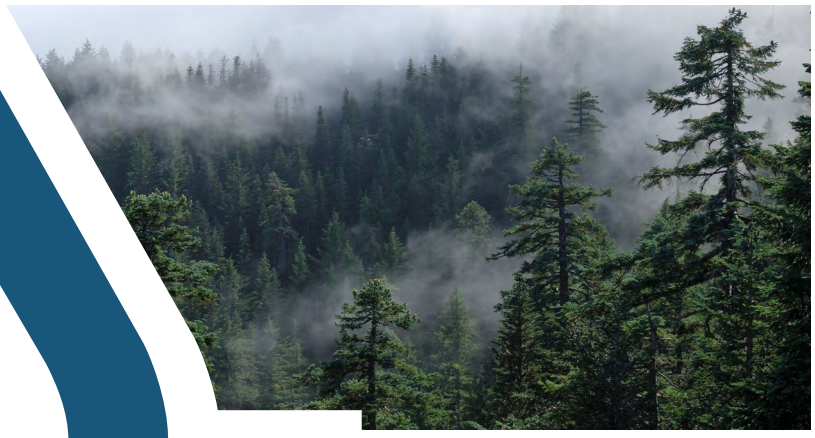
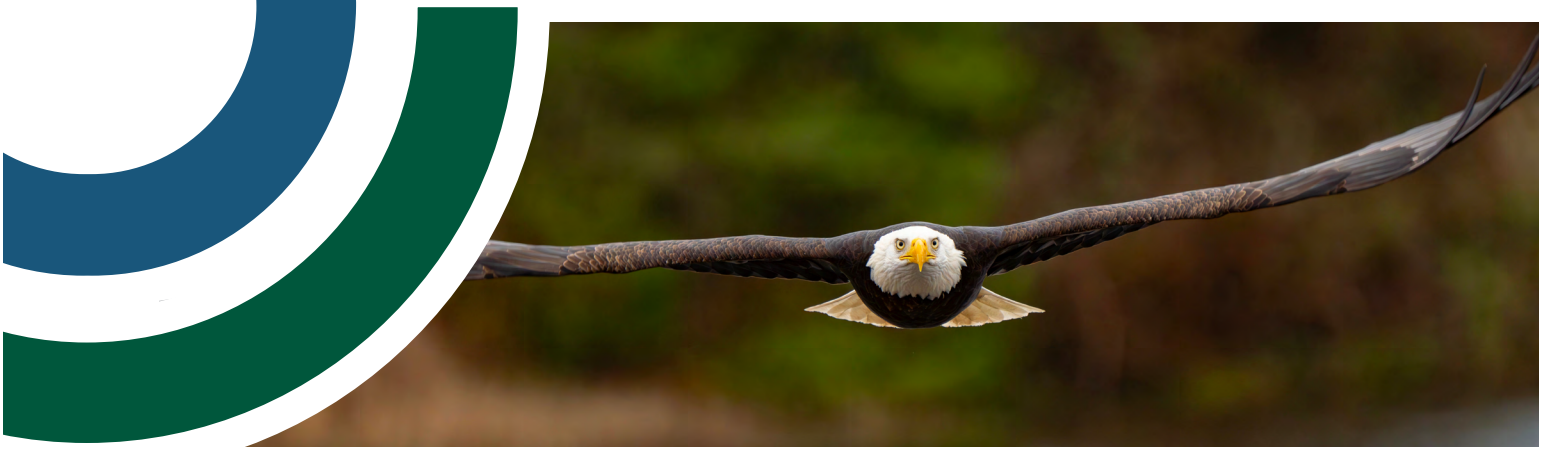
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Local Working Group Annual Summary 2024





NRCS - Washington State Area Map

Conservation Districts

1 Clallam	13 Thurston	29 North Yakima	41 Rock Lake
2 Jefferson County	14 Pacific	30 South Yakima	42 Pine Creek
3 San Juan County	15 Lewis County	31 Underwood	43 Palouse
4 Whatcom	16 Wahkiakum	32 Benton	44 Whitman
5 Skagit	17 Cowlitz	33 Franklin	45 Walla Walla County
6 Whidbey Island	18 Clark	34 Central Klickitat	46 Columbia
7 Snohomish	19 Okanogan	35 Eastern Klickitat	47 Pomeroy
8 Kitsap	20 Chelan County	36 Ferry	48 Asotin County
9 King	21 Foster Creek	37 Stevens County	49 Grant
10 Pierce	23 South Douglas	38 Pend Oreille	
11 Grays Harbor	27 Adams	39 Lincoln County	
12 Mason	28 Kittitas County	40 Spokane County	

