



Nez Perce

Soil and Water Conservation District

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December 9, 2010

Memorandum

To: Nez Perce SWCD Board

From: Lynn Rasmussen

Subject: Update on USDA special project funds

Background

At the 2010 Division 2 meeting held in Orofino, Idaho, Clint Evans, Program Manager for USDA-NRCS from Boise presented information on the AWEF and CCPI programs. These programs were briefly discussed at the October and November Board meetings, with the District staff directed to provide program information to the Board. The attached information was provided by USDA-NRCS in response to this request.

Overview

The CCPI program or Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative is funded by NRCS on an annual basis. The application process begins with a funding announcement which has not been made for 2011. NRCS anticipates this announcement to be made in April of 2011.

The program requires a partner, such as a conservation district, to provide funds for practices in addition to the NRCS contribution. Program details can be found on the NRCS web site <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ccpi/index.html>.

The following attachments are provided for your information (if you have limited time, read the ones shown in green text :

- FY10 Program Evaluation Criteria – this provides some insight on how applications are evaluated.
- Resource Concern Definitions – an applicant needs to choose the resource concerns from this list.
- **Example Agreement between NRCS and partner – this outlines the responsibilities of each party. If you have limited time, this would be a good document to review.**
- Example Proposal – this example indicates the level of work required to put together a proposal. The proposal is completed by the applicant, NOT NRCS.
- **FY10 approved proposals – The document lists the proposals approved in FY10 and their funding amounts. There were 2 approved in Idaho last year.**

AWEF or the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program is managed as a component of the EQIP program. Additional information can be found on the NRCS web site at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/awep/>.



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The program is a voluntary conservation initiative that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to implement agricultural water enhancement activities on agricultural land for the purposes of conserving surface and ground water and improving water quality. AWEP operates through program contracts with producers to plan and implement conservation practices in project areas established through partnership agreements.

Under AWEP, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) enters into partnership agreements with eligible entities and organizations that want to promote ground and surface water conservation or improve water quality on agricultural lands. After the Chief has announced approved AWEP project areas, eligible agricultural producers may submit a program application.

The program requires a partner to sponsor an application. Sponsors provide outreach assistance, but no financial assistance. Several attachments are provided for your review. If you have limited time, read those in green text.

- AWEP FY2010 proposal review criteria – provides some insight into how the applications are evaluated.
- AWEP example proposal – indicates the level of work needed to prepare the application. NRCS does not prepare the application, the sponsor does.
- *AWEP FY2010 list of proposals funded – Lists the projects funded in FY10 and the amount of funding.*

CCPI

Attachment

FY10 Program Evaluation Criteria

**US Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service**

**Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative
(CCPI)**

**CCPI Partner Proposal
Evaluation Guidance**



Date Issued: April 2010

Fiscal Year 2010 CCPI Partner Application National Evaluation Guidance

Background

Section 2707 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Act) establishes the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) by amending section 1243 of the Food Security Act of 1985 [16 U.S.C. 3843]. The Secretary of Agriculture has delegated the authority to administer CCPI to the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), who is Vice President of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). NRCS is an agency of the Department of Agriculture (USDA). The CCPI is a voluntary conservation initiative that enables the use of certain conservation programs along with resources of eligible partners to provide financial and technical assistance to owners and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands. In fiscal year (FY) 2010, NRCS will make Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) funds available to owners and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands who participate in approved CCPI project areas.

As authorized by Congress, this is not a grant program to eligible partners. This is a program whereby approved eligible partners will enter into multi-year agreements with NRCS to help enhance conservation outcomes on agricultural lands and private nonindustrial private forest lands. A purpose of CCPI is to leverage the federal investment in natural resources from authorized conservation programs along with services and resources of non-Federal partners.

Legal Authority:

- Section 2707 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 which establishes the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) by amending Section 1243 of the Food Security Act of 1985 [16 U.S.C. 3843].

Eligible Partners: Federally recognized Indian Tribes, State and local units of government, producer associations, farmer cooperatives, institutions of higher education, and nongovernmental organizations with a history of working cooperatively with producers. Agricultural producers are not eligible CCPI partners and may not submit a proposal under this authority.

Partner Application: Potential partners submit proposals according to the requirements published in the annual notice of request for proposals (RFP) and request program assistance to address resource concerns within a specified geographic project area.

Partner Application Evaluation: The purpose of this guidance is to provide a process by which proposals submitted by eligible partners are screened, evaluated and competitively ranked to allow selection and approval by NRCS. Selection of proposals to be supported through NRCS programs is determined by this evaluation, score, and other considerations cited in the RFP along with the availability of programs and funding.

General Evaluation, Ranking and Implementation Process:

1. Submission of partner proposals:
 - a. All CCPI Proposals are either mailed or delivered by courier to:

Gregory K. Johnson, Director
 Financial Assistance Programs Division
 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
 "CCPI Proposal"
 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Rm 5239-S
 Washington, DC 20250
 - b. Note: CCPI proposals must also be supported by a letter of review from State Conservationists for all states in the proposed project area.
2. Initial Eligibility Review by Program Manager: CCPI Program Manager (PM) ensures that proposals received meet basic eligibility criteria as set forth in the notice of request for proposals (RFP). PM organizes proposals by category, priority, readies materials for review and takes the following actions:
 - a. Verifies complete application submitted (format, length, copies, etc.)
 - b. CCPI basic screening worksheet completed
 - c. Letter to partner:
 - i. Proposal received – Complete and in the review process.
 - ii. Proposal received – Incomplete or does not meet requirements of basic screening criteria.
 - d. Program Manager will refer complete and eligible proposals to Review Panel(s) with assigned priority.
3. Review Panel Actions: Members of the national review panel will evaluate and rank proposals individually using the RFP evaluation criteria as cited in this guidance document. Each proposal will then be evaluated by the panel as one group. Final ranking score will be assigned by consensus of the panel members. Consensus comments and recommendations will be developed and recorded by the designated review team lead with assistance from the PM which includes:
 - a. Individual review
 - b. Group review and consensus development
 - c. Ranking recommendations
 - d. Review team leader and CCPI PM assembles final report and ranking
4. CCPI Review Board Actions: At the national level, the Deputy Chief for Financial Assistance and Community Development (FACD) will chair the Review Board meeting to explain proposed project rankings and their strengths and weaknesses. The CCPI Review Board will review and confirm that the Review Panel rankings are consistent with program purposes and objectives. The CCPI Review Board will make final recommendations for funding to the Chief.
5. Chief Final Review and Selection: Chief will review all findings, ranking and recommendations and make final selection for funding of partner proposals.
 - a. Final selection of proposals to be funded. The Chief directs the Deputy Chief FACD or designated CCPI PM to:
 - i. Send notification letter to partner and deadline for approval of agreement.
 - ii. Coordinate development of partner agreement.
 - b. STC and Partner approve/sign agreement.
 - c. Allocation of CCPI funds to FFIS, ProTracts and coordination of announcement of CCPI program availability with State(s) and partner for producer application.

The following types of review groups will be established:

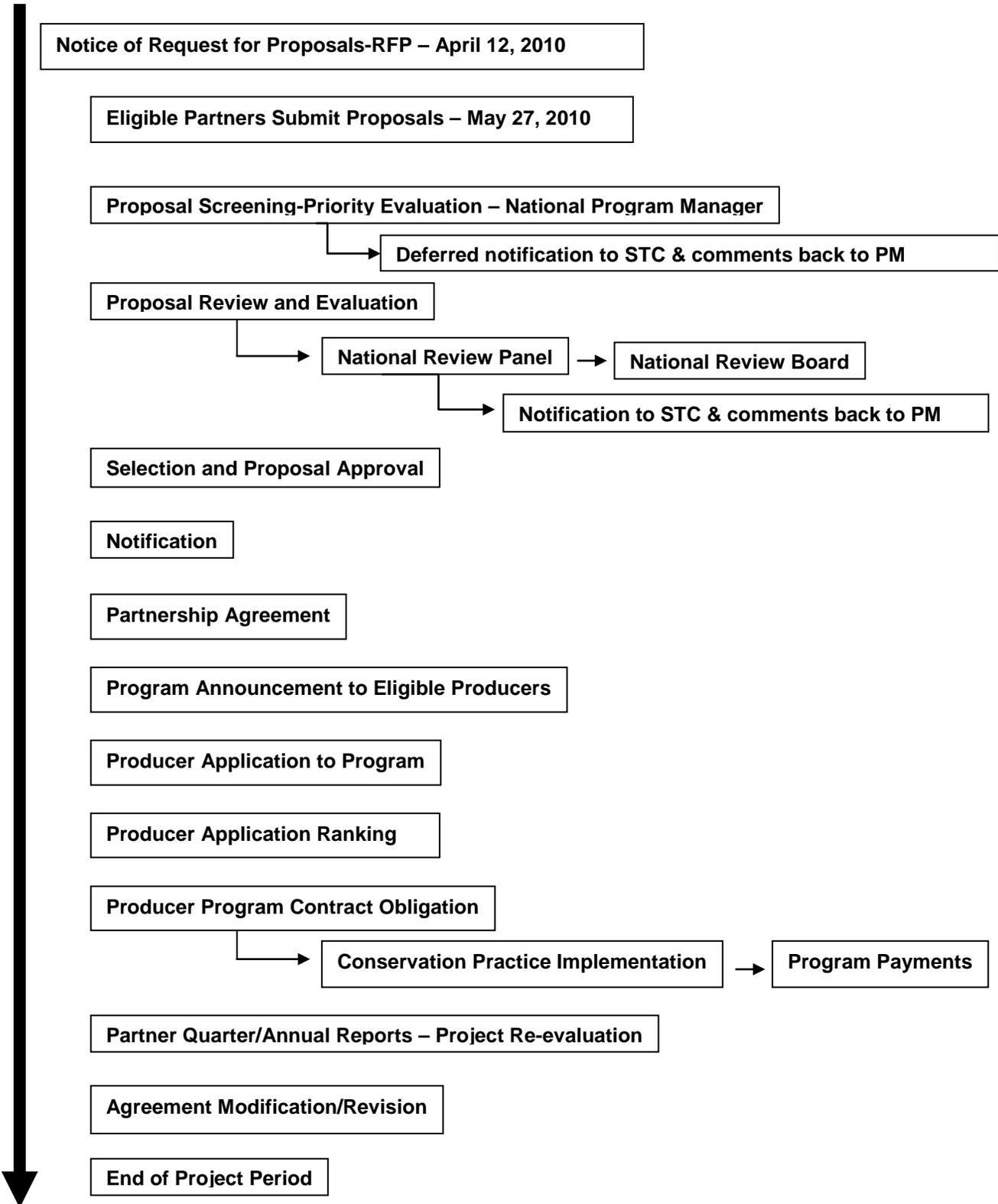
- **National Review Panel(s)** - Program managers, program specialists, and technical specialists from States, National Headquarters and National Centers will be designated to assist with review of eligible partner proposals.
- **National CCPI Review Board** – Comprised of NRCS national leadership: Chaired by the Deputy Chief for Financial Assistance and Community Development (FACD), Deputy Chief for Easements and Landscape Planning (ELP), Deputy Chief for Science and Technology, Deputy Chief for Soil Survey and Resource Assessment, one Regional Assistant Chief (RAC), and one State Conservationist (STC). The National CCPI Review Board will certify the Review Panel evaluations and make final funding recommendations to the Chief.

Note: There will be no need for establishment of a State Review Panel or Board during FY2010. The national Review Panel will not include any representatives from outside the agency. Members of Review Panels and Board will be subject to requirements for confidentiality and may only discuss proposals with assigned Program Managers and other review panel members, and any leadership designated by the Deputy Chief for FACD.

Additional CCPI information and guidance for agreements and program administration can be obtained from:

- Director, Financial Assistance Programs Division (FAPD), phone (202) 720-1845.
- <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ccpi/>

General CCPI Process Flowchart:



General Guidelines and Requirements:

Review Panel and CCPI Review Board Information:

- Proposals are reviewed by the designated CCPI Program Manager (PM) in advance of the Review Panel meeting to ensure proposals meet program requirements. The PM shall notify the partner applicant in writing that the proposal was received and prepares one of the following letters for signature by the Division Director, FAPD.
 - Letter notifying the participant the application was received, is complete and is in process of evaluation.
 - Letter notifying the participant the application was received but was incomplete and/or does not meet basic CCPI program requirements. The application may be deferred.
- **STC Contact:** The PM will provide notification to the STC prior to sending deferral letters to partners. The STC may provide comment to the PM.
- **Screening-Prioritization:** The PM will screen, organize and assign priority (High, Medium, Low) for all eligible proposals. The PM will transmit the proposals to members of the Review Panel for evaluation based upon the proposals priority status. High priority proposals will be ranked first, Medium second, Low last. Depending upon funding availability, the agency may choose not to evaluate or rank lower priority proposals based upon funding availability. The PM will notify STCs of initial screening/priority results and STC may provide comment.
- **Proposals will first be evaluated individually** by individual review panel members prior to the group Review Panel meeting. Each member must complete an Individual Reviewer Scoring Sheet and Individual Commentary Sheet for each proposal. (*The blank forms are included in this guidance.*) The PM will provide Panel members with a list of prioritized proposals and funding requested. The panel will evaluate proposals based upon the highest priority and until the available funding is exhausted. This means that if funding is exhausted after ranking prioritized proposals, no additional proposals need to be ranked as there is little chance of the proposal to be funded.
- **Review Panel Actions:** For each proposal, the review panel will discuss the proposals and the preliminary individual scores and agree to final scores, establish consensus “strengths and weaknesses” commentary report (“Group Consensus Commentary Sheet”), and consensus recommendations (Recommended, Consider, or Not Recommended) for each proposal which will be evaluated and ranked.
- **STC Contact:** The PM will provide STCs with the preliminary list of ranked proposals and recommendations. The STC may provide the PM with additional comment. All ranking, consensus recommendations and STC comments will be organized and provided to the Review Board and Chief.
- **Review Panel Facilitators** are either selected/assigned from one of the Review Panel members, or by the designated CCPI Program Manager. The assigned facilitator may be responsible for arranging meeting locations, keeping the team on task, on time to meet deadlines, and will record the final score, strengths and weaknesses on the “Review Panel Consensus Commentary Sheet” developed by the Review Panel for each proposal.
- **Accurate and thorough completion of these documents is critical, as they will be used to provide information to the CCPI Review Board, the Chief, and to provide feedback to applicants following award selections.** (The initial score for each proposal is determined by the review team members. Concurrence is needed for the final score on the “Group Consensus Commentary Sheet.”)

