

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE FY04 EQIP RANKING CRITERIA SOUTHWEST LOCAL WORK GROUP

## LOCAL WORK GROUP (LWG) – PRIORITY SETTING

The Southwest Local Work Group has taken the following actions:

- 1) A maximum point value has been assigned for each “Resource” and “Additional” Consideration. The weight of each category was based on the priorities determined through the locally led process.
- 2) Local modifiers were established for each consideration. This allowed the LWG to localize the ranking criteria by including modifiers that were not addressed in the state template.
- 3) Points were assigned for each modifier.

## Ranking the applicants – Using the Worksheet

**Important – Before granting points to an applicant 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.**

## SOIL RESOURCE CONSIDERATION (Maximum: 100 Points)

### “Evidence of accelerated erosion on non-cropland” (50 Points)

Grant points if there is sufficient indication that accelerated erosion is occurring on non-cropland. This may be based on case file information, aerial photo interpretation, topographic maps, and applicant interview. Types of erosion to consider are sheet and rill, wind, ephemeral, or permanent gullies with active head cutting or mass wasting.

### “Streambank stabilization” (50 Points)

Grant points if there are streambank areas within pasture or cropland that need to be stabilized to halt excessive bank erosion and sediment loading are being treated by installation of practice 580 Streambank and Shoreline Protection. Also allow points for practices (treatment) that facilitate the regulation/exclusion of domestic livestock from streambank areas that are actively eroding.

### “Groundcover type” (0 to 30 Points)

Points are assigned according to the groundcover type.

Cropland w/o cover crop	0 pts
Cropland with cover crop	10 pts
Pasture	20 pts
Forest	30 pts

### “Road related problems” (20 Points)

Grant points if there are road related problems such as soil erosion, slumps, and landslides. Evaluation includes private, non-industrial roads on all eligible lands. Problem areas can be identified by RMAP Plans, aerial or on-site photo interpretation, and from landowner descriptions.

## WATER RESOURCE CONSIDERATION (Maximum: 500 Points)

### “A CNMP will be included (livestock operations)” (50 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.

**“Pest management will be included for crop or pasture” (400 Points)**

Grant points if the application includes crop or pasture where pest control is needed to reduce adverse effects on ground and/or surface water by including the development and implementation of the Pest Management practice. Evaluation may be based on soil interpretations, case file information related to pesticide risk analysis, and applicant interview.

**“Storage is needed for animal manure” (200 Points)**

Grant points if a waste storage facility is needed and included in the application. Evaluation may be based on applicant interview, livestock numbers, and current storage capability.

**“Heavy use areas need stabilization” (100 Points)**

Grant points if there is a need to stabilize small areas of short-term livestock containment to improve water quality and/or quantity. Evaluation may be based on soil interpretations, case file information, and applicant interview. The conservation practice “Heavy Use Area Protection” will be included in the application.  
*Points)*

**“Forest access roads deliver sediment to salmonid-bearing streams” (300 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 has assigned points based on proximity.

Road adjacent to or crossing stream	300 pts
Road within 1/8 mile of stream	300 pts
Road within 1/4 mile of stream	200 pts
Road within 1/2 mile of stream	100 pts
Road more than 1/2 mile of stream	50 pts

**“Proposed contract area is within a shellfish sensitive area” (50 Points)**

Grant points if the application is for land in a watershed that flows into estuaries within the Greater Puget Sound Region, Grays Harbor or Willapa Bay. Evaluation may be based on aerial photography, topographic maps, and applicant interview.

**“Proposed contract area is adjacent to a 303(d) listed stream or drains into it via a defined tributary” (0 to 100 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](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	100 pts
Upstream distance < 1/4 mile	5 pts
Upstream distance 1/4 to 1/2 mile	0 pts
Upstream distance 1/2 to 3/4 mile	0 pts
Upstream distance 3/4 to 1 mile	0 pts
Upstream distance > 1 mile	0 pts

**“A buffer practice will be installed” (0 to 200 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. Different points may be assigned by the LWG based on the buffer type.

Riparian Forest Buffer	195 pts	Hedgerow Planting	0 pts
Contour Grass Strips	5 pts	Grassed Waterway	0 pts
Grass Buffer Strips	0 pts	Field Borders	0 pts
Shelterbelt	0 pts	Filter Strip	0 pts
Field Windbreak	0 pts		

**"Irrigation System will be improved & or IWM will be applied" (100 Points)**

Points will be awarded if the current irrigation system will be improved and irrigation water management will be applied; or if irrigation water management will be applied. This includes replacing an open delivery system with pipeline, replacing a leaky delivery pipeline, converting from wheel lines to a center pivot system, & converting from overhead sprinklers to a micro system. Irrigation Water Management is defined as the process of determining and controlling the volume, frequency, and application rate of irrigation in a planned, efficient manner. The purposes of IWM include managing soil moisture to promote desired crop response; optimizing use of available water supplies; decreasing non-point source pollution of surface and groundwater resources; and to minimize irrigation induced soil erosion. It includes the use of devices such as tensiometers, watermarks, or neutron probes to determine moisture levels in the soil.

**“Irrigation efficiency for streamflow - Surface water source will be converted to deep water” (10 Points)**

Grant points if irrigation water source will be converted from surface water to deep water well to address low stream flow issues. Current WA state regulations allow water right conversion from surface to deep water. The surface water right will then be donated to state conservation fund. Evaluation may be based on soil interpretations, case file information, and applicant interview.

**“Existing riparian zone is enhanced” (90 Points)**

Grant points for enhancing existing riparian areas. Conservation practices will be implemented that expand riparian forest buffer widths to current NRCS standards or improve plant diversity, establish native species, improve streamside habitat, or improve forest stands in riparian areas. Evaluation may be based on aerial photos, topographic maps, and applicant interview.

**AIR RESOURCE CONSIDERATION (Maximum: 0 Points)**

**PLANT RESOURCE CONSIDERATION (Maximum: 100 Points)**

**“Water Development is a factor for proper grazing distribution” ( 50 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.

**“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.

**“Forest stand improvement will be applied” (50 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.

**ANIMAL RESOURCE CONSIDERATION (Maximum: 250 Points)**

**“There are in stream structures known to be barriers to passage of salmonid fish on eligible lands” (200 Points)**

Award points if there is sufficient indication that in-stream structures; including road culverts, on forestland (private, non-industrial), agricultural and range lands; 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.

**“Proposed contract area is adjacent to a stream which supports listed salmonid.” (100 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). Exception – Do not grant points for Bull Trout in the Colville Watershed.

**“Increased fish access” (0 to 50 Points)**

Assign points if fish access is expected to increase as a result of the contract.

No increased fish access	0 pts
Fish access increased to less than ¼ mile of stream	10 pts
Fish access increased ¼ to ½ mile of stream	25 pts
Fish access increased ½ to 1 mile of stream	35 pts
Fish access increased to greater than 1 mile of stream	50 pts

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS (Maximum: 50 Points)**

**“Basis for ID’d future projects or enhances completed projects” (50 Points)**

The practices in the EQIP plan fall within a previously established watershed or special project area. Their individual efforts will help solve the broader watershed problems. They may be part of one that has been in place for a long time, or they may be the very first one in a new project effort area. It gives credit for value-added benefit. Evaluation may be based on case file information, applicant and project interviews.