WASHINGTON STATE

USDA

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Washington State Office, Spokane Valley
January 2022

USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)

NRCS WASHINGTON
State Administrative Map
January 2022

LEGEND

- NRCS State Office
- Washington State Conservation Commission
- USDA Service Center
- NRCS Area Office
- Tribal DC Office
- Soil Survey Office
- Plant Materials Center
- NRCS Program Delivery Point and Conservation District Office
- Conservation District Office not located in a Service Center
- Washington State Boundary
- NRCS Area Boundaries
- Conservation District Boundaries
- County Boundaries
- Both Conservation District and County Boundaries
- Open Water

NOTE: The * next to the NRCS Service Center name denotes the location of the District Conservationist.

NRCS MULTI-COUNTY TEAMS

EAST AREA
- NORTHEAST TEAM
- PALOUSE TEAM
- WEST PALOUSE TEAM
- SNAKE RIVER TEAM

CENTRAL AREA
- NORTH CENTRAL TEAM
- COLVILLE TRIBAL TEAM
- BIG BEND TEAM
- SOUTH CENTRAL TEAM
- YAKAMA TRIBAL TEAM

WEST AREA
- NORTHWEST TEAM
- PUGET SOUND TEAM
- SOUTHWEST TEAM

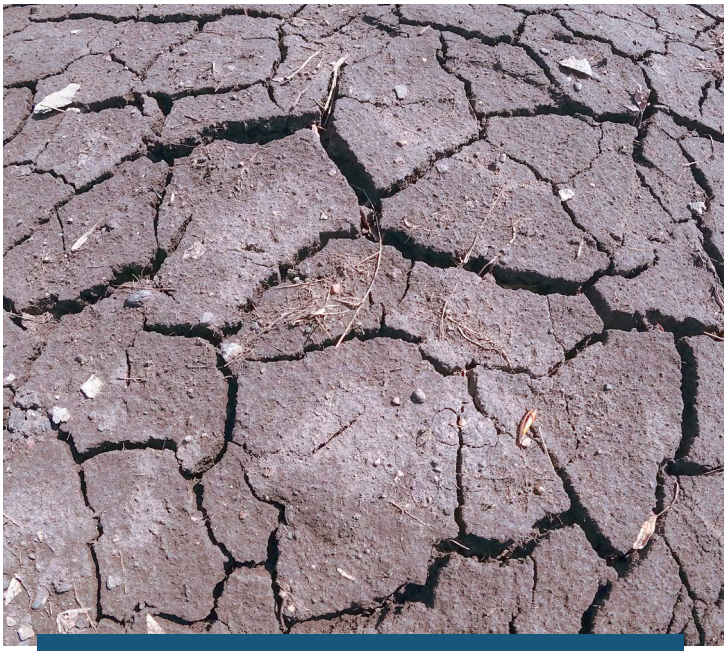
Big Bend Team (EQIP Fund Pools)

Big end Team - Rangeland Health

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Range	• Plant productivity and health • Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates • Inadequate livestock water quantity, quality and distribution	• Are you following an NRCS approved Grazing management plan? Y=20pts	20
		• Will you be contracting prescribed grazing (528) for a minimum of two years? Y=100pts	100
		• Will you be planting a mix of native species? Y=20pts	20
		• Will livestock water quantity, quality, and distibution be improved? Y=60pts	60

Big Bend Team - Irrigation and Energy

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Crop • Pasture • Farmstead • Associated Agriculture Lands	• Surface water depletion • Inefficient irrigation water use • Plant productivity and health • Plant structure and composition • Energy efficiency of farming/ranching practices and field operations • Energy efficiency of equipment and facilities	• What is the efficiency gain from going to current irrigation system to planned system (reference Table WA6-2 from the WA irrigation guide to make determination, https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-11/WA-Irrigation-Guide_4.pdf)? +25% = 100pts; +15-25% = 50pts; +less than 15% = 25pts	100
		• Does the plan include (449) Irrigation Water Management (required for 2 growing seasons, with moisture sensors and/or data logger)?	40
		• Does the producer have an approved conservation activity plan (CAP) or approved VSP plan? (CAP= agEMP or Audit completed that meets NRCS standards) and does the proposed project implement at least one practice within the applicable plan?	60



North Central Team (EQIP Fund Pools)