Additional Review Panel, Approval Guidelines and Miscellaneous Information

All members of review panels, facilitators, and other review officials must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Prior to evaluating proposals, each evaluator must sign and submit a Certification and Acknowledgement indicating an understanding of the evaluation procedures and requirements. This certification must be read and understood by the evaluator and returned prior to receiving any proposals. Adherence to the certification is required.
- Evaluators may contact the Program Manager to obtain clarifications regarding an application.
- Evaluators should not discuss with persons outside the agency aspects related to the Review Panel proceedings, even after selection of awards. Questions regarding the review process should be directed to the designated Program Manager. Evaluator identities will be held in the strictest confidence.
- Evaluators should not directly contact a partner applicant; however questions could be directed to the designated Program Manager who may contact the partner for clarification.
- Evaluators may not accept any invitations or gratuities (i.e., meals, gifts, favors, etc.) from any applicant. If an evaluator is offered any invitations, gratuities, or job offers by or on behalf of any applicant, the evaluator will immediately report it to the designated Program Manager.
- Proposals will be evaluated only against the published criteria in the notice of request for proposals (RFP). No new criteria are to be considered by evaluators.
- All proposals will be individually evaluated against the published criteria and initially ranked without consultation between evaluators.
- Screening worksheets and individual and group consensus worksheets are the property of the NRCS for internal use of the agency. Information developed during the evaluation process is not released to the public. Final ranking lists of eligible proposals may be posted to the NRCS national website. Agency decisions regarding evaluation and ranking scores are not appealable.

Forms and Worksheets for Program Manager and Review Team Members:

1. Basic Screening Eligibility Criteria Worksheet (Completed by Program Manager)
2. Technical Rating Standards (scoring guidance for reviewers)
3. "Individual-Group Reviewer Scoring Sheet" (Reviewers make copies and complete for each proposal)
4. "Individual Commentary Sheet" (Reviewers make copies and complete for each proposal)
5. "Group Consensus Commentary Sheet" (Facilitators make copies and compile for each proposal)

Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI)

Fiscal Year 2010 CCPI Eligibility Screening Criteria Worksheet – Attachment 1

Introduction:

This worksheet shall be completed by the designated Program Manager (PM) for each partner proposal submitted by the established deadline date and before referral to the Review Panel. This worksheet will provide the PM with guidance for appropriate response to the partner and must be completed in order to provide a timely response for acceptance or denial due to ineligibility.

Detailed AWEP Application Screening Criteria Worksheet			
Applicant Name:		Date Rec	
Address:		State(s)	
City, State ZIP:		County	
Contact person-email:		Phone	
Program Manager:		Application #	

Screening Criteria – All answers must be “YES” to refer the application for evaluation and prioritization

Line	Minimum Requirement (See RFP for details)	Yes	No	Remarks
1	Proposal delivered or submission postmarked on or before RFP deadline?			“No” = Defer Proposal
2	Partner is an eligible entity? (Federally recognized tribe, State, unit of government, producer associations, farmer cooperative, and institution of higher education or other nongovernmental organization (NG) – see RFP – Individual producers are not eligible)			“No” = Defer Proposal
3	Land associated with proposal is eligible (Controlled by producers-See RFP)?			“No” = Defer Proposal
4	The proposal is <u>not</u> a request for direct program funding (FA) to the partner entity (no funding to producers)?			“No” = Defer Proposal
5	Proposal will involve more than one program eligible producer?			“No” = Defer Proposal
6	Proposal is in the proper format and copies per the RFP?			“No” = Defer Proposal
7	The Project Proposal Does Not Exceed Five Years.			“No” = Defer Proposal
	PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS (Addressing all the following):	Yes	No	Remarks
8	The proposal identifies and addresses one or more natural resource concern priorities (SWAPA)?			
9	The proposal includes request for program support to implement at least one or more NRCS approved conservation practice, CSP enhancement, or conservation activity plan (CAP)?			
10	The Proposal includes: • Cover & Summary Items and Objectives/Actions			
11	The Proposal criteria includes: • History working with producers • Detailed geographic description & map • Description of partner objectives, roles, & capabilities • Schedule and finish date • Detailed description of NRCS program resources requested • Detailed description of partner non-Federal resources to be provided • Plan & description for partner provided monitoring & evaluation of project • Suggested producer application ranking criteria • Estimates of producers in project area • List of NRCS approved conservation practices to be supported • Complete description of FA needed each FY of project by practice & program			
12	The Proposal includes a request for letter of review from the STC(s).			
13	The Proposal is complete and each category above is “Yes”:			Yes = Refer for evaluation

	<u>ADDITIONAL PROPOSAL CONSIDERATIONS TO NOTE:</u>	Yes	No	Remarks
13	The Proposal includes: • Request and Description of Program Policy Adjustments To Assist Project.			
14	The Proposal includes: • Partner efforts for outreach to BF/R, SDF/R, LRF/R, or Tribes.			
15	The Proposal includes: • Request for consideration of AGI waiver for project of Special Environmental Significance.			
16	The Proposal includes: • Partner efforts to address renewable energy, energy conservation, climate change or adaptation, or fostering carbon sequestration.			

	<u>Programs Requested:</u>	Yes	No	FY2010 FA Funds Requested	Total Project FA Funds Requested
A	<u>EQIP:</u>				
B	<u>CSP:</u>				
C	<u>WHIP:</u>				

All minimum proposal requirements and criteria have been met. Refer for evaluation or Not referred

Reviewer: _____ Date: _____

Comments:

FY 2010 CCPI

RANKING STANDARDS

For the purposes of this application review evaluation, a **strength** is an aspect of a project proposal that, when compared to a stated evaluation criterion, leaves virtually no doubt regarding the applicant's capability to perform the criterion.

A **weakness** is an aspect of a project proposal that, when compared to the evaluation criterion, provides evidence that the applicant will not be capable of fulfilling the criterion successfully. A **minor weakness** is one, which raises doubts regarding the applicant's ability to satisfy the criterion, but can be easily correctable. A **significant weakness** is one, which leaves no doubt regarding the applicant's inability to satisfy the criterion and cannot be corrected without a major revision to the application. The combination of several minor weaknesses within a criterion may become a significant weakness. A **deficiency** is a material failure of an applicant to address a solicitation requirement or a combination of significant weaknesses in the application, providing evidence that the risk for unsuccessful performance of the statement of work is raised to an unacceptable level.

The Panel will use a 100-point scale to score the project proposals. Each of the four criteria can receive a maximum of 25 points.

- 21 – 25 Superior: Virtually no practical way to improve the application regarding this criterion. Addresses all criteria comprehensively and has strengths with no significant weaknesses. Proposal leaves practically no doubt regarding the applicant's capability to fulfill the criterion.
- 16 – 20 Good: Applicant comprehensively addresses all aspects of the criterion and there are no significant weaknesses. Proposal demonstrates applicant's capability to fulfill the criterion.
- 11 – 15 Satisfactory: Applicant addresses all aspects of the criterion, may have few, but correctable weaknesses, and will likely be able to fulfill the criterion.
- 6 – 10 Marginal: Applicant fails to address some aspects of the criterion, has many potentially correctable weaknesses, but leaves some doubt as to the ability to fulfill the criterion.
- 0 – 5 Unsatisfactory: Applicant fails to address most aspects of the criterion, has significant weaknesses, and correcting these weaknesses would require a major revision. Proposal does not demonstrate applicant's ability to fulfill the criterion.

The Review Panel will only evaluate CCPI project proposals by comparing submitted data against the Evaluation Criteria. No new criteria may be added or considered.

FY 2010 CCPI Proposal – INDIVIDUAL-GROUP REVIEWER SCORING SHEET

Partner Name: _____ Project #: _____

Project Name: _____

Reviewer(s): _____ Date: _____

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Score
1	Producer Participation - Proposal includes efforts to promote a high percentage of producer participation in the project area? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% or more of eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 25 pts • 60%-79% of eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 20 pts • 40%-59% of eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 15 pts • 20%-39% of eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 10 pts • 10%-19% eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 5 pts • Less than 10% of eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 0 pts 	
2	Proposal Leverages Non-Federal Resources – Type of Assistance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes provisions for partner contribution of non-Federal financial AND technical assistance to eligible program participants. 25 pts. • Proposal includes provisions for partner contribution of non-Federal financial assistance OR technical assistance to eligible program participants. 15 pts. • Proposal does not include any partner contribution of non-Federal technical assistance or financial assistance to eligible program participants. 0 pts. 	
3	Proposal Leverages Non-Federal Resources – Financial Assistance: (Divide total amount of non-Federal Funding by requested NRCS program funding x 100 = %) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal percentage of non-Federal to Federal funding > 50%. 50 pts. • Proposal percentage of non-Federal to Federal funding = 25% - 49%. 25 pts. • Proposal percentage of non-Federal to Federal funding = 10% - 24%. 10 pts. • Proposal percentage of non-Federal to Federal funding = 9% or less. 5 pts. 	
4	Resource Improvement and Agricultural Activities: - Proposal will result in significant application of conservation practices to address agricultural water quality, water conservation activities or other State, regional, or nation conservation initiatives? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal will address priority conservation activities on 80% or more of the land in project area – 25 pts • Proposal will address priority conservation activities on 50% to 79% of the land in project area – 20 pts • Proposal will address priority conservation activities on 49% or less of the land in project area – 15 pts • Proposal will minimally address priority conservation activities in the project area – 0 pts 	
5	Partner Innovation and Performance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes partner efforts to apply or implement non-NRCS approved practices and activities to address identified natural resource concerns (e.g. energy production, climate change, etc.) – 25 pts • Proposal includes partner innovation to deliver services or technical assistance to producers (e.g. marketing plan to encourage adoption of conservation practices) – 20 pts • Proposal includes plan to provide/implement outcome-based plan efforts to implement conservation – 15 pts • Proposal does not provide any significant innovation or performance-based efforts – 0 pts 	
6	Project Completion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes efforts to help program participants complete the application of the conservation practices and/or activities in program contracts in one to two years - 25 pts. • Proposal includes efforts to help program participants complete the application of the conservation practices and/or activities in program contracts in three to four years - 20 pts. • Proposal includes efforts to help program participants complete the application of the conservation practices and/or activities in program contracts at end of five year project period - 10 pts. • Proposal will result in program contract implementation in more than five years – 0 pts 	

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Score
7	Regulatory Compliance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal will substantially assist producers meet “on-farm” environmental Federal, State or local regulatory requirements (TMDL, EPA non-attainment area, groundwater depletion area, – 25 pts • Proposal will assist producers meet some “on-farm” environmental related regulatory requirements – 15 pts • Proposal will not assist producers meet “on-farm” environmental related regulatory requirements – 0 pts 	
8	Partner Monitoring and Evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposal includes partner contributions to monitor implementation and/or performance of practices/activities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes efforts and reporting which monitor implementation and performance of CCPI funded practices/activities implemented by producers in project area – 20 pts • Proposal includes efforts and reporting which monitor implementation and performance of partner funded or supported practices/activities implemented by producers in project area – 20 pts • Proposal does not include reporting activities which monitor implementation and performance of practices in project area – 0 pts 	
9	General Project Management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milestones and partner deliverables are clearly identified and achievable – 5 pts • Timeline and implementation schedule and reasonable and achievable – 5 pts • Project staff has technical expertise needed – 5 pts • Budget is justified and reasonable – 5 pts • Proposal will address resource concerns on a regional or multi-State basis – 10 pts 	
10	Proposal Includes Ranking Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes environmental related criteria that NRCS can use in ProTracts Ranking Tool (AERT) to prioritize and rank agricultural producer EQIP program applications – 25 pts • Proposal does not include criteria for prioritization or ranking purposes – 0 pts 	
11	Partner Collaboration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal identifies two or more other partners who will collaborate to help achieve project objectives –25 pts • Proposal identifies one other partner who will collaborate to help achieve project objectives – 15 pts • Proposal identifies no other partner who will collaborate to help achieve project objectives – 0 pts 	
12	Special “On-Farm” Project Priorities: Proposal includes practices or partner activities which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote on-farm renewable energy production –10 pts • Promote on-farm energy conservation – 10 pts • Mitigate effects of climate change – 10 pts • Facilitates climate change adaptation – 10 pts • Promotes carbon sequestration – 10 pts • Promotes use of precision agriculture techniques – 10pts • Promotes specialty crop or organic agricultural production – 10 pts 	
13	Partner Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes an outreach plan to assure opportunities are provided and/or efforts to increase participation by historically underserved producers and Indian tribes – 25 pts • Proposal does not include an outreach plan or efforts to increase participation – 0 pts. 	
14	Partner Contributions To Help Producer Applicants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes efforts by partner to host workshops or provide information outreach (e.g. newsletter, website, etc.) to producers to promote project participation – 10 pts • Proposal includes efforts by partner to provide conservation planning assistance producers – 15 pts • Proposal includes efforts by partner to help producers submit applications to NRCS – 10 pts 	
	Total Score (maximum 485 points)	

FY 2010 CCPI Proposals

INDIVIDUAL COMMENTARY SHEET

Partner Name: _____ Project #: _____

Project Name: _____ Date: _____

Reviewer: _____ Individual Score: _____

(Do not use the enter key in the boxes. Use the arrow down key to start a new statement.)

