

**GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE**  
**Wisconsin FY13 GLRI-EQIP**  
**Phosphorus Reduction Sign-Up**  
**Application Ranking Guidance Document**  
**June 3, 2013**

Purpose: This document provides guidance for completing the application ranking tool for the FY13 GLRI-EQIP Phosphorus sign-up.

Please note that applications for Conservation Activity Plans (i.e. 102, 114, and 130) are placed in the CAP fund pool (see “WI GLRI FY13 Phosphorus Sign-Up Contracting Guidance Document 6-3-2013” regarding the exception for CNMP).

**NATIONAL QUESTIONS**

1. 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.

1a. 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.

If the application being ranked is in the “GLRI-PhosphorusPriority-04030204” fund pool, then answer this question as “no”.

If the application is being ranked in the “GLRI-PhosphorusPriority-04030204-CAP” fund pool, then answer this question as “yes”. Then proceed to answer local question #1 in the CAP ranking tool as “yes”. For applications being ranked in the GLRI-PhosphorusPriority-04030204-CAP fund pool; all of the other questions in the national and state section shall be answered as “no”.

2. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Quality – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:

1a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?

Operation must have livestock to qualify for these points. A water quality resource concern must be selected and the practice(s) must aid in participant meeting requirements of NR 151, NR 243, or local county ordinance. Factsheets on the WDNR rules are available at the following links:

<https://nrcs.sc.egov.usda.gov/central/wi/ProgramsFA/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2fcentral%2fwi%2fProgramsFA%2fEQIP%2fFY13%2fRanking%20Companion%20Documents&FolderCTID=0x01200053BE97F47604D14C8E1B13096BBF1230&View=%7bB1230000%2d6D83%2d4288%2dAA59%2d98345C685073%7d>

2b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated “impaired water body” (TMDL, 303d, etc)?

NRCS Field Offices: the GIS layer developed for this question should be used to determine if a field receives these points. The practices applied for on the field must address sediment, nutrients, or pesticides.

2c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a "non-impaired water body"?

A water quality concern related to sediment, nutrients or pesticides must be selected and the field or pasture must be within 300’ of a stream or 1000’ of a lake. The Surface Water Quality layer from the Wisconsin 590 Nutrient Management Restriction Maps (see link) shall be referenced to determine if points may be taken.

<http://datcpgis.wi.gov/slv/index.html?Viewer=590>

3. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Conservation – Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement conservation practices which:

3a. Decrease aquifer overdraft?

Points may be taken for the practices listed below that are located in the areas outlined in the WI Groundwater Drawdown brochure (see map on pg. 2) found at the following link:

<https://nrcs.sc.egov.usda.gov/central/wi/ProgramsFA/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2fcentral%2fwi%2fProgramsFA%2fEQIP%2fFY13%2fRanking%20Companion%20Documents&FolderCTID=0x01200053BE97F47604D14C8E1B13096BBF1230&View=%7bB1230000%2d6D83%2d4288%2dAA59%2d98345C685073%7d>

Conservation Cover (327)  
Residue Management, No-Till (329)  
Filter Strip (393)  
Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)

3b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?

Answer this question as “no” for all applications.

3c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?

Answer this question as “no” for all applications.

4. Clean Air: Treatment of Air Quality from Agricultural Sources – Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practice(s) which:

4a. Meet on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?

Points may be received in any county for the following practices: Residue Management, No-Till (329), Cover Crop (340), and Nutrient Management (590).

4b. Reduce on-farm generated green house gases such as CO<sub>2</sub> (Carbon Dioxide), CH<sub>4</sub> (Methane), and N<sub>2</sub>O (Nitrous Oxide)?

Points may be received in any county for the following practices: Residue Management, No-Till (329), Cover Crop (340), and Nutrient Management (590).

4c. Increase on-farm carbon sequestration?

Points may be received in any county for the following practices: Conservation Cover (327), Cover Crop (340), Forage and Biomass Planting (512), Residue Management, No-Till (329), and Tree/Shrub Establishment (612).