North Central Team - Irrigation

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Crop • Pasture • Farmstead	• Inefficient irrigation water use • Plant productivity and health • Energy efficiency of equipment and facilities	• Will project convert current on-field irrigation to a more efficient sprinkler system? • Will other irrigation infrastructure (mainlines, pumps) be improved on the farm?	125 75

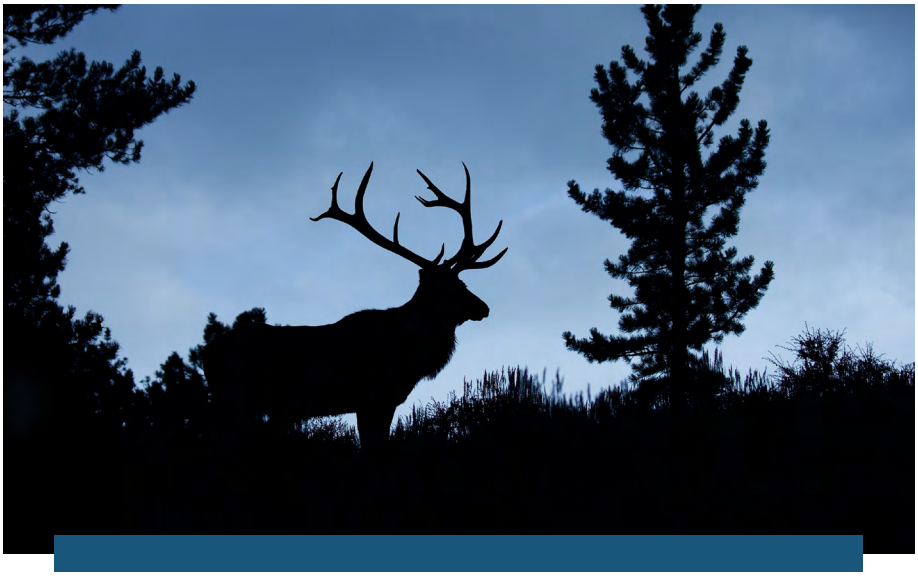
Northeast Team (EQIP Fund Pools)

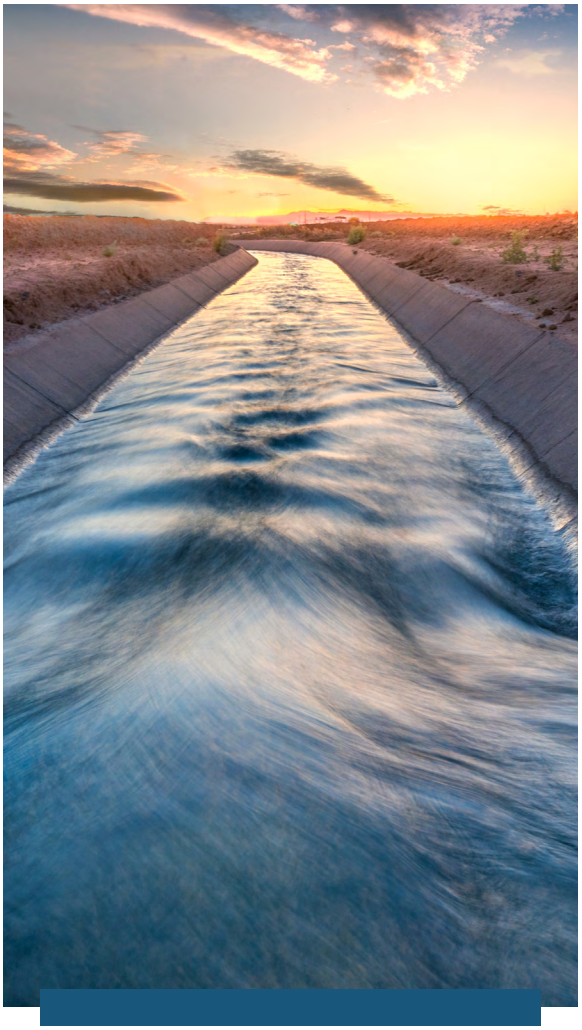
Northeast Team - Range & Pasture

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Range • Pasture	• Plant productivity and health • Inadequate livestock water quantity, quality and distribution • Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates	• Will an off-site (non-riparian) water development be implemented as part of this project to change from current in-stream watering of livestock	100
		• Will a Prescribed Grazing Plan be implemented as part of this project?	100