Strengths:

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Weaknesses:

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Group Consensus Commentary Sheet

Partner Name: _____ Project #: _____

Project Name: _____ Date: _____

Reviewer(s): _____ Group Score: _____

(Do not use the enter key in the boxes. Use the arrow down key to start a new statement.)

Strengths:

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Weaknesses:

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CCPI

Attachment

Resource Concern Definitions

SWAPA Resource Concern	Resource Concern Definitinon
Soil Erosion – Sheet and Rill	Detachment and transport of soil particles caused by rainfall splash and runoff degrade soil quality.
Soil Erosion – Wind	Detachment and transport of soil particles caused by wind degrade soil quality and/or damage plants.
Soil Erosion – Ephemeral Gully	Small channels caused by surface water runoff degrade soil quality and tend to increase in size. On cropland, they can be obscured by heavy tillage.
Soil Erosion – Classic Gully	Deep, permanent channels caused by the convergence of surface runoff degrade soil quality. They enlarge progressively by head cutting and lateral widening.
Soil Erosion – Streambank	Accelerated loss of streambank soils restricts land and water use and management.
Soil Erosion – Shoreline	Soil is eroded along shorelines by wind and wave action, causing physical damage to vegetation, limiting land use, or creating a safety hazard.
Soil Erosion – Irrigation induced	Improper irrigation water application and equipment operation are causing soil erosion that degrades soil quality.
Soil Erosion – Mass Movement	Soil slippage, landslides, or slope failures, normally on hillsides, result in large volumes of soil and rock movement.
Soil Erosion – Road, Roadsides and Construction Sites	Soil loss occurs on areas left unprotected during or after road building and/or construction activities.
Soil Condition – Organic Matter Depletion	Soil organic matter has lowered or will diminish to a level that degrades soil quality.
Soil Condition – Rangeland Site Stability	The capacity to limit redistribution and loss of soil resources (including nutrients and organic matter) by wind and water.
Soil Condition – Compaction	Compressed soil particles and aggregates caused by mechanical compaction adversely affect plant-soil-moisture relationships.
Soil Condition – Subsidence	Loss of volume and depth of organic soils due to oxidation caused by above-normal microbial activity resulting from excessive drainage or extended drought.
Soil Condition – Contaminants: Salts and Other Chemicals	Inorganic chemical elements and compounds such as salts, selenium, boron, and heavy metals restrict the desired use of the soil or exceed the soil buffering capacity.
Soil Condition – Contaminants: Animal Waste and Other Organics – N	Nitrogen nutrient levels from applied animal waste and other organics restrict desired use of the land.
Soil Condition – Contaminants: Animal Waste and Other Organics – P	Phosphorus nutrient levels from applied animal waste and other organics restrict desired use of the land.
Soil Condition – Contaminants: Animal Waste and Other Organics – K	Potassium nutrient levels from applied animal waste and other organics restrict desired use of the land.
Soil Condition – Contaminants: Commercial Fertilizer – N	Over application of nitrogen degrades plant health and vigor or exceeds the soil capacity to retain nutrients.
Soil Condition – Contaminants: Commercial Fertilizer – P	Over application of phosphorus degrades plant health and vigor or exceeds the soil capacity to retain nutrients.
Soil Condition – Contaminants: Commercial Fertilizer – K	Over application of potassium degrades plant health and vigor or exceeds the soil capacity to retain nutrients.
Soil Condition – Contaminants: Residual Pesticides	Residual pesticides in the soil have an adverse effect on non-targeted plants and animals.
Soil Condition – Damage from Sediment Deposition	Sediment deposition damages or restricts land use/management or adversely affects ecological processes.
Water Quantity – Rangeland Hydrologic Cycle	The capacity to capture, store, and safely release water from rainfall, run-on, and snowmelt (where relevant).
Water Quantity – Excessive Seepage	Subsurface water oozing to the surface restricts land use and management.
Water Quantity – Excessive Runoff, Flooding, or Ponding	The land becomes inundated, restricting land use and management.
Water Quantity – Excessive Subsurface Water	Water saturates upper soil layers, restricting land use and management.
Water Quantity – Drifted Snow	Wind-blown snow forms deposits and accumulates around and over surface structures, restricting ingress, egress, and conveyance of humans and animals.
Water Quantity – Inadequate Outlets	Natural or constructed outlets are too small to remove excess water in a timely manner.
Water Quantity – Inefficient Water Use on Irrigated Land	Limited water supplies are not optimally utilized.
Water Quantity – Inefficient Water Use on Nonirrigated Land	Natural moisture is not optimally utilized.
Water Quantity – Reduced Capacity of Conveyances by Sediment Deposition	Sediment deposits in ditches, canals, culverts, and other water conveyances reduce the desired flow capacity.
Water Quantity – Reduced Storage of Water Bodies by Sediment Accumulation	Sediment deposits in water bodies reduce the desired volume capacity.
Water Quantity – Aquifer Overdraft	Water withdrawals exceed the safe yield for the aquifer.
Water Quantity – Insufficient Flows in Watercourses	Water flows are not consistently available in sufficient quantities to support ecological processes and land use and management.
Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Groundwater	Residues resulting from the use of pest control chemicals degrade groundwater quality.

Water Quality – Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Groundwater	Pollution from natural or human-induced nutrients such as N, P, and S (including animal and other wastes) degrades groundwater quality.
Water Quality – Excessive Salinity in Groundwater	Pollution from salts such as Ca, Mg, Na, K, HCO ₃ , CO ₃ , Cl, and SO ₄ degrades groundwater quality.
Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Heavy Metals in Groundwater	Natural or human-induced metal pollutants present in toxic amounts degrade groundwater quality.
Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Pathogens in Groundwater	Kinds and numbers of viruses, protozoa, and bacteria are present at a level that degrades groundwater quality.
Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Petroleum in Groundwater	Fuel, oil, gasoline, and other hydrocarbons present in toxic amounts degrade groundwater quality.
Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Surface Water	Pest control chemicals present in toxic amounts degrade surface water quality.
Water Quality – Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water	Pollution from natural or human induced nutrients such as N, P, and S (including animal and other wastes) degrades surface water quality.
Water Quality – Excessive Suspended Sediment and Turbidity in Surface Water	Excessive concentrations of mineral or organic particles, algae, or organic stains degrade surface water quality.
Water Quality – Excessive Salinity in Surface Water	Pollution from salts such as Ca, Mg, Na, K, HCO ₃ , CO ₃ , Cl, and SO ₄ degrades surface water quality.
Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Heavy Metals in Surface Water	Natural or human-induced metal pollutants are present in toxic amounts that degrade surface water quality.
Water Quality – Harmful Temperatures of Surface Water	Undesired thermal conditions degrade surface water quality.
Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Pathogens in Surface Water	Kinds and numbers of viruses, protozoa, and bacteria are present at a level that degrades surface water quality.
Water Quality – Harmful Levels of Petroleum in Surface Water	Fuel, oil, gasoline, and other hydrocarbons present in toxic amounts degrade surface water quality.
Water Quality – Colorado River Excessive Salinity	Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program (CRBSC) tracks effects of improved irrigation techniques to reduce salt entering Colorado River waters that eventually flow into Mexico.
Air Quality – Particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM 10)	Particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter are suspended in the air, causing potential health hazards to humans and animals.
Air Quality – Particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM 2.5)	Particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter are suspended in the air, causing potential health hazards to humans and animals.
Air Quality – Excessive Ozone	High concentrations of ozone are adversely affecting human health, reducing plant yields, and creating smog.
Air Quality – Excessive Greenhouse Gas: CO₂ (carbon dioxide)	Increased CO ₂ concentrations are adversely affecting ecosystem processes.
Air Quality – Excessive Greenhouse Gas: N₂O (nitrous oxide)	Increased N ₂ O concentrations are adversely affecting ecosystem processes.
Air Quality – Excessive Greenhouse Gas: CH₄ (methane)	Increased CH ₄ concentrations are adversely affecting ecosystem processes.
Air Quality – Ammonia (NH₃)	Animal waste and inorganic commercial fertilizers emit ammonia that contributes to odor, is a PM _{2.5} precursor, and contributes to acid rain.
Air Quality – Chemical Drift	Materials applied to control pests drift downwind and contaminate/injure non-targeted fields, crops, soils, water, animals and humans.
Air Quality – Objectionable Odors	Land use and management operations produce offensive smells.
Air Quality – Reduced Visibility	Sight distance is impaired due to airborne particles causing unsafe conditions and impeded viewing of natural vistas, especially in Class I viewing areas (primarily national parks and monuments).
Air Quality – Undesirable Air Movement	Wind velocities (too little or too much) reduce animal or plant productivity, impact human comfort and increase energy consumption.
Air Quality – Adverse Air Temperature	Air temperatures (too cold or too hot) reduce animal or plant productivity, impact human comfort and increase energy consumption.
Plants not adapted or suited	Plants are not adapted and/or suited to site conditions or client objectives.
Plant Condition – Productivity, Health and Vigor	Plants do not produce the yields, quality, and soil cover to meet client objectives.
Plant Condition – Threatened or Endangered Plant Species: Plant Species Listed or Proposed for Listing under the Endangered Species Act	The site includes individuals, habitat or potential habitat for one or more plant species listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act.
Plant Condition – Threatened or Endangered Plant Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern	The site includes individuals, habitat or potential habitat for one or more plant species that the State or Tribal government with jurisdiction, or the State Technical Committee, has identified as a species of concern. This includes plant species that hav
Plant Condition – Noxious and Invasive Plants	The site has noxious or invasive plants present.
Plant Condition – Forage Quality and Palatability	Plants do not have adequate nutritive value or palatability for the intended use.

Plant Condition – Wildfire Hazard	The kinds and amounts of fuel loadings (plant biomass) pose risks to human safety, structures, and resources, should wildfire occur.
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Food	Quantity and quality of food are unavailable to meet the life history requirements of the species or guild of species of concern.
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Cover/Shelter	Cover/shelter for the species or guild of species of concern is unavailable or inadequate. This includes lack of hiding, thermal, and/or refuge cover.
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Water	The quantity and quality of water is unacceptable for the species or guild of species of concern.
Fish and Wildlife – Inadequate Space	Lack of required areas disrupts the life history of the species or guild of species of concern.
Fish and Wildlife – Habitat Fragmentation	Habitat has insufficient structure, extent, and connectivity to provide ecological functions and/or achieve management objectives.
Fish and Wildlife – Imbalance Among and Within Populations	Populations are not in proportion to available quantities and qualities of food (plants, predator/prey), cover/shelter, water, and space and other life history requirements.
Fish and Wildlife – Threatened and Endangered Fish and Wildlife Species: Fish and Wildlife Species Listed or Proposed for Listing under the Endangered Species Act	The site includes individuals, habitat or potential habitat for one or more fish or wildlife species listed or proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act.
Fish and Wildlife – Threatened and Endangered Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern	The site includes individuals, habitat or potential habitat for one or more fish or wildlife species that the State or Tribal government with jurisdiction, or the State Technical Committee, has identified as a species of concern. This includes fish and wi
Domestic Animals – Inadequate Quantities and Quality of Feed and Forage	Total feed and forage are insufficient to meet the nutritional and production needs of the kinds and classes of livestock.
Domestic Animals – Inadequate Shelter	Livestock are not protected sufficiently to meet the production goals for the kinds and classes of livestock.
Domestic Animals – Inadequate Stock Water	The quantity, quality and distribution of drinking water are insufficient to meet the production goals for the kinds and classes of livestock.
Domestic Animals – Stress and Mortality	Animals exhibit illness or death from disease, parasites, insects, poisonous plants, or other factors.
Land - Change in Land Use	The degree to which implementing the conservation practice is expected to cause an increased change from one land use to another.
Land - Land in Production	The degree to which implementing the conservation practice is expected to cause an increase or decrease in the amount of land in production.
Capital - Change in Equipment	The degree to which implementing the conservation practice is expected to cause an increase or decrease in the amount of capital equipment required for farm or ranch operations.
Capital - Total Investment Cost	A qualitative measure of the increase in total investment dollars required in order to implement the conservation practice.
Capital - Annual Cost	A qualitative measure of the expected change in annual capital costs required in order to operate and maintain the conservation practice.
Capital - Credit & Farm Program Eligibility	Included to make conservation planners aware of the potential availability of funding for implementing conservation practices.
Labor - Labor	The degree to which implementing the conservation practice is likely to cause an increase or decrease in the total amount of overall farm or ranch labor required for operations.
Labor - Change in Management Level	The degree to which implementing the conservation practice is likely to cause an increase or decrease in the total amount of required active management, or skills, on a farm or ranch.
Risk - Yield	The degree to which risk, as related to crop or livestock yields, is expected to increase or decrease as a result of implementing the conservation practice.
Risk - Flexibility	The degree to which risk, as related to the flexibility of farm or ranch operations, is expected to increase or decrease as a result of implementing the conservation practice. For example, converting from flood irrigation to a sprinkler system gives a farmer an increase in flexibility of irrigation, which results in a decrease in the level of risk associated with inflexibility of operations.
Risk - Timing	The degree to which risk, as related to the timing of farm or ranch operations, is expected to increase or decrease as a result of implementing the conservation practice.
Risk - Cash Flow	The degree to which risk, as related to cash flow in farm or ranch operations, is expected to increase or decrease as a result of implementing the conservation practice.
Profitability - Change in Profitability	The degree to which farm or ranch profitability is expected to increase or decrease as a result of implementing the conservation practice (benefits exceed costs).
Human Social - Client Well Being	The client believes they benefit from applying the practice.
Human Social - Community Well Being	The community believes they benefit from the widespread application of the practice.
Human Cultural - Impact on Cultural Resource Sites	The likelihood a conservation practice could damage a cultural resource site.