5. Soil Health: Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practice(s) which:

5a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?

As determined by RUSLE2. Primary resource concern must be soil erosion (sheet and rill or wind). Erosion must currently be above "T" and be reduced to "T" or less to receive points.

5b. Improve soil tilth, organic matter, structure, health, etc.?

Points may be received in any county for the following practices:

328 Conservation Crop Rotation  
340 Cover Crop  
512 Forage and Biomass Planting  
595 Integrated Pest Management  
590 Nutrient Management  
528 Prescribed Grazing  
329 Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till

6. Healthy Plant and Animal Communities Wildlife Habitat Conservation – Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practice(s) which:

6a. Benefit on-farm habitat associated with threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?

Refer to the WHIP Priority Areas map for the location of state priority grassland habitat areas, riparian habitat areas, early successional habitat areas, and pollinator habitat areas. Points can be received for this question if the practice(s) identified below will be applied within the applicable state priority habitat areas. [ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/WI/whip/whippriorityareas\\_2.pdf](ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/WI/whip/whippriorityareas_2.pdf)

If area is grassland habitat, application includes Brush Management (314), Conservation Cover (327) or Prescribed Burning (338).

If area is riparian habitat, application includes Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395), Wetland Creation (658), and Wetland Restoration (657).

If area is early successional habitat, application includes Brush Management (314).

If area is pollinator habitat, application includes Conservation Cover (327), Field Border (386), or Tree/Shrub Establishment (612) **with** an approved pollinator seeding/planting mix. Pollinator mixes included in the WI EQIP cookbook are automatically approved.

6b. Help retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?

At least 25% of the former CRP field will be maintained in permanent, non-crop cover.

7. High Quality, Productive Soils, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities: Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practices which:

7a. Help manage or control noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?

Answer this question as “no” for all applications.

7b. Increase, or improve habitat to benefit pollinator or other targeted wildlife species?

If area is grassland habitat, application includes Brush Management (314), Conservation Cover (327) or Prescribed Burning (338).

If area is riparian habitat, application includes Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395), Wetland Creation (658), and Wetland Restoration (657).

If area is early successional habitat, application includes Brush Management (314).

If area is pollinator habitat, application includes Conservation Cover (327), Field Border (386), or Tree/Shrub Establishment (612) **with** an approved pollinator seeding/planting mix. Pollinator mixes included in the WI EQIP cookbook are automatically approved.

7c. Properly dispose of livestock carcasses?

Application must include Animal Mortality Facility (316) to receive points.

7d. Are identified in an Integrated Pest Management plan?

Application must include eligible practice(s) recommended in an approved Integrated Pest Management CAP (114).

7e. Are identified in a Nutrient Management plan?

Application must include eligible practice(s) recommended in an approved Nutrient Management CAP (104).

7f. Apply principles of adaptive nutrient management?

Application must include an adaptive nutrient management scenario from Nutrient Management (590).

8. Energy Conservation– Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practices which:

8a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?

The following practices may receive points: Anaerobic Digester, Controlled Temperature (366), Conservation Crop Rotation (328), Integrated Pest Management (595), Nutrient Management (590), Prescribed Grazing (528) and Residue Management, No-Till (329).

8b. Increase on-farm energy efficiency with practices and improvements identified in an approved energy audit equivalent to criteria required in Ag EMP (122,124)?

Application must include eligible practice(s) recommended in an approved AgEMP or equivalent plan.

8c. Assist in implementing energy conservation measures that also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants?

Points may be received in any county for the following practices: Conservation Crop Rotation (328), Cover Crop (340), Nutrient Management (590), Residue Management, No-Till (329).

9. Business Lines – Conservation Implementation Additional Ranking Considerations - Will the proposed project result in:

9a. Implementation of all conservation practices scheduled in the contract on the CPA-1155 within three years of date of obligation?

Full certification within three years must be feasible per a certified conservation planner and planned in the application. Three-year management practices may not receive points for this question.

9b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted?

Existing conservation practice(s) must currently exist on the area in the application and applicant will be implementing additional practices or improving those already in place.