Northeast Team - Irrigation

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Crop	• Inefficient irrigation water use • Plant productivity and health • Energy efficiency of equipment and facilities	• Will an Intermediate or Advanced Irrigation Water Management (IWM) practice be implemented as part of this irrigation project?	100
		• Will energy savings be achieved with installation of a Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) as part of the pumping plant design for this irrigation project per recommendations from an energy audit?	100





Northwest Team (EQIP Fund Pools)

Northwest Team - Plant/Soils/Terrestrial Habitat

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Any	• Plant productivity and health • Plant structure and composition • Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates • Compaction • Organic matter depletion • Soil organism habitat loss or degradation	• The project proposal includes a practice or practices that are ranked 3 out of 5 or higher on CPPE for one of the following Resource Concern (RC): Plant productivity and health; Plant structure and composition; Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates; Compaction; Organic matter depletion; Soil organism habitat loss or degradation: **1 practice = 25 points, 2 practices = 50 points, 3 or more practices =75 points**	75
		• The project proposal occurs within 1000 ft adjacent to fresh or marine surface water, and/or adjacent to a project funded by NRCS in the last 5 years.	40
		• The project proposal occurs adjacent to a project funded by NRCS in the last 5 years.	35
		• Proposed project will reduce soil compaction and/or improve soil regenerative features and live plant cover elements.	50

Northwest Team - Water

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Any	• Nutrients transported to surface water • Sediment transported to surface water • Groundwater depletion • Inefficient irrigation water use • Surface water depletion • Ponding and flooding • Naturally available moisture use • Seasonal high water table	• The project proposal includes a practice or practices that are ranked 3 out of 5 or higher on CPPE for one of thefollowing RC: Nutrients transported to surface water;Pathogens and chemicals from manure, biosolids, orcompost applications transported to surface water;Sediment transported to surface water; Ground water depletion; Inefficient irrigation water use; Surface water depletion; Ponding and flooding; Naturally availablemoisture use; Seasonal high water table. **1 practice = 30 points, 2 practices = 40 points, 3 practices= 50 points**	50
		• The proposed project controls/manages runoff thatcurrently enters or is adjacent to a 303d listed waterbodylisted for any of the following parameters – Bacteria -Enterococci, Escherichia coli, Fecal coliform; FineSediment; Sediment Bioassay; Total Nitrogen; Total Phosphorus	50
		• Is the project within 1 mile of an existing county-identified urban growth area (UGA)?	50
		• Proposed practice(s) have, in their practice standard document on eFOTG, the purpose of reducing evaporation (or an equivalent term/concept) and/or enhancing water infiltration (or an equivalent term/concept).	50

Palouse Team (EQIP Fund Pools)

Palouse Team - Crops

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Crop	• Plant pest pressure • Aggregate instability • Soil organism habitat loss or degradation • Ponding and flooding	• Will an Integrated Pest Management system reduce plant pest infestations to allowable threshhold ?	60
		• Will practices be applied on cropland that improve by 25% or more from the Aggregate Instability conditions present before treatment?	60
		• Will practices be applied on cropland that improve by 25% or more from the Soil Organism Habitat conditions present before treatment?	60
		• Will practices be installed to reduce the incidence and or duration of ponding and flooding without adverse site or offsite impacts?	20

Palouse Team - Grazing

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Range • Pasture • Crop	• Inadequate livestock shelter • Feed and forage balance • Plant productivity and health • Plant pest pressure	• Will practices be applied to address livestock production impacted by inadequate shelter?	20
		• Will practices be applied to address livestock production needs from imbalance of feed and forage?	60
		• Will Practices be applied to improve plant productivity and health toward site potential ?	80
		• Will an Integrated Pest Management system reduce plant pest infestations to allowable threshhold ?	40

Puget Sound Team (EQIP Fund Pools)

Puget Sound Team - Water Quality & Soil

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Any	• Nutrients transported to groundwater • Sediment transported to surface water • Nutrients transported to groundwater • Nutrients transported to surface water • Compaction • Aggregate instability	• Is the current waste storage system considered to be medium to high risk, or high risk? Answer no if there is no livestock on the land unit.	50
		• Will the proposed project alleviate sediment from being transported to waterways bearing at-risk species?	50
		• Is the nitrate leaching potential high in the soil on the farm?	50
		• Will the proposed practice include cover crops, crop rotation, prescribed grazing, and/or residue and tillage management to address soil health?	50

Puget Sound Team - Habitat/ Degr. Plant Cond.