CCPI

Attachment

Example Agreement Between NRCS/Sponsor

Recommended Reading

Agreement Instructions: *This document serves as a “template” for NRCS employees to use for development of partnership agreements for approved CCPI projects with eligible entities. Remove, replace or modify any items show in italic as appropriate and needed. Other than insertion of information within “< >” brackets, the following items are not to be modified, changed or removed from the document: Agreement Title; I. Authority; II. Background; III. Purpose; IV(C) Mutually Agreed Responsibilities; V. Duration (except dates, names); VI. Provisions. Items 4A “NRCS Responsibilities” and 4B “Partner Responsibilities” shall be modified to accurately document details of NRCS and Partner agreed to responsibilities based upon the approved partner CCPI proposal. Only those items that NRCS has the legal authority and resources to provide may be included in the agreement. Questions regarding proposed agency responsibilities or clarification for use of this template may be directed to the national CCPI program manager, Mark Parson at 202-720-1840 or mark.parson@wdc.usda.gov.*

Partnership Agreement between the <Name of Partner Entity> and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through provisions of the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI)

NRCS XXXX *(Enter State Agreement Number assigned by Management Services)*

Introduction:

This Partnership Agreement is entered into between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service henceforth named “NRCS” and the <Name of Partner Entity> henceforth named “<Partner Name>”. NRCS and <Partner Name> are engaged in complementary and compatible activities related to providing financial and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers through provisions of the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI). Partnership activities include efforts to encourage conservation of natural resources through technical and financial assistance which may be provided by both parties to the agreement. *(This introductory statement is optional).*

I. Authority

This Agreement is entered into in accordance with:

Section 2707 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 which establishes the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) by amending Section 1243 of the Food Security Act of 1985 [16 U.S.C. 3843].

II. Background

The Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) is a voluntary conservation initiative that establishes specific parameters for working with eligible partner entities to provide financial and technical assistance to owners and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial private forest lands. The assistance provided through this partnership agreement enables farmers and ranchers to install and maintain conservation activities (conservation practices or, in the case of CSP, enhancement activities) to address priority natural resource concerns. The Secretary of Agriculture has delegated the authority for administration of CCPI to the Chief of NRCS. Congress established CCPI to assist potential partners in focusing conservation assistance from existing programs administered by NRCS, in defined project areas to achieve high priority natural resource objectives while leveraging resources from non-federal sources

“Partner Name” has submitted a request for NRCS program assistance to address priority natural resource concerns in the <Enter general description of area where partnership effort is focused>. “Partner Name” is an eligible partner entity and meets statutory requirements of CCPI to carry out activities specified in this agreement and work with eligible program participants to help implement conservation activities on eligible lands as defined in this agreement.

NRCS is the lead Federal agency for conservation on private land. In carrying out this role, NRCS provides voluntary conservation planning, technical and financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, and other landowners to address the natural resource concerns on the Nation's private and nonfederal land. NRCS administers a variety of technical and financial assistance programs which are authorized for use in support of CCPI. Specifically, if approved through a partnership agreement in FY2010, NRCS may provide financial and technical assistance from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to eligible program participants within a defined project area. *(This statement is optional)*

III. Purpose

The purpose of this agreement is to establish a partnership framework for cooperation between NRCS and <Partner Name> on activities that involve implementation of conservation activities on eligible producer's lands

IV. Responsibilities

- A. NRCS agrees to: *(Add additional NRCS agreed to items based upon details of CCPI proposal submitted and approved by Chief or State Conservationist.)*
 1. Carry out and implement in good faith the provisions of this agreement.
 2. Provide on an annual basis, technical and financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), and/or Conservation Stewardship (CSP) as requested by the <Partner Name>, and as available, to eligible producers located within the approved project area. Note: NRCS reserves the right and authority to reduce or discontinue program benefits to support this partner agreement based upon funds availability, changes in agency priorities, or inability of <Partner Name> to deliver resources or provisions of this agreement. EQIP and WHIP program contracts obligated with producers as a result of this partnership agreement are assured of funding for the entire length of the approved contract and not subject to provisions of this partnership agreement regarding fund availability. On CSP program contracts, NRCS agrees to provide payment annually, subject to the availability of funds.
 3. Implement and administer EQIP, WHIP, and/or CSP to the extent possible to address identified CCPI project natural resource concerns. Such assistance includes use of recommendations from <Partner Name> for evaluation and ranking of program applications and expeditious obligation of approved contracts for eligible farmers and ranchers to facilitate timely implementation of activities within the project area. In the case of CSP, NRCS will use the Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT) for evaluating and ranking program applicants.
 4. Provide annual review and recommendations to <Partner Name> regarding the project to ensure success and implementation of conservation activities related to producer program contracts.

- B. <Partner Name> agrees to: *(Add additional partner agreed to items based upon details of CCPI proposal submitted and approved by Chief or State Conservationist.)*
1. Carry out and implement in good faith the provisions of this agreement.
 2. Comply with NRCS guidelines (General Manual 120-408) regarding the disclosure of information protected by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA - 5 USC 552(a)) and Privacy Act provisions. Information protected in participant case files shall not be disclosed to the general public except in cases approved by the FOIA Officer. The FOIA Officer should be contacted if questions arise whether to release information covered by the FOIA and Privacy Act pursuant to one of the exemptions under the Acts.
 3. Provide NRCS with a well-defined description and boundary of the project area for which NRCS program benefits are to be offered.
 4. Provides NRCS a detailed "Plan of Work" for delivery of technical or financial resources to be provided by <Partner Name>. The plan shall identify specific resources to be provided by the partner or other cooperating entities and the project timeframe for delivery of said resources to NRCS program participants.
 5. A project "Budget" which identifies other funding sources which support technical or financial resources identified in Item #3.
 6. Provide NRCS with the annual amount of program funding specifically needed to address identified priority natural resource concerns within the project area.
 7. Provide NRCS with a list of suggested "ranking criteria" for EQIP and WHIP that could be used by the agency for evaluation and ranking of eligible producer program applications. The suggested criteria shall relate to the CCPI project area objectives to address priority natural resource concerns.
 8. Acknowledge, and promote, NRCS's use of the CMT to evaluate CSP applications through a point-based system to estimate environmental benefits. The CMT evaluates existing and proposed new activities to calculate conservation performance points which will be used for ranking and payment purposes.
 9. Provide NRCS with a list of agency-approved conservation activities the partner would like offered through the EQIP and WHIP programs. The partner shall also provide NRCS with recommendations for payment percentages, practice implementation costs and data needed by the agency to develop practice payment schedules to support the priority needs within the project area.
 10. Acknowledge, and promote, NRCS's use of enhancement activities and bundles offered through CSP.
 11. Provide the NRCS agency representative with semi-annual and annual reports during the project period and a final project report that documents project accomplishments and goals achieved. Such reports shall include activities and services that are provided by <Partner Name> to program participants to help achieve objectives of the agreement. Reports shall also address partner efforts to monitor and evaluate implementation of conservation activities included in NRCS program contracts within the approved project area. Additional report requirements, if appropriate and included in the CCPI proposal, shall include:
 - a. Numbers of NRCS program participants assisted and/or cooperating in the project effort.
 - b. Acres of project area addressed in NRCS program contracts and/or extents of conservation activities implemented in the project area each year and for the final project report.
 - c. Other partner or resource contributions from other agencies or organizations which help implement provisions of the agreement and further project objectives

- d. Assistance provided to program participants to help meet local, State, and/or Federal regulatory requirements.
 - e. Information related to efforts to address water quality, water conservation, and other natural resource related concerns.
 - f. Efforts to provide innovation in applying conservation methods and delivery of NRCS programs, including new outcome-based performance measures and methods.
 - g. Efforts related to renewable energy production, energy conservation, mitigating effects of climate change, adaptation, or fostering carbon sequestration.
 - h. Efforts for outreach to, and participation of, beginning farmers or ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, limited resource farmers or ranchers, and Indian Tribes within the project area.
12. Other additional agreed to items: *<Identify and list other items included in the partner proposal that was specifically offered to support the project.>*
- C. C. It is mutually agreed upon by both parties:
1. To cooperate in developing and implementing conservation plans that address priority natural resource concerns in the defined project area
 2. That the designated representative of <Partner Name> and the designated representative of NRCS will cooperate to develop procedures to ensure good communication and coordination at the various levels of each organization.
 3. NRCS and <Partner Name> and their respective agencies and offices will manage their own activities and utilize their own resources, including the expenditure of their own funds, in pursuing the objectives of this agreement. Each party will carry out its own separate activities in a coordinated and mutually beneficial manner. Each party therefore agrees that it will assume all risk and liability to itself, its agents or employees, for any injury to person or property resulting in any manner from the conduct of its own operations, and the operations of its agency or employees under this agreement, and for any loss, cost, damage or expense resulting at any time from failure to exercise proper precautions, of itself, its own agency or its own employees, while occupying or visiting the projects under and pursuant to this agreement. The Government's liability shall be governed by the provisions of the Federal Tort Claims Act (28 U.S.C. 2671-80).
 4. That nothing in this agreement shall obligate either NRCS or <Partner Name> to obligate or transfer any funds or financial assistance that NRCS may provide to eligible program participants. Specific work projects or activities that may involve the transfer of funds, services, or property among <Partner Name> and offices of NRCS will require execution of separate agreements and be contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds or technical services. Such activities must be independently authorized by appropriate statutory authority. This agreement does not provide such authority. Negotiation, execution, and administration of each such agreement must comply with all applicable statutes and regulations.
 5. This agreement does not restrict either party from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, or organizations, and individuals.

V. Duration

This agreement takes effect upon the signature of NRCS and <Partner Name> and shall remain in effect for *(insert a period of no more than five years)* from the date of execution. This agreement may be extended or amended upon request of either NRCS or <Partner Name> as long as the extension or amendment does not extend this agreement beyond 5 years from date of execution. Either NRCS or <Partner Name> may terminate this agreement with a 60 day written notice to the other party. Note: Although statute limits this CCPI partner agreement to a maximum of 5 years, NRCS EQIP and WHIP program contracts with producers may extend beyond this period of time. NRCS CSP contracts are limited to 5 years.

VI. Provisions

- A. Employees of NRCS shall participate in efforts under this agreement solely as representatives of the United States. To this end, they shall not participate as directors, officers, <Partner Name> employees, or otherwise serve or hold themselves out as representatives of <Partner Name>. NRCS employees shall also not assist <Partner Name> with efforts to lobby Congress, or to raise money through fund-raising efforts. Further, NRCS employees shall report to their immediate supervisor any negotiations with <Partner Name>, concerning future employment and shall refrain from participation in efforts regarding such actions until approved by the agency

Accepted by:

Signed: _____
<Name> Chief or State Conservationist Natural Resources Conservation Service
<NRCS Agency Address>

Date: <Enter Date Signed>

Signed: _____
<Name of Executive Director or Authorized Partner Designee>
<Name of Partner Entity>
<Address and Contact Information of Partner Entity>

Date: <Enter Date Signed>

CCPI

Attachment

Example Proposal

DISCLAIMER: The following is an **example** of what a CCPI proposal might look like. It addresses: questions in notice of request for proposals; identifies natural resource concerns to be addressed and NRCS conservation practices and extents needed; includes complete budget information and funds requested from NRCS; it provides the resources and activities that the partner will implement and other requirements. The example is designed to provide guidance for development of a CCPI proposal, but is not intended to take the place of what a partner must address in the notice of request for proposals.

The example does not reflect an example that will score high or low. The submission of a CCPI proposal is subject to a competitive process and so following this model will not guarantee the proposal will be assigned a score which leads to approval and funding. The partner should not rely only on this example for development of a proposal. Partners should fully examine the notice of the request for proposals (RFP) for complete details and requirements to develop a proposal which meets the requirements of CCPI and the purposes of each program that may be funded through this authority. All questions and requirements listed in the CCPI RFP “Proposal Requirements” must be answered and addressed in a narrative format similar to this example. The partner may choose to alter the format of the narrative response but the proposal must answer all of the RFP questions and requirements.

