map.

No listed species	<u>0</u> pts
Terrestrial species only	<u>75</u> pts
Resident fish presence only	<u>75</u> pts
Anadromous fish presence only	<u>75</u> pts
Terrestrial & resident fish presence	<u>75</u> pts
Terrestrial & anadromous fish presence	<u>75</u> pts
Resident & anadromous fish presence	<u>75</u> pts
Terrestrial, resident & anadromous presence	<u>75</u> pts

Livestock (Maximum = 300 Points)

“Surface water runoff containment from feedlots” (30 points)

Assign points for practices that will assist in containment of surface water runoff from feedlots.

“Proposed contract area is adjacent to a 303(d) listed stream or drains into it via a defined tributary” (0 – 100 points)

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Adjacent to stream segment	<u>100</u> pts
Upstream distance < ¼ mile	<u>100</u> pts
Upstream distance ¼ to ½ mile	<u>100</u> pts
Upstream distance ½ to ¾ mile	<u>100</u> pts
Upstream distance ¾ to 1 mile	<u>100</u> pts
Upstream distance > 1 mile	<u>0</u> pts

“Relocation of feeding facilities” (100 points)

Grant points if project includes relocation of feeding facilities.

“Airborne particulate problem on feedlot operations” (30 points)

Assign points if practices are installed to address dust control in confined animal feeding operations.

“Planned practices will assist the producer in complying with laws/regulations” (0 -25 points)

Grant points if the application includes practices that will assist the person in complying with the Dairy Waste Law, AFO/CAFO regulations, or the Forest Practices Act. In order to qualify for points, compliance must be enforceable by an agency with the ability to impose fines or sanctions for violation. Points may not be granted if the applicant is under a court order to carry out a plan. Nor can EQIP be used to assist applicant come into compliance in sodbusting or swampbusting situations. Evaluation may be based on case file information and applicant interview. LWG may assign points based on regulation type.

Dairy Waste Law	<u>0</u> pts
AFO/CAFO	<u>25</u> pts
Forest Practices Act	<u>25</u> pts

“A CNMP will be included (livestock operations)” (100 points)

Grant points if the application is a livestock operation with lands where animal manure is applied, and will include the development and implementation of a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan that meets NRCS criteria. Evaluation may be based on case file information and applicant interview.