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Any	• Aquatic habitat for fish and other organisms • Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates • Plant productivity and health • Plant structure and composition	• Will the proposed practices directly benefit federal or state threatened or endangered species?	40
		• Will the proposed practices directly benefit a species from WDFW's Species of Greatest Conservation Need list?	40
		• Will the proposed practice improve food, cover, or shelter for pollinators?	40
		• Will the proposed practices assist with the implementation of an existing FMP?	40
		• Will the proposed practices assist with the implementation of an existing FMP?	40

South Central Team (EQIP Fund Pools)

South Central Team - Irrigation

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Crop • Pasture	• Inefficient irrigation water use • Surface water depletion • Groundwater depletion • Nutrients transported to surface water • Nutrients transported to groundwater • Pesticides transported to groundwater • Pesticides transported to surface water	• Is the existing irrigation flood or rill irrigated AND will the planned system be >= 85% efficient as per the WA irrigation guide table 6-2 average efficiency? (Only answer question 1 or 2 based on the designed system efficiency, not both. If the designed system is less than 75%, do not answer either)	75
		• Is the existing irrigation flood or rill irrigated AND will the planned system be above 75% efficient as per the WA irrigation guide table 6-2 average efficiency? (Only answer question 1 or 2 based on the designed system efficiency, not both. If the designed system is less than 75%, do not answer either)	50
		• Are there nutrients, either organic or inorganic, being applied not following Land Grant University guidance?	30
		• Is the water source pulled directly out of a stream, not an established irrigation district delivery?	20
		• Does WQ TN-3 shows >= Moderate to High risk and the planned practices will mitigate the resource concern identified?	15
		• Are the planned practices to reduce nutrients or pesticides to surface water located adjacent to water body/stream with anadromous fish?	10

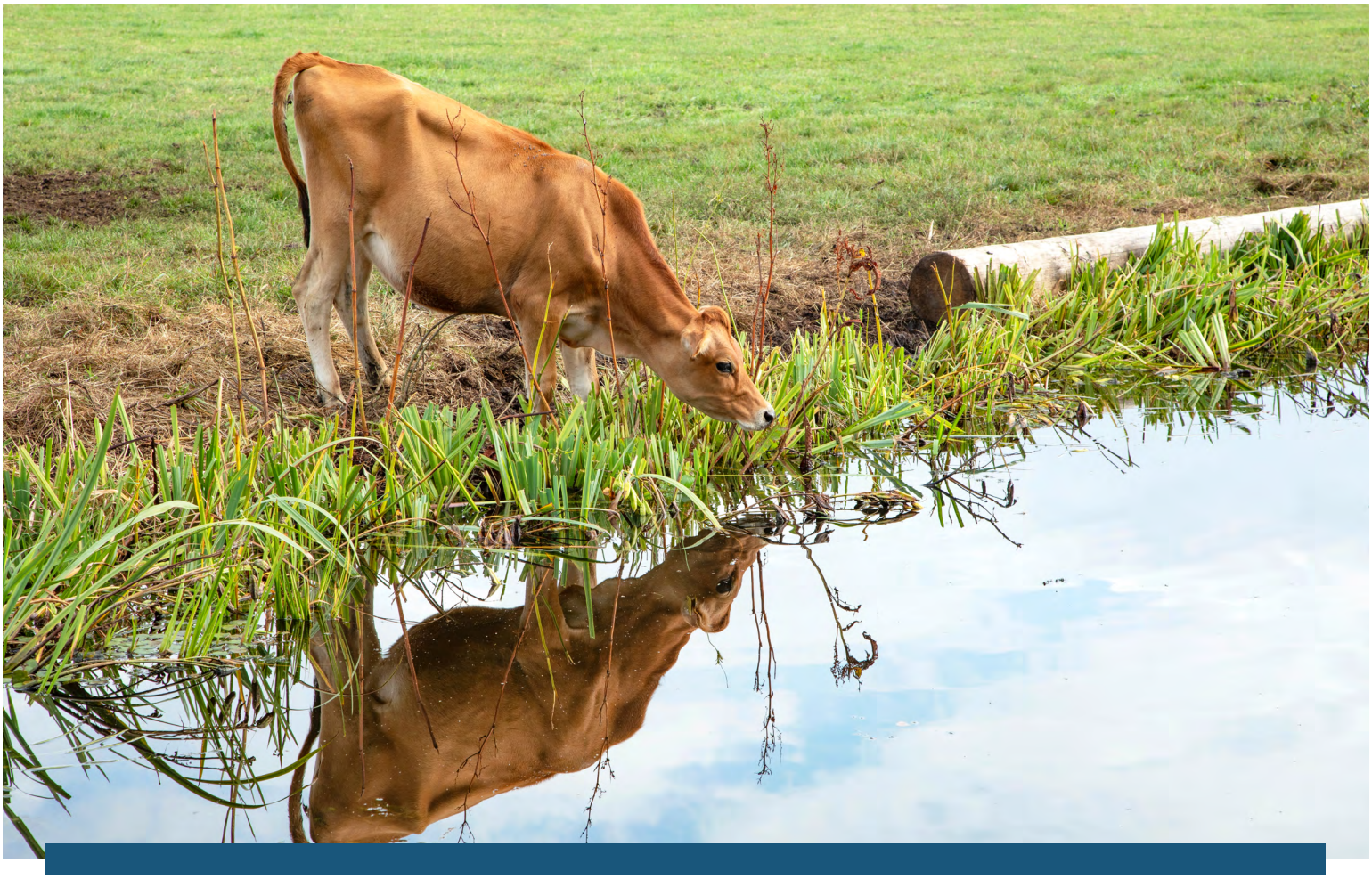
South Central Team - Range and Pasture Health