Optional items included in the proposal may include:

- Transmittal-Introduction letter
- Copy of letter from partner to State Conservationist(s) requesting “letter of review”

SUNNYSIDE PARTNERSHIP

Proposal for the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative

***Improving Water Quality Conditions
within the Four Mile Watershed – Any State***

*John Doe, Project Director
Sunnyside Partnership
111 Water Street, Suite 2
Your Town, Any State 00000
(555) 555-5555 ext 2*

John.Doe@sunnysideprtnshp.net

Proposal for the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI)

“Improving Water Quality Conditions within the Four Mile Watershed”

Example CCPI Proposal

*John Doe, Project Director
Sunnyside Partnership
111 Water Street, Suite 2
Your Town, Any State 00000
(555) 555-5555 ext 2
John.Doe@sunnysideprtnshp.net*

Partners Associated with Proposal:

- Sunnyside Partnership – Lead Partner (See contact information above)
- Four Mile Watershed Council
- Sunnyside Soil and Water Conservation District
- Any State Department of Environmental Quality

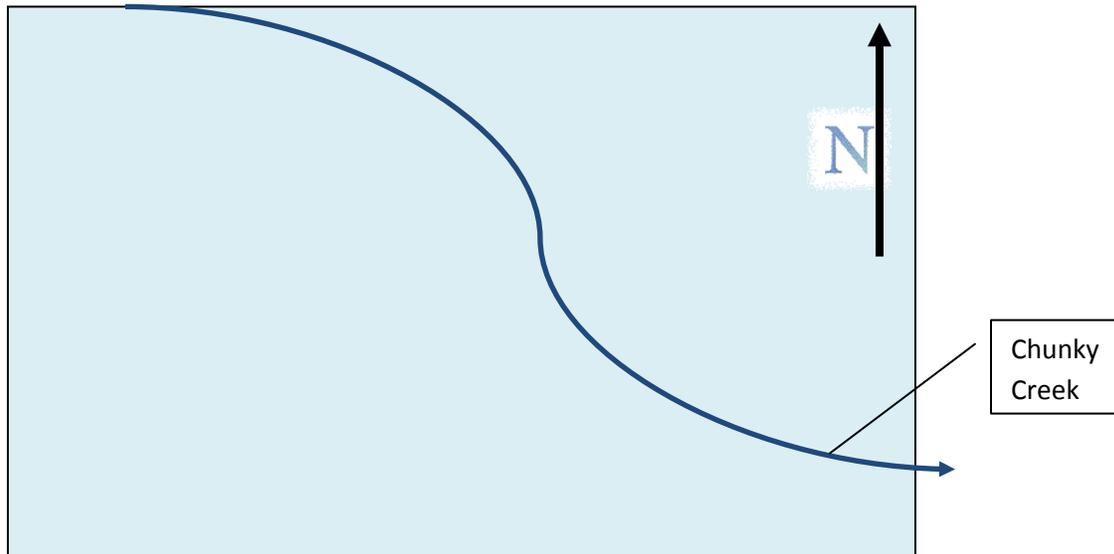
Section 1 Proposal Summary

Sunnyside Partnership seeks to obtain \$737,800 over a five year period (2010-2014) through the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, for the purpose of encouraging producers within the Four Mile Watershed to enroll voluntarily into the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) and apply for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contracts. The entire partnership effort will contribute \$387,000 in non-Federal resources and services. This program would provide financial benefits to participants who enter their land into EQIP contracts through CCPI and voluntarily install conservation practices that will improve surface quality within the project area. The project area, located in Dryland County, was identified after consultation with partners within the watershed. The proposal includes use of CCPI-EQIP financial resources to assist producers within the project area to implement the conservation practices identified below to address water quality resource concerns. The partners will also provide resources to assist producer in conservation planning, monitoring activities to help meet regulatory water quality requirements along Chunky Creek, a major tributary within the watershed. The project does not request any assistance from WHIP or CSP programs.

Specific NRCS approved conservation practices that are anticipated to be installed to address water quality practices include: PC 340 Cover Crop, PC 320 Irrigation Canal and PC 393 Filter Strips. In addition to the NRCS resources requested, the partner proposes to provide services to producers to help plan to address regulated water quality issues within the project area. The Sunnyside Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will make the services of their mobile lab available to conduct on-farm evaluations of agricultural systems to address potential activities which may result in erosion and water quality problems. The Department of Environmental Quality of Any State will provide on-farm monitoring of water quality to assure project objectives are met along with permit and regulatory requirements in the project area.

The project area is located entirely in Dryland County, Any State, and serving Congressional District 013. The project has been designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a priority area for significant erosion and sediment problems contributing to excessive nutrients and resulting water quality issues in Chunky Creek. Agricultural producers along Chunky Creek are required to obtain TMDL permits and this project will help farmers meet the permit requirements.

Map of Four Mile Watershed, Dryland County and CCPI project area:



A more detailed map of the project area is found at the end of the document.

2. Project Natural Resource Objectives and Actions:

- a. Specific targeted goals include improvement of surface water quality to meet State and EPA regulatory requirements. Benefits would be an estimated improved surface water quality to help producer meet TMDL regulatory requirements. By the end of the project, the partnership hopes to help about 20% of participating producers meet TMDL water quality permit requirements.
- b. The specific actions to be completed with CCPI funding for resource concerns addressed by the project are outlined in the table below.

Water Quality Resource Concern:

CCPI Funded Practices	Planned Extent for Project	Estimated CCPI Resources Needed
Cover Crop 340	5,000 Acres - \$125/Ac	\$625,000
Field Border 386	330 Acres - \$35/Ac	\$11,550
Filter Strips 393	750 Acres - \$135/Ac	\$101,250
Total CCPI-EQIP Resources Needed:		\$737,800

Total NRCS CCPI Program Funds Requested: \$737,800.

The actions being addressed using non-federal resources or fund sources are detailed in the table under section (d). Generally, they include:

- 1. The State permitting agency will provide estimates of water quality improvements upon issue of discharge permits. Together the partnership will be able to provide seasonal outcome based measurement of water savings and water quality improvements.

Example CCPI Proposal

2. The Sunnyside Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will make the services of their mobile lab available to conduct on-farm evaluations of agricultural systems and to help provide recommendations to help implement water quality practices.
 3. In addition, the Sunnyside SWCD will provide staff time and services to conduct all outreach and a portion of the conservation plan development.
 4. The Four Mile Watershed Council will also provide direct technical assistance in conservation plan development.
- c. The entire proposed project area is 100,000 acres of which 80,000 acres are irrigated cropland to be addressed by project participants. There are approximately 75 eligible producers irrigating rotations of corn and soybeans in the project area with an average farm size of 850 acres. However, the specific resource concerns to be addressed lie within an 8,500 acre area that runs adjacent to Chunky Creek, which is the main tributary for the watershed. Twenty-five landowners are adjacent to the Creek. The goal of the project is to work with all 25 landowners. The project will focus first on those producers farming along Chunky Creek where water quality permits are required by Any State. The table in section 2(b) specifically outlines the project goals for producer assistance and acres treated with CCPI-EQIP funding. Partner funding will focus on different activities on the same acres.
- d. The table below outlines the specific activities to be completed by the partners. Letters are provided (attached) indicating the partners’ willingness to participate and full commitment to this effort.

Partner	Responsibility	Capability	Funding
Sunnyside SWCD	Outreach	Newsletter, website, landowner meeting capabilities	\$ 50,000
	Existing Ag. System Evaluation		\$ 43,000
	Conservation Plan Development (40)	Certified conservation planners	\$ 40,000
	Installation of on-farm erosion monitoring devices	Experience in installing devices	\$ 77,000
	Project monitoring	Experience in working with producers	\$ 57,000
Four Mile Watershed Council	Conservation Plan Development (20)	Certified conservation planners	\$ 20,000
Any State Dept of Environmental Quality	Project Monitoring - stream flow and temperature	ability to install temperature and flow stations on critical stream reaches	\$ 100,000
TOTAL INVESTMENT			\$ 387,000

The table under Section 2(b) outlines specifically the activities that will be implemented using CCPI-EQIP financial assistance. Generally, they include water quality practices: PC 340 Cover Crop, PC 386 Field Border and PC 393 Filter Strips.

3. *Partnership Capacity*

- a) There are three partners for this proposal: Four Mile Watershed Council, Sunnyside SWCD, and the Any State Department of Environmental Quality. The long-term conservation commitments of these four partners is described as follows:

Example CCPI Proposal

- Four Mile Watershed Council was formed in 1960 to assist local landowners within the Four Mile Watershed.
 - Sunnyside SWCD was established in 1950 to promote locally led conservation and assist landowners and operators apply conservation practices.
 - Any State Department of Environmental Quality was established in 1955 to assist the state with environmental resource concerns and regulation of water quality.
- b) District conservation efforts required working cooperatively and closely with producers within the watershed. All 25 producers in the projected area were visited individually, field work was assisted with and final projects were inspected. The district and watershed council are highly respected in the area and have leveraged investments of over \$15 million in the county through various state and federal sources over the last 10 years to address water quality resource concerns in the region.
- c) All funds indicated in table provided for the response to 2(d) above are a part of existing programs and funding sources, as well as an approved grant from the State DEQ for the installation of on-farm water quality monitoring devices. No additional federal funds are requested. The Department of Environmental Quality, Watershed Council and SWCD all have access to leveraged funds through their existing programs. As attached letters of support indicate, all entities are prepared to provide direct investment pending approval of the CCPI-EQIP project.
- d) The Department of Environmental Quality already has existing monitoring stations in place for water quality (temperature/nutrient/sediments) along Chunky Creek. These stations will be utilized to provide baseline and ongoing monitoring data to show improvements in water quality based on project implementation.
- Sunnyside SWCD has a state-of-the art mobile lab that will be available and used on-site to provide agricultural system evaluations throughout the summer. In addition, this analysis will be tied directly to the on-farm monitoring efforts conducted by DEQ.
- e) Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council have participated extensively in previously successful grant applications. Both organizations have staff and capacity to provide quarterly reports and a final report outlining both project implementation and associated monitoring. The Watershed Council executive director is formally trained in grant writing and federal reporting requirements.
- f) Producer Ranking Criteria: The Sunnyside Partnership have contacted and worked with NRCS staff within Any State and offer the following criteria for ranking of CCPI producer applications within the project area.

Water Quality Resource Concern	
1. Excessive Suspended Sediment & Turbidity in Surface Water	1. Establish cover crops to reduce field erosion/trap nutrients.
2. Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water	2. Establish field borders to reduce erosion and sedimentation.
3. Excessive Pesticides in Surface Water	3. Establishment of filter strips in areas within 250 feet of Chunky Creek to reduce runoff and pollution of the watershed.

- g) Please see the following table for detailed description of RFP Sections G, H and I to address required items. In addition, documentation letters are provided indicating commitment of financial and staff resources for the project.

All three partners (SWCD, Watershed Council and DEQ) are fully committed to this project. Restoration of water quality on Chunky Creek is listed as the top priority on both the Watershed Council and SWCD strategic plans. EPA has identified Chunky Creek as fourth on its statewide list of impaired streams and requires TMDLs permits for producers located along Chunky Creek.

- h) Please see the following table for detailed description which addresses RFP Sections G, H and I as cited in the CCPI notice. The following table provides the support requested from CCPI and resources provided by the partner for each year of the project.
- i) A description of the resources (financial and/or technical assistance) requested annually from CCPI for producer contracts and the non-Federal resources provided by the partner that will be leveraged by the Federal contribution is found in the following table.

CCPI Example Proposal

Description of Federal and Non-Federal resources and collaborative efforts to implement the project:

Description	Fund Source	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		Total
		NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	
Project Outreach to landowners	SWCD		\$15,000		\$18,000		\$12,000		\$5,000			\$50,000
Existing Ag. System Evaluations	SWCD		\$25,000		\$18,000							\$43,000
Conservation Plan Development (40 landowners)	SWCD		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$8,000		\$2,000	\$40,000
Conservation Plan Development (20 landowners)	watershed council		\$2,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$2,000			\$20,000
340 Cover Crop 5,000ac @ \$125/ac	NRCS	\$125,000		\$156,250		\$156,250		\$156,250		\$31,250		\$625,000
386 Field Borders – 330ac @ \$35/ac	NRCS	\$2,310		\$2,310		\$2,310		\$2,310		\$2,310		\$11,550
393 Filter Strips - 750Ac @ \$135Ac	NRCS			\$25,380		\$25,380		\$25,380		\$25,110		\$101,250
Installation of On-Farm Erosion Monitoring Devices	SWCD		\$32,000		\$16,000		\$16,000		\$8,000		\$5,000	\$77,000
Project Monitoring - Water Quality	DEQ				\$28,000		\$22,000		\$25,000		\$25,000	\$100,000
Project Monitoring	SWCD				\$12,000		\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000	\$57,000
		NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	\$0
Totals		\$127,310	\$84,000	\$183,940	\$110,000	\$183,940	\$83,000	\$183,940	\$63,000	\$58,670	\$47,000	\$1,124,800

Total Resources by Federal and Non-Federal Sources:

TOTAL NRCS REQUEST:	\$737,800
TOTAL PARTNER INVESTMENT:	\$387,000
TOTAL PROJECT:	\$1,124,800

4. Lands to be treated:

The proposal should describe the geographic area to be covered by the partnership agreement. Specifically, the proposal should include:

- a) A very simplified map is provided at the beginning in this example. A very detailed map is included at the end of this document. This project is located in a high priority stream reach for temperature, sediment and nutrients.
- b) A description of the agricultural water quality issues to be addressed by the partnership agreement. This was adequately addressed in the Project Natural Resource Objectives, section of this proposal.
- c) Specific outcomes for this project specifically include:
 - ✓ An estimated 25 producers along Chunky Creek to implement practices and meet TMDL water quality permit requirements.
 - ✓ Based on water quality monitoring data, reductions in nutrients (specifically nitrogen and phosphorous), and sediment to levels that will ensure that Chunky Creek's water quality is improved to a level that ensures it will meet or exceed EPA regulatory requirements.
 - ✓ Help 20% of all participating producers meet water quality permit requirements.
- d) The priority areas for treatment are 8,500 acres along Chunky Creek that also draw groundwater resources for irrigation water. All 25 landowners in this reach have been contacted and have indicated initial willingness to participate. These landowners are the priority, as the major contributor to specific irrigated lands is entering Chunky Creek, which reduces water quality by increasing both sediment and nutrients in-stream. These properties are the highest priority properties for the project.