Example 1: Applicant is currently implementing Contour Farming (330) and is now applying for Contour Buffer Strips (332).

Example 2: Applicant is currently implementing a basic Nutrient Management (590) plan and is applying for Enhanced Nutrient Management (590).

9c. Implementation of practice(s) which will complete an existing conservation system or suite of practices?

Implementation of practices in the application will result in RMS level of conservation on the land use where applied.

Example 1: Applicant has reduced sheet and rill erosion to “T” on field, controlled ephemeral and gully erosion through Grassed Waterway (412), is implementing Integrated Pest Management (595), and is applying for Nutrient Management (590).

Example 2: Applicant has existing CNMP and application will result in implementation of practices remaining in the CNMP for the farmstead.

## **STATE QUESTIONS**

1. Does the application include core conservation practices that will be implemented within ¼ mile of, and address resource concerns associated with, a stream or water body that is threatened (i.e., receives significant runoff of excess nitrogen or phosphorous), on the EPA 303(d) list, or is impaired with a TMDL in place and therefore not on the 303(d) list (or other critical stream or water body authorized by the Regional Conservationist)? (100 pts)

Refer to GIS layer which identifies the ¼ mile buffer area from 303d streams and waterbodies. If a core practice will be implemented within the buffer area – then answer “Yes”.

2. Are core conservation practices planned on the majority of the offered acres?
  - i. Greater than 50 percent of the offered acres are within the targeted 8-HUC and 12-HUC watersheds, AND
  - ii. Greater than 50 percent of the offered acres have a core conservation practice for the primary watershed impairments (excess nutrient, sediment, pesticides, develop or improve wildlife habitat and/or addressing invasive species) planned for application? (125 pts)

Refer to the “WI GLRI FY13 Phosphorus Sign-Up Contracting Guidance Document 6-3-2013” to determine how to calculate the acres offered % of the core practice(s).

3. Are core conservation practices planned within an existing State agency or other non-USDA water quality project area (Example: State or county watershed plan, NGO focus watershed) addressing the same or similar watershed impairments (excess nutrient, sediment, pesticides, develop or improve wildlife habitat, or addressing invasive species)? (75 pts)

Answer this question as “yes” if a core conservation practice will be installed in one of the 12-digit HUC Phosphorus Reduction Priority Watersheds.

4. Does this program application include the implementation of a system of conservation practices that address the primary watershed impairments (excess nutrient, sediment, pesticides, develop or improve wildlife habitat, or addressing invasive species)? (50 pts)

Answer “Yes” if the application includes three or more core conservation practices.

5. Are core conservation practices to be implemented on offered acres, associated with a majority of soil types that are classified hydrologic group D (high runoff) or group A (high infiltration)? (50 pts)

Answer “Yes” if a core conservation practice will be implemented on any hydrologic soil group A or D. If the soil hydrologic group is listed as “A/D”, “B/D”, etc, then answer “yes”.

## LOCAL QUESTIONS

1. A practice in the application will be installed in either the Upper Duck Creek or Upper East River watershed? (100 pts)

If a practice in the application will be installed in either one of these 12-Digit HUCs (i.e. Upper Duck Creek or Upper East River), then answer "yes".

2. Does the application includes two or more core practices OR the applicant has an existing CNMP and a practice in the application will address a resource concern identified in the CNMP? (50 pts)

See the document titled "WI GLRI FY13 Phosphorus Sign-Up Conservation Practices 5-23-2013" for the list of core conservation practices.

3. Does the application include three or more core practices? Note: if this question is answered "yes", then local question #2 will also be answered "yes". (50 pts)

See the document titled "WI GLRI FY13 Phosphorus Sign-Up Conservation Practices 5-23-2013" for the list of core conservation practices. If this question is answered "yes", then local question #2 will also be answered "yes".

4. Does the application include conversion of cropland into grass cover via prescribed grazing? (50 pts)

Answer "yes" if cropland will be converted to long-term grass cover for the purpose of prescribed grazing.