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Any	• Aquatic habitat for fish and other organisms • Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates • Plant productivity and health • Plant structure and composition	• Is prescribed grazing (528) included in the planned practices?	75
		• Is the RHA biotic integrity attribute a moderate departure or less? – OR – Is the RHA functional/structural indicator a moderate departure or less? – OR – Is the PCS percent desirable plants element <4? – OR – Is the PCS plant vigor element <4?	25
		• Is the RHA annual production indicator a moderate departure or less? – OR – Is the PCS grazing utilization and severity element >4?	25
		• Do the applicant's livestock have to travel >0.5 miles to a developed water source within the PLU? – OR – Are existing water development locations within PLU not compatible with a planned prescribed grazing system?	25
		• Are existing water developments producing less than livestock water requirements based on Engineering Tech Note #19 Water Requirements for Beef Cattle (<20 gal/day/head beef) or on table 11-1 on the Livestock Pipeline Watering Facility Design spreadsheet gal/day/head within the PLU during the season of use?	25
		• Is the average SVAP2 bank condition score <5 for water courses within the PLU? - OR - Is the average PCS streambank and shoreline element <4 for watercourses within the PLU? - OR- Answer NO if there are no watercourses within the PLU?	25

Snake River Team (EQIP Fund Pools)

Snake River Team - Grazing

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Any	• Inadequate livestock water quantity, quality and distribution • Inadequate livestock shelter • Feed and forage balance • Plant productivity and health • Plant structure and composition • Nutrients transported to surface water • Pathogens and chemicals from manure, biosolids or compost applications transported to surface water	• Will the proposed project be documented on the CPA-52 for improved livestock production limitations on any land use, reduced livestock induced nutrient and pathogen contamination to surface waters and/or improve degraded plant condition on pasture and/or range lands? If you answered NO to all of these statements do not prodeed and decline fund pool as not applicable.	Eligibility
		• With or without NRCS funding, does the participant operate under a prescribed grazing plan (CPS528) that meets NRCS specifications OR will the participant be implementing a prescribed grazing plan (CPS528) for the project application that will meet NRCS specifications?	60
		• Will the practices applicable to this ranking pool be implemented to remove livestock access to fish bearing waters?	80
		• Will the practices applicable to this ranking pool be implemented to remove livestock access to surface waters?	60



Southwest Team (EQIP Fund Pools)

Southwest Team - Cropland

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Crop	• Pesticides transported to surface water • Pesticides transported to groundwater • Organic matter depletion • Soil organism habitat loss or degradation • Bank erosion from streams, shorelines or water conveyance channels	• Do planned practices reduce pesticide delivery into surface or ground waters within 200 feet of the land unit?	20
		• Do planned practices reduce pesticide delivery toward an adjacent 303d listed waterbody within 200 feet of the land unit?	50
		• Do the planned practices increase the Soil Condition Index to a positive trend and is the Soil Tillage Intensity Rating less than 20?	50
		• Do planned practices address soils in the planning unit with less than 5% Organic matter as indicated from recent soil test(s) and/or boost habitat for soil organisms?	50
		• Do planned practices address bank erosion?	30