5. Producer Information:

- a) There are an estimated 624 producers farming on irrigated crop land in Sunnyside County (USDA, NASS, 2007). 75 of those are located within the Four Mile Watershed. However, of these, the project is very specifically focused on the 25 landowners who have the most direct impact on both water quality in the area. The expected participation of those producers is 100%, based on informal participation surveys and landowner meetings. The landowners in the area, along with the irrigation district, are well aware of the challenges relating to water quality in their watershed and have been very receptive to assist in identifying ways they can help address the problem.

Example CCPI Proposal

6. Proposal Implementation Plan and Schedule:

Fiscal Year	Activity	Responsible Entity	Date to be Completed	Notes
2010	Landowner neighborhood meetings	Sunnyside SWCD	2/15/2010	Landowner meetings have been held throughout Four Mile River watershed - 3 meetings in total
	Announce signup in Newsletter and with mailings	Sunnyside SWCD	5/15/2010	Date dependent on when national CCPI is approved. Newsletter and mailings will be sent immediately after announcement and approval of partnership agreement.
	Take signups and obligate funds	NRCS	8/15/2010	Date dependent on negotiation with NRCS State Conservationist signup and obligation deadlines
	Complete ag. system evaluations on applicant properties		6/15/2010	
	Develop initial conservation plans for 12 initial landowners as identified in plan	Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council	7/10/2010	Assume 12 producers will participate in first year
	Install on-farm erosion monitoring devices Project monitoring & progress report to NRCS State Conservationist	Sunnyside SWCD Sunnyside SWCD	8/15/2010 8/15/2010	
2011	Landowner neighborhood meetings	Sunnyside SWCD	10/15/2010	Same locations as previous year
	Announce signup in Newsletter and with mailings	Sunnyside SWCD	12/1/2010	
	Take signups and obligate funds	NRCS	3/15/2011	Date dependent on negotiation with NRCS State Conservationist signup and obligation deadlines
	Complete ag. system evaluations on applicant properties		10/31/2010	
	Begin stream flow monitoring	Dept of Environmental Quality	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	Stream flows will be monitored and weekly water quality sampling during irrigation season
	Develop initial conservation plans for 18 initial landowners as identified in plan	Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council	1/31/2011	Assume 18 producers will participate in second year
	Install on-farm erosion monitoring devices	Sunnyside SWCD	6/15/2011	
	Project monitoring & progress report to NRCS State Conservationist	Sunnyside SWCD	8/15/2011	
2012	Landowner neighborhood meetings	Sunnyside SWCD	10/15/2011	Same locations as previous year
	Announce signup in Newsletter and with mailings	Sunnyside SWCD	12/1/2011	
	Take signups and obligate funds	NRCS	3/15/2012	Date dependent on negotiation with NRCS State Conservationist signup and obligation deadlines
	Complete ag. system evaluations on applicant properties		10/31/2012	
	Develop initial conservation plans for 18 initial landowners as identified in plan	Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council	1/31/2012	Assume 18 producers will participate in third year
	Stream flow monitoring	Dept of Environmental Quality	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	Stream flows will be monitored and weekly water quality sampling during irrigation season
	Install on-farm erosion monitoring devices Project monitoring & progress report to NRCS State Conservationist	Sunnyside SWCD Sunnyside SWCD	6/15/2012 8/15/2012	

Example CCPI Proposal

Fiscal Year	Activity	Responsible Entity	Date to be Completed	Notes
2013	Landowner neighborhood meetings	Sunnyside SWCD	10/15/2012	Same locations as previous year
	Announce signup in Newsletter and with mailings	Sunnyside SWCD	12/1/2012	
	Take signups and obligate funds	NRCS	3/15/2013	Date dependent on negotiation with NRCS State Conservationist signup and obligation deadlines
	Complete system evaluations on applicant properties		10/31/2013	
	Stream flow monitoring	Dept of Environmental Quality	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	Stream flows will be monitored and weekly water quality sampling during irrigation season
	Develop initial conservation plans for 10 initial landowners as identified in plan	Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council	1/31/2013	Assume 10 producers will participate in fourth year
	Monitoring	Sunnyside SWCD	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	
	Install on-farm erosion monitoring devices	Sunnyside SWCD	6/15/2013	
	Project monitoring & progress report to NRCS State Conservationist	Sunnyside SWCD	8/15/2013	
2014	Landowner neighborhood meetings	Sunnyside SWCD	10/15/2013	Same locations as previous year
	Announce signup in Newsletter and with mailings	Sunnyside SWCD	12/1/2013	
	Take signups and obligate funds	NRCS	3/15/2014	Date dependent on negotiation with NRCS State Conservationist signup and obligation deadlines
	Complete ag. system evaluations on applicant properties		10/31/2014	
	Develop initial conservation plans for 2 initial landowners as identified in plan	Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council	1/31/2014	Assume 2 producers will participate in final year
	Stream flow monitoring	Dept of Environmental Quality	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	Stream flows will be monitored and weekly water quality sampling during irrigation season
	Install on-farm erosion monitoring devices	Sunnyside SWCD	6/15/2014	
	Project monitoring & final performance report to NRCS State Conservationist	Sunnyside SWCD	8/15/2014	

7. Letter of Review from State Conservationist – SEE ATTACHED

CCPI

Attachment

FY10 Approved Proposals

Recommended Reading

Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI)

Fiscal Year 2010 CCPI Project Information

NRCS has approved the following new CCPI projects for fiscal year 2010. Contact individual States where the projects are located for additional information which can be reached from [their Programs pages](#).

ST	Name of Organization/Partner	Project Title	Project Description	Programs Supported	FY 2010 FA Fund Allocation
CA	Sierra Coordinated Resource Management Council	Central Sierra CCPI Proposal	Project to address water quality and quantity concerns and implement forest related practices based upon state approved plans.	EQIP	\$1,000,000
CA	Contra Costa Resource Conservation District	East Contra Costa Water Conservation on Farmlands Project	Multiple practices in EQIP to benefit water use and water quality in the delta region.	EQIP	\$100,000
CA	Yurok Tribe	Yurok Indian Reservation Road Improvement and Fuel Reduction Treatments	Project will address road rehabilitation, erosion and sediment control and fuels management in forested areas.	EQIP	\$246,571
CA	Western United Dairymen	Western United Dairymen CCPI	Project seeks to improve water quality by appropriately managing animal manure and reducing the potential for related non-point source pollution.	EQIP	\$42,000
CA	NW CA RC&D Council	The Klamath - North Coast Forestland Conservation Project	To assist producers in implementing forest land improvement practices outlined in the Klamath-Land Conservation Project.	EQIP	\$855,617
CA	Solano Resource Conservation District	Solano Co Noxious Weed and Rangeland Management Program	To control 1,100 net acres of invasive artichoke thistle (<i>Cynara cardunculus</i>) in two areas of southern Solano County.	EQIP	\$30,829
CA	Hoopa Valley Tribal Council	2009-2011 Road Sedimentation Reduction Project Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation	Project seeks to reduce road sediment in areas where timber harvesting is occurring.	EQIP	\$220,000
ID	Yellowstone Soil Conservation District	Egin Bench - Wind Erosion Reduction Areas	Promotion of winter mustard as cover crop for wind erosion and nematode control	EQIP	\$90,000
ID	Yellowstone Soil Conservation District	Ashton Groundwater Protection Project Phase II	Reduce nitrate leaching, therefore improving groundwater quality.	EQIP	\$160,000
IL	McLean County Soil & Water Conservation District	The Central Illinois Cover Crops Initiative (CICCI)	Promotion of the use of cover crops on crop land in six Illinois counties and surrounding areas that will improve soil and water quality.	EQIP	\$100,000
IN	Knox County SWCD	Southern Indiana Irrigation Improvement Project	This project will address both water conservation resource issues and water quality resource issues.	EQIP	\$43,000
LA	Louisiana State University Agriculture Center Rice Research Station	LSU AgCenter, Rice Research Station, Gulf Coast Joint Venture, LA Master Farmer CCPI proposal.	Will utilize the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to implement program on 15,000 acres of eligible producers land.	CSP	\$246,150
MO	Newton County Soil and Water Conservation District	Southwest Ozarks CCPI-Missouri	This initiative will focus on excluding livestock from streams, implementing grazing systems, installing alternate water supplies with solar pumps to conserve energy and promote renewable energy production.	EQIP	\$19,200
MO	Saline CO SWCD	Improving Soil and Water Conditions within Saline Co, MO	To install conservation practices that will improve surface water quality through erosion control within the project area.	EQIP	\$500,000
MO	Gasconade County Soil and Water Conservation District	Stabilizing Streambank Erosion Issues Within the Bourbeuse Watershed in Gasconade County, Missouri	To implement conservation practices to address water quality and soil erosion resource concerns.	EQIP	\$40,000
ND	Walsh County Three Rivers Soil Conservation District	Red River Valley CCPI	To install conservation practices that will significantly improve soil and water resource condition in the Red River Valley.	EQIP	\$100,000

ST	Name of Organization/Partner	Project Title	Project Description	Programs Supported	FY 2010 FA Fund Allocation
NE	World Wildlife Fund	Restoring Ecological Processes and Ranchlands for Priority Birds in the Nebraska Sand Hills	To implement beneficial management practices for grassland species and ecological processes for priorities in the State of Nebraska.	EQIP	\$37,352
NE	Lower Republican NRC	Optimizing Use of Available Water Supplies in Nebraska's Lower Republican River Basin	IWM on irrigated land using specific technology/equipment	EQIP	\$250,126
NM	Black Range RC&D	AZ-NM Borderlands Conservation Initiative	To implement conservation practices to maintain or improve vegetative species composition and density in order to address resource concerns along the border of Mexico.	EQIP	\$800,000
NY	Hudson Mohawk Resource Conservation and Development Council	Improving Soil and Water Quality Conditions and Wildlife Habitat Through Prescribed Grazing within the Hudson Mohawk Region	To install conservation practices that will reduce energy usage, promote carbon sequestration and improve surface water and soil quality within the project area through prescribed grazing.	EQIP	\$160,000
OK	Oklahoma Conservation Commission	Sugar Creek Stabilization Project	To install conservation practices necessary to repair and thus increase farmable acreage and mitigate channel instability threatening the watershed's extensive flood structure network.	EQIP	\$99,943
OR	Fifteen-mile Watershed Council	Fifteen-mile Watershed Cooperative Conservation Initiative	Promotion of IWM using advanced irrigation technology	EQIP	\$624,594
SD	South Dakota Department of Agriculture, Division of Resource Conservation and Forestry	Central Great Plains Shelterbelt Renovation for Water Quality Reduced Soil Erosion and Wildlife Habitat	Renovation of shelterbelts to reduce soil erosion, protect livestock and property from wind related damage, improve energy conservation, manage snow deposition, improve air quality, increase carbon storage, provide wildlife habitat.	EQIP	\$400,005
SD	South Dakota Department of Agriculture, Division of Resource Conservation and Forestry	Central Great Plains Forested Riparian Buffers for Water Quality Reduced Soil Erosion and Wildlife Habitat	Establish riparian forest buffers by planting trees and installing fence for use exclusion	EQIP	\$417,135
WA	Washington State Department of Natural Resources	Family Forrest Fish Passage Barrier Correction	The proposal seeks to accelerate the rate and number of fish (salmon) barriers to be corrected within the defined geographic location.	EQIP	\$10,000
WV	National Wild Turkey Federation	Enhancement qualities of Gandy Creek and upper portions of Laurel Fork and Dry Creek watersheds in West Virginia	This proposal encourages landowners to voluntarily install conservation practices that will improve water quality and agricultural lands with an emphasis on pasturelands.	EQIP WHIP	\$50,000
			Total Financial Assistance Requested for Fiscal Year 2010:		\$6,642,522

AWEP

Attachment

FY2010 Proposal Review Criteria

**US Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service**

**Agricultural Water Enhancement Program
(AWEP)**

NHQ Review Evaluation Guidance



Date Issued: March, 2010

AWEP Proposal Evaluation

Fiscal Year 2010 National Headquarters (NHQ) Review Evaluation Guidance

Background

The Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP), authorized under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), is a voluntary program intended to promote the conservation of ground and surface water and improve water quality. AWEP allows for proposals from potential partners who seek to enter into partnership agreements with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to promote the conservation of ground and surface water and improvement of water quality. All AWEP funds will be administered by the NRCS through financial assistance contracts with eligible agricultural producers. Partner proposals will be received and evaluated per the requirements of the Notice of Request for Proposals (RFP).

Legal Authority:

- Section 1240I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 establishes the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program.

Eligible Partners:

Partners that are eligible to participate in AWEP include, but are not limited to entities such as federally recognized Indian Tribes, States, units of local government, agricultural or silvicultural associations, or other such groups of agricultural producers (NGOs must meet IRS requirements). Individual producers are not eligible to submit AWEP proposals.

