

FAX COVER SHEET



Docket # NRCS-IFR-08005

Financial Assistance Programs Division
US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
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From:

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To whom it may concern:

This letter is to provide comment on the new 2008 EQIP Rule that became effective January 1, 2009. As representatives of the Fredonia Natural Resources Conservation District in Fredonia, Arizona, we support the EQIP program and the intent of the program in addressing resource concerns in our area.

The majority of the land within the district boundaries is public land and less than 5% is private land. Many of our agriculture producers have operations that consist of only public and state owned lands. We understand eligible land in the new rule to include:

- (1) privately owned land;
- (2) publicly owned land where:
 - (a) the land is a working component of the participant's agricultural and forestry operations, and
 - (b) the participant has control of the land for the term of the contract, and
- (3) the conservation practices to be implemented on the public land are necessary and will contribute to an improvement in the identified resource condition that is on private land.

As representatives of the Fredonia Natural Resources Conservation District, we ask that this be amended or changed to include state owned land as well as private land. Without this change, many of our agriculture producers would not have land eligible for the program and resource concerns that exist on these lands will increase and will not be addressed. Allowing inclusion of state owned land, states with lesser amounts of privately owned land have a more equitable opportunity to participate in EQIP and realizing the benefits that the program has to offer.

Thank you
 Donny Mackelprang
 Supervisor
 Fredonia NRCD