Southwest Team - Water Quality and Upland Habitat

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Crop • Forest • Pasture • Associated Agriculture Lands	• Sediment transported to surface water • Nutrients transported to surface water • Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates • Plant pest pressure	• Do planned practices manage/control sediment and/or nutrient delivery to surface water, wetlands or near shore habitat within a half mile meeting the qualifications outlined in WA NRCS Forest Road planning guide or from pastures, cropland or associated ag land?	20
		• Do planned practices control/manage sediment and/or nutrient delivery toward an adjacent 303d listed waterbody within a quarter mile?	70
		• Do planned practices result in habitat enhancement addressing declining pollinator habitat as outlined in the Pollinator Habitat Assessment Tool?	40
		• Do the planned practices improve habitat for terrestrial species?	40
		• Do the planned practices reduce plant pest pressure?	30

West Palouse Team (EQIP Fund Pools)

West Palouse Team - Grazing

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Range • Pasture • Forest	• Plant pest pressure • Feed and forage balance • Inadequate livestock water quantity, quality and distribution • Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates	• Did the participant have an application in the prior FY that was eligible and not funded?	40
		• Will the practices benefit livestock or wildlife?	60
		• Does the participant plan to implement a livestock grazing system (PS 528)?	50
		• Will plantings utilize native seed species?	50

West Palouse Team - Forestry

Land Uses	Resource Concerns	Questions	Points
• Forest	• Plant productivity and health • Plant structure and composition • Plant pest pressure • Wildfire hazard from biomass accumulation	• Did the participant have an application in the prior FY that was eligible and not funded?	40
		• Will the practices reduce wildfire risk to structures	50
		• Does the work address concerns for ingress and egress?	20
		• Are firewise practices being implemented?	40
		• Do the practices improve forest health?	50

IRA Project Proposals

Beginning in 2023, local work groups (LWG) were provided opportunity to submit Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Project Proposals to NRCS for funding consideration. These proposals are identification and recommendations of needed Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) or Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) fund pools that could be supported by IRA funding and the practices available under the IRA.

This year's LWGs provided 12 NEW project proposals, with a total of nearly $28m in IRA funds requested. NRCS will evaluate submitted proposals and make awards for Fiscal Year 2025. Individual project proposals are listed below.

- Colville Tribe – Orchards: $13,696,284
- Colville Tribe – Wildfire: $670,106
- Colville Tribe – Wildfire (Stranger Creek): $571,842
- Northeast Team Wildfire: $1.320,170
- Northwest Team – Forests: $360,000
- Northwest Team – Soil/Pasture: $200,000
- Palouse Team – Soil Health: $2,000,000
- Snake River Team – Noxious Weeds: $800,000
- South Central Team – Crop: $6,000,000
- South Central Team – Range: $660,000
- Spokane Tribe – Forest Health: $700,000
- West Palouse Team – Forest Health & Wildfire: $978,480

NWQI Planning Phase

Northwest Team

1

NWQI Priority 1: Samish Watershed (17110002)

Current Conditions and Objectives: The Samish watershed is a largely agricultural watershed, mostly in Skagit County with areas in southwestern Whatcom County as well. The Samish is home to many dairy and livestock operations and has had high fecal coliform counts in surface waters for many years; it drains to the Samish bay, where more than 4,000-acres of commercial shellfish beds are grown. The Samish watershed is managed under the state-mandated Clean Samish Initiative, where partner agencies collaborate to sample water, educate residents, and implement BMPs to improve water quality. Additional funding would help to improve land protection and BMP adoption in this watershed.-Submitted by Skagit CD.

2

NWQI Priority: Quiyallute River

Current Conditions and Objectives: Aquatic habitat (fish passage), bank erosion, elevated water temperatures, flooding reduction, riparian health (thinning, planting, and invasive weed treatment). The Quillayute River has 23 anadromous salmon runs that are vital to the local economy and Tribal subsistence. Compared to other watersheds, Quillayute salmon runs are relatively healthy, but still declining substantially from historic levels. We are currently in an emergency fishing closure due to low Steelhead returns. Now is the time to invest in protecting and restoring this watershed, before recovery becomes impossible.-Submitted by Quileute Nation.

State Initiatives

North Central Team

1 **Objectives:** Our LWG wishes to participate in all applicable state initiatives. Need more money for soil health and to better capture the needs of urban and small scale farmers.

Proposed Conservation Practices

Big Bend Team

1
Conservation Practice: Green Lightning
Description: On farm production of nitrogen

North Central Team

1
Conservation Practice: Greenhouses
Description: It makes very little sense to pay for high tunnels and not greenhouses. Greenhouses treat the same RC.