Partner Proposals:

To participate in AWEP, a potential partner must submit a proposal to the Chief. The proposal must contain the information set forth in the Notice of Request for Proposals (RFP). Five copies of the proposal must address and include information in the RFP as follows:

1. *Proposal Cover Sheet and Summary.*
2. *Project Natural Resource Objectives and Actions.*
3. *Partnership Capacity.*
4. *Lands to be treated.*
5. *Producer Information.*
6. *Proposal Implementation Plan and Schedule.*
7. *Letter of Review:* From the NRCS State Conservationist.

The RFP includes more detail and specific questions to be addressed and the criteria to be used for evaluation. This guidance incorporates the evaluation criteria and process to be used by the Program Manager, Review Panel and Review Board.

Partner Proposal Evaluation:

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a process by which proposals submitted by eligible partners are evaluated and competitively ranked to allow selection and approval by the Chief. National level applications will be evaluated by staff designated by the Deputy Chief for Programs, in cooperation with the Deputy Chiefs for Science and Technology and Soil Survey and Resource Assessment. This guidance will also be made available to the public on the national AWEP website: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/awep/>.

General Evaluation, Ranking and Implementation Process:

1. Submission of partner proposals:
 - a. All AWEP Proposals are either mailed or hand-delivered to:

Gregory K. Johnson, Director Financial Assistance Programs Division USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service "AWEP Proposal" 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Rm 5239-S Washington, DC 20250
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 - b. Note: AWEP proposals must also be supported by a letter of review from State Conservationists for all states in the proposed project area.
2. Initial Eligibility Review by Program Manager: AWEP Program Manager (PM) ensures that proposals received meet basic eligibility criteria as set forth in the Notice of Request for Proposal. PM organizes proposals by category, priority, readies materials for review and takes following actions:
 - a. Verifies complete application submitted (format, length, copies, etc.)
 - b. AWEP basic screening worksheet completed
 - c. Letter to partner:
 - i. Proposal received – Complete and in review process
 - ii. Proposal received – Incomplete or does not meet requirements of basic screening criteria.
 - d. Program Manager will refer proposals to Review Panel(s)
3. Review Panel Actions: Members of the national review panel will evaluate and rank proposals individually using the Request for Application evaluation criteria. Each proposal will then be evaluated by the panel as one group. Final ranking will be by consensus of the panel members. Consensus comments and recommendations will be developed and recorded by the designated review team lead with assistance from the PM.
 - a. Individual review
 - b. Group review and consensus development
 - c. Ranking recommendations
 - d. Review team leader and AWEP PM assembles final report and ranking
4. AWEP Review Board Actions: At the national level, the Deputy Chief for Programs will chair the Review Board meeting to explain proposed project rankings and their strengths and weaknesses. The AWEP Review Board will review and confirm that the Review Panel rankings are consistent with program purposes and objectives. The AWEP Review Board will make final recommendations for funding to the Chief.
5. Chief Final Review and Selection: Chief will review all findings, ranking and recommendations and make final selection for funding of partner proposals.
 - a. Final selection of proposals to be funded. Chief directs the Deputy Chief for Programs or designated AWEP PM to:
 - i. Send notification letter to partner and deadline for approval of agreement.
 - ii. Coordinate development of partner agreement.
 - b. STC and Partner approve/sign agreement.
 - c. Allocation of AWEP funds to FFIS and coordination of announcement of AWEP program availability with State(s) and partner for producer application.

The following types of review groups will be established:

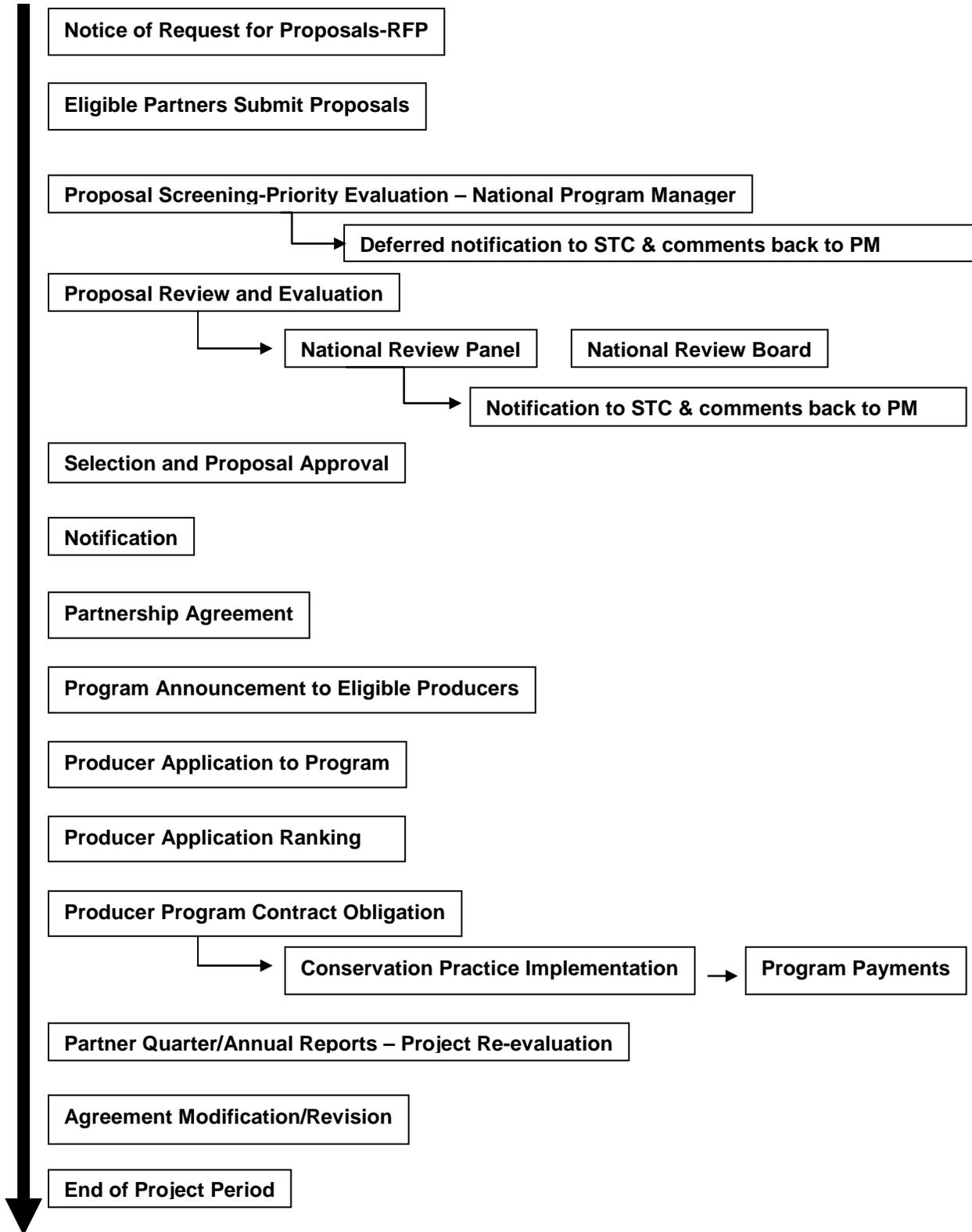
- **National Review Panel(s)** - Program managers, program specialists, and technical specialists from States, National Headquarters and National Centers will be designated to assist with review of eligible partner proposals.
- **National AWEP Review Board** – Comprised of NRCS national leadership: Chaired by the Deputy Chief for Financial Assistance and Community Development (FACD), Deputy Chief for Easements and Landscape Planning (ELP), Deputy Chief for Science and Technology, Deputy Chief for Soil Survey and Resource Assessment, one Regional Assistant Chief (RAC), and one State Conservationist (STC). The National AWEP Review Board will certify the Review Panel evaluations and make final funding recommendations to the Chief.

Note: Review Panels will not include any representatives from outside the agency. Members of Review Panels will be subject to requirements for confidentiality and may only discuss proposals with assigned Program Managers and other review panel members, and any leadership designated by the Deputy Chief for FACD.

Additional AWEP information and guidance for agreements and program administration can be obtained from:

- Director, Financial Assistance Programs Division (FAPD), phone (202) 720-1845.
- <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/awep/>

General AWEP Process Flowchart:



Implementation Timeline:

Milestone or Task	Who	Deadline
1. Publish RFP Federal Register	Farm Bill Coordinator	April 1, 2010
2. Proposal Submission	Partners	May 17, 2010
3. Letters of “Receipt” to Partner	National AWEP Program Manager	May 24, 2010
4. Complete Evaluation Screening-Priority	National AWEP Program Manager	June 7, 2010
5. Email notification to STCs of “Referred” and “Deferred” List	National AWEP Program Manager	June 11, 2010
6. STC response back to National AWEP Program Manager	State Conservationist(s)	June 14, 2010
7. Issue “Referred” or “Deferred” Letters to Partners	National AWEP Program Manager	June 16, 2010
8. Review Panel – Evaluation of eligible proposals	National Review Panel	June 21-23, 2010
9. Email notification to STCs of Initial Ranking	National AWEP Program Manager	June 30, 2010
10. STC comments and response back to National AWEP Program Manager	State Conservationist(s)	July 2, 2010
11. Evaluations and recommendations for approval to Review Board	National AWEP Program Manager	July 5-7, 2010
12. Review Board Actions	National Review Board	July 8-9, 2010
13. Final evaluation, recommendations, priority approval to Chief	National AWEP Program Manager	July 12-14, 2010
14. Final selection by Chief	Chief	July 15-16, 2010
15. Formal Announcement of Awards	Chief	July 22, 2010
16. Approval or denial letters to partners.	National AWEP Program Manager	July 22-23, 2010
17. NRCS State Conservationists announce approved project area(s).	State Conservationist(s).	July 23, 2010
18. NRCS POC and partner complete development of agreement.	NRCS POC and Partner	July 26-28, 2010
19. Partner and NRCS State Conservationist(s) sign/approve partner agreements.	State Conservationist(s) and Partner	July 28, 2010
20. NRCS National Office allocation.	Chief or designee	July 28, 2010
21. NRCS State Conservationists announces application periods and creates funding pool accounts in ProTracts for each approved project.	State Conservationist(s)	July 29, 2010
22. NRCS State Conservationists allocate (or reallocate multi-state) AWEP to approved projects in ProTracts.	State Conservationist(s)	July 29, 2010
23. NRCS ranks and approves plans and contracts for AWEP projects	State Conservationist(s)	August 12, 2010
24. NRCS obligates AWEP contracts	State Conservationist(s)	August 27, 2010

Review Panel and AWEP Review Board Information:

- Copies of proposals are reviewed by the designated AWEP Program Manager (PM) in advance of the Review Panel meeting to ensure proposals meet program requirements. The PM shall notify the partner applicant in writing that the proposal was received and prepares one of the following letters for signature by the Division Director, FAPD.
 - Letter notifying the participant the application was received, is complete and is in process of evaluation.
 - Letter notifying the participant the application was received but was incomplete and/or does not meet basic AWEP program requirements. The application may be deferred.
- **STC Contact:** The PM will provide notification to the STC prior to sending deferral letters to partners. The STC may provide comment to the PM.
- **Screening-Prioritization:** The AWEP PM will screen, organize and assign priority (High, Medium, Low) for all eligible proposals. The PM will transmit the proposals to members of the Review Panel for evaluation based upon the proposals priority status. High priority proposals will be ranked first, Medium second, Low last. Depending upon funding availability, the agency may choose not to evaluate or rank lower priority proposals based upon funding availability. The PM will notify STCs of initial screening/priority results and STC may provide comment.
- **Proposals will first be evaluated individually** by individual review panel members prior to the group Review Panel meeting. Each member must complete an Individual Reviewer Scoring Sheet and Individual Commentary Sheet for each proposal. (*The blank forms are included in this guidance.*) The PM will provide Panel members with a list of prioritized proposals and funding requested. The panel will evaluate proposals based upon the highest priority and until the available funding is exhausted. This means that if funding is exhausted after ranking prioritized proposals, no additional proposals need to be ranked as there is little chance of the proposal to be funded.
- **Review Panel Actions:** For each proposal, the review panel will discuss the proposals and the preliminary individual scores and agree to final scores, establish consensus “strengths and weaknesses” commentary report (“Group Consensus Commentary Sheet”), and consensus recommendations (Recommended, Consider, or Not Recommended) for each proposal which will be evaluated and ranked.
- **STC Contact:** The PM will provide STCs with the preliminary list of ranked proposals and recommendations. The STC may provide the PM with additional comment. All ranking, consensus recommendations and STC comments will be organized and provided to the Review Board and Chief.
- **Review Panel Facilitators** are either selected/assigned from one of the Review Panel members, or by the designated AWEP Program Manager. The assigned facilitator may be responsible for arranging meeting locations, keeping the team on task, on time to meet deadlines, and will record the final score, strengths and weaknesses on the “Review Panel Consensus Commentary Sheet” developed by the Review Panel for each proposal.
- **Accurate and thorough completion of these documents is critical, as they will be used to provide information to the AWEP Review Board, the Chief, and to provide feedback to applicants following award selections.** (The initial score for each proposal is determined by the review team members. Concurrence is needed for the final score on the “Group Consensus Commentary Sheet.”)