2
Conservation Practice: Hydroponics
Description: Another production based practice that should be eligible for cost share with a changing climate and need to grow differently.

3
Conservation Practice: Fodder Systems
Description: Ability to mass produce food and eliminate resource concerns to provide more feed avialability to livestock under a changing climate and reduced land base.

4
Conservation Practice: Post Fire Erosion Control
Description: Better practice for erosion control post-fire to reduce sediment losses.

5
Conservation Practice: Shade Cloths
Description: We provide low and high tunnels but the orchard industry could also use financial assistance for the larger scale shade cloths to improve plant vigor and extend growing seasons.

6
Conservation Practice: Virtual Fences
Description: NRCS should get onboard with virtual fences, creating a much more friendly optoin for wildlife while more efficiently managing animal movements at a greatly reduced costs to traditional fence.

7
Conservation Practice: Prescribed Burning
Description: Needs to be a tool in our toolbox that NRCS will support.

8
Conservation Practice: Diesel to Diesel Replacement
Description: This could really improve air-quality if made more flexible and funded.

9
Conservation Practice: Biodigester
Description: Helps to reduce waste and produce sustainable ag products on both large and small scale.

10
Conservation Practice: Biocontrols
Description: Assist with more environmentally friendly weed management.

Northeast Team

1
Conservation Practice: Virtual Fencing
Description: Virtual Fencing for prescribed grazing. A key new technology for prescribed grazing.

Palouse Team

2
Conservation Practice: Virtual Fencing
Description: Virtual Fencing for prescribed grazing. A key new technology for prescribed grazing.

3
Conservation Practice: Temporary Structures for Grazing
Description: Primarily watering facilities (temporary/mobile) and pipelines. These structures are currently required to be permanent which is restrictive when using grazing on cropland or range for soil health which is growing in practice.

Proposed Conservation Practices (cont.)

4 **Conservation Practice:** Precision Agriculture and Variable Rate Technology
Description: Update payment scenarios (590, etc.) to make high cost technology more accessible through existing practices.

5 **Conservation Practice:** Liquid-based Carbon/Biological Amendments
Description: Foliar or soil applied liquids for soil health improvements with a soil health focus rather than carbon sequestration. Carbon amendments are currently required to be in solid form and focused on sequestration. This would reduce the use of synthetic fertilizers.

6 **Conservation Practice:** Soil pH Adjustment
Description: Adopt a permanent practice to allow for soils amendment (primarily liming) where soil acidity has become a problem for the production of certain crops (example: pulses).

Puget Sound Team

1 **Conservation Practice:** Liming
Description: Increasing payment to factor in that transportation costs to areas that do not supplier close - look into urban payment scenario.

Snake River Team

1 **Conservation Practice:** Inter-seeded Cover Crop
Description: Cost scenarios representative of a lower seeding rate to improve soil health conditions in dry land farming situations. Could be used under 340 practice or create a new interim practice.

Southwest Team

1 **Conservation Practice:** Covers for Livestock Heavy use Areas
Description: Roof Covers over livestock heavy use areas to reduce runoff and subsequent pathogen, nutrient and sediment loads reaching surface water. LWG discussion of areas needed for water quality concerns as well as livestock health. Members had examples where the practice had been used in SW WA with NRCS support in prior years. Also believe it is approved for use in other states with NRCS. Request that inclusion in the practice list for WA be considered for 2025.

2 **Conservation Practice:** Cropland Pest Management with Drones
Description: Add a practice or scenario to NRCS cost share that uses Drones to scout and apply pesticides with precision to minimize impacts on water and wildlife.

3 **Conservation Practice:** Pest Management for Shellfish
Description: Find practices or suite of practices to assist shellfish growers with green crab infestation in SW WA. Specific practices need to be researched and developed to fit into an integrated pest management approach. LWG felt that NRCS could/should be a lead for this and are requesting a sub committee within the LWG including NRCS staff to evaluate practices that could be applied. See meeting notes for attendees who would like to be part of a sub committee.

West Palouse Team

1 **Conservation Practice:** Filter Strips, Field Borders, Grassed Waterways, Conservation Cover
Description: Do not count acreage for these practices against base acres - work with FSA.

2 **Conservation Practice:** Access Roads
Description: Add dust/erosion control measures for temporary roads that provide access to fields and cropland.

3 **Conservation Practice:** 595 Practice for IRA
Description: Add 595 as an eligible practice for IRA.