Additional Review Panel, Approval Guidelines and Miscellaneous Information

All members of review panels, facilitators, and other review officials must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Prior to evaluating proposals, each evaluator must sign and submit a Certification and Acknowledgement indicating an understanding of the evaluation procedures and requirements. This certification must be read and understood by the evaluator and returned prior to receiving any proposals. Adherence to the certification is required.
- Evaluators may contact the AWEF Program Manager to obtain clarifications regarding an application.
- Evaluators should not discuss with persons outside the agency aspects related to the Review Panel proceedings, even after selection of awards. Questions regarding the review process should be directed to the designated Program Manager. Evaluator identities will be held in the strictest confidence.
- Evaluators should not directly contact a partner applicant; however questions could be directed to the designated Program Manager who may contact the partner for clarification.
- Evaluators may not accept any invitations or gratuities (i.e., meals, gifts, favors, etc.) from any applicant. If an evaluator is offered any invitations, gratuities, or job offers by or on behalf of any applicant, the evaluator will immediately report it to the designated National Program Manager.
- Proposals will be evaluated only against the published criteria in the Notice of Request for Proposals (RFP). No new criteria are to be considered by evaluators.
- All proposals will be individually evaluated against the published criteria and initially ranked without consultation between evaluators.
- Screening worksheets and individual and group consensus worksheets are the property of the NRCS for internal use of the agency. Information developed during the evaluation process is not released to the public. Final ranking lists of eligible proposals may be posted to the NRCS national AWEF website. Agency decisions regarding evaluation and ranking scores are not appealable.

Forms and Worksheets Attachments for Program Manager and Review Team Members:

1. Attachment 1: AWEF Screening Eligibility Criteria Worksheet (Completed by PM)
2. Attachment 2: Evaluator Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Certification
3. Technical Rating Standards (scoring guidance for reviewers)
4. "Individual Reviewer Scoring Sheet" (Reviewers make copies and complete for each proposal)
5. "Individual Commentary Sheet" (Reviewers make copies and complete for each proposal)
6. "Review Panel Consensus Commentary Sheet" (Facilitators make copies and compile for each proposal)

Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP)

Fiscal Year 2010 AWEP Eligibility Screening Criteria Worksheet – Attachment 1

Introduction:

This worksheet shall be completed by the designated AWEP Program Manager (PM) for each partner proposal submitted by the established deadline date and before referral to the Review Panel. This worksheet will provide the PM with guidance for appropriate response to the partner applicant and must be completed in order to provide a timely response for acceptance or denial due to ineligibility. Proposals will also be assigned a **priority** (High, Medium, Low) which will establish the grouping order by which proposals will be evaluated.

Detailed AWEP Application Screening Criteria Worksheet			
Applicant Name:		Date Rec	
Address:		State(s)	
City, State ZIP:		County	
Contact person-email:		Phone	
Program Manager:		Application #	

Screening Criteria – All answers must be “YES” to refer the application for evaluation and prioritization

Line	Minimum Requirement (See RFP for details)	Yes	No	Remarks
1	<u>Proposal delivered or submission postmarked on or before RFP deadline?</u>			“No” = Defer Proposal
2	<u>Partner is an eligible entity?</u> (Federally recognized tribe, State, unit of government, agricultural or silvicultural association or other group (NGO) of agricultural producers – see RFP – Individual producers are not eligible)			“No” = Defer Proposal
3	<u>Land associated with proposal is eligible (Controlled by producers-See RFP)?</u>			“No” = Defer Proposal
4	<u>The proposal is not a request for direct NRCS FA funding to the partner entity with no funding to producers?</u>			“No” = Defer Proposal
5	<u>The proposal will involve more than one EQIP eligible producer?</u>			“No” = Defer Proposal
COMPLETE PROPOSAL (Addressing all the following):				
6	<u>The proposal addresses one or more priority agricultural water enhancement activities?</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water quality or water conservation plan development including resource condition assessment and modeling. Water conservation restoration or enhancement including activities for conversion from irrigated to dryland farming. Conversion of irrigated land to less-intensive crops or dryland farming. Water quality or quantity restoration or enhancement practices. Irrigation system improvements or efficiency enhancements. Practices to address drought (e.g. water storage). Other water quality or conservation proposal on ag. lands. 			
7	<u>The Proposal is complete by addressing partner capacity:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates ability to commit to long-term effort to promote water conservation or quality improvement. Demonstrates ability to coordinate efforts among producers. Shows ability to provide non federal funds or other resources. Partner provides support for monitoring and evaluation for project. Provides capacity to deliver final project performance report. Proposal includes criteria for ranking producer applications. Describes collaboration efforts to achieve project goals for each partner, including roles, responsibilities, capabilities, etc. Describes water enhancement activities to be carried out and practices to be applied within project time period, NTE 5 years. Describes the AWEP funds needed for entire project & annually. Describes the amount and source of non-federal resources to be leveraged by the partner. Proposal includes a project implementation schedule. 			

8	<u>The Project Proposal Does Not Exceed Five Years.</u>			
9	<u>The Proposal describes the lands to be treated:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes a map of project area. Description of the water quality/quantity concerns to be addressed. Description of the water enhancement objectives to be achieved. The total number of acres anticipated to be treated. The proposed enhancement activities to be implemented. 			
10	<u>The Proposal describes Producer participation:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal includes the number of producers likely to participate. Proposal includes the total number of producer in the project area. 			
11	The Proposal includes a letter of review from the STC(s).			
12	<u>The Proposal is complete and each category above is “Yes”:</u>			“Yes” to all items = Refer for priority assignment and project evaluation
<u>Special Considerations Noted:</u>				
13	Proposal Includes Indian Land (Federally recognized Tribal land).			
14	Proposal is located in Drought Exception D-4 Area (See State/County List)			
15	Proposal requests consideration for AGI waiver for projects of Special Environmental Significance			
<u>Priority Assignment:</u>				
A	<u>Proposal which includes or will address (meet all listed items):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practices to assist producers to convert from irrigated to dryland farming. Proposal leverages other partner funding along with AWEP funding. Proposal is located in a priority region per RFP. Proposal will address both water conservation and water quality issues. 			Assign “High Priority”
B	<u>Water conservation related proposal which includes (meet all listed items):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practices to assist producers to convert to less-water intensive crops. Proposal leverages other partner resources along with AWEP funding. Proposal is located in a priority region per RFP. 			Assign “Medium Priority”
C	<u>Water conservation or water quality related proposals:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All other proposals which are not High or Medium priority. 			Assign “Low Priority”

All minimum proposal application, applicant, and criteria have been met. Refer for evaluation or Not referred

Priority: High Medium Low Reviewer: _____ Date: _____

Other Comments:

ATTACHMENT 2**CERTIFICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT****EVALUATOR CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST CERTIFICATION****CONFIDENTIALITY**

In anticipation of my participation as a member of a review panel for the evaluation of proposals submitted in response to the subject solicitation, I certify that I will not disclose, either during the proceedings of the evaluation or at any subsequent time, any information concerning the content of proposals (unless such information is otherwise publicly made available) or the evaluation process, to anyone who is not authorized access to the information by the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Selection Official or by law or regulation, and then only to the extent that such information is required in connection with such person's official responsibilities, except pursuant to the order of a court of competent jurisdiction. Furthermore, I will report immediately to the NRCS Program Manager or Contracting Officer any communication directed to me from any outside source concerning either the content of proposals or the evaluation process.

Whenever the NRCS provides me with an application for evaluation, I agree to use the information contained in the application only for evaluation purposes and to treat the information confidentially. Furthermore, I agree to abide by any restrictive markings on the application to protect technical data and other data including trade secrets and/or privileged or confidential commercial, financial, or personnel information which the applicant does not want disclosed to the public or to its competitors. Upon completion of the evaluation, I agree to return all paper copies of proposals in my possession and to delete all electronic copies of the same. Finally, unless authorized by the NRCS Program Manager or Contracting Officer, I agree not to contact the originator of the application concerning any aspect of its contents.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

I certify that I am not aware of any matter which might reduce my ability to review and evaluate proposals for financial assistance in an objective and unbiased manner or which might place me in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between my responsibilities as an evaluator and other interests. In making this certification, I have considered all my stocks, bonds, other financial interests and employment arrangements (past, present, or under consideration) and, to the extent known by me, all the financial interests and employment arrangements of myself or any other members of my immediate family. Furthermore, I agree to disclose to the NRCS Program Manager and the NRCS Contracting Officer any actual or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as I become aware of them.

If, after the date of this certification, any person, firm, or organization with which, to my knowledge, I or other members of my immediate family) have a financial interest, or with which I have (or had) an employment arrangement, submits a proposal or otherwise becomes involved in, or is discovered to be involved in, the subject solicitation process, I will notify the NRCS Program Manager and the NRCS Contracting Officer, and thereafter, until advised to the contrary, I will not participate further in any way (by rendering advice, making recommendations, voting, or otherwise) in the evaluation process.

 Signature

 Date

 Printed Name

*Certification to be maintained in the official file of the designated Program Manager.

Points of emphasis for FY 2010 review**FY 2010 AWEP****RANKING STANDARDS**

For the purposes of the NHQ Review evaluation, a **strength** is an aspect of a project proposal that, when compared to a stated evaluation criterion, leaves virtually no doubt regarding the applicant's capability to perform the criterion.

A **weakness** is an aspect of a project proposal that, when compared to the evaluation criterion, provides evidence that the applicant will not be capable of fulfilling the criterion successfully. A **minor weakness** is one, which raises doubts regarding the applicant's ability to satisfy the criterion, but can be easily correctable. A **significant weakness** is one, which leaves no doubt regarding the applicant's inability to satisfy the criterion and cannot be corrected without a major revision to the application. The combination of several minor weaknesses within a criterion may become a significant weakness. A **deficiency** is a material failure of an applicant to address a Solicitation requirement or a combination of significant weaknesses in the application, providing evidence that the risk for unsuccessful performance of the statement of work is raised to an unacceptable level.

The Panel will use a point scale system to score the project proposals on the following worksheets. Each of the criteria can receive a maximum of 25 points. The additional "commentary" provided by the review team shall utilize the following concepts to help categorize the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal.

- Superior:** Virtually no practical way to improve the application regarding this criterion. Addresses all criteria comprehensively and has strengths with no significant weaknesses. Proposal leaves practically no doubt regarding the applicant's capability to fulfill the criterion.
- Good:** Applicant comprehensively addresses all aspects of the criterion and there are no significant weaknesses. Proposal demonstrates applicant's capability to fulfill the criterion.
- Satisfactory:** Applicant addresses all aspects of the criterion, may have few, but correctable weaknesses, and will likely be able to fulfill the criterion.
- Marginal:** Applicant fails to address some aspects of the criterion, has many potentially correctable weaknesses, but leaves some doubt as to the ability to fulfill the criterion.
- Unsatisfactory:** Applicant fails to address most aspects of the criterion, has significant weaknesses, and correcting these weaknesses would require a major revision. Proposal does not demonstrate applicant's ability to fulfill the criterion.

The Panel will only evaluate AWEP project proposals by comparing submitted data against the Evaluation Criteria. Further, no evaluation of the project is made by comparison of one proposal to another. No new criteria may be added or considered.

The following AWEP scoring worksheet shall be used by Review Panel members to score proposals using the following procedure. The PM will provide Panel members with a list of prioritized proposals and funding requested. The panel will evaluate proposals based upon the highest priority and until the available funding is exhausted. This means that if funding is exhausted after ranking prioritized proposals, no additional proposals need to be ranked as there is little chance of the proposal to be funded.

FY 2010 AWEP Proposals

INDIVIDUAL REVIEWER SCORING WORKSHEET

Resource Concern: _____ Application #: _____

Project Name: _____

Reviewer: _____

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Score
1	<p>Producer Participation</p> <p>- Proposal includes a high percentage of producers actively farming or managing working agricultural or nonindustrial private forest lands included in the area covered by the agreement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% or more of eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 25 pts • 60%-79% of eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 20 pts • 40%-59% of eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 15 pts • 20%-39% of eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 10 pts • 10%-19% eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 5 pts • Less than 10% of eligible producers in project area are likely to participate – 0 pts 	
2	<p>Resource Improvement and Agricultural Activities:</p> <p>- Proposal will result in significant application of conservation practices to address agricultural water conservation activities <u>or</u> water quality issues?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal will address water quantity/quality activities on 80% or more of the land in project area – 25 pts • Proposal will address water quantity/quality activities on 50% to 79% of the land in project area – 20 pts • Proposal will address water quantity/quality activities on 49% or less of the land in project area – 15 pts 	
3	<p>Partner Monitoring and Evaluation:</p> <p>- Proposal includes contributions, activities or efforts by the partner to assist producers develop water quality or water conservation plans which include resource condition assessment and modeling. 25 pts</p> <p>- Proposal does not include partner provided activities for planning, resource assessment and modeling. 0 pts</p>	
4	<p>Regulatory Compliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal will substantially assist producers in meeting water conservation related Federal, State or local regulatory requirements 25 pts • Proposal will assist producers meet some water conservation related regulatory requirements 15 pts • Proposal will not assist producers meet water conservation related regulatory requirements 0 pts 	
5	<p>Project Completion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes provisions to help program participants complete the application of the conservation practices and/or activities in program contracts in two to three years - 25 pts • Proposal includes provisions to help program participants complete the application of the conservation practices and/or activities in program contracts in four to five years - 20 pts • Proposal includes provisions to help program participants complete the application of the conservation practices and/or activities in program contracts in six or more years - 0 pts 	
6	<p>Groundwater Depletion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes activities by partner, using non-federal resources, to reduce on-farm groundwater depletion through efforts in cooperation with other agencies, partners or water management districts in project area (e.g. reduced groundwater pumping, retirement of water rights, other partner activity) 25 pts • Proposal does not include any partner activities as previously described. 0 pts 	

Continue to next page

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Score
7	<p>General Project Management (Select as appropriate not to exceed 20 pts):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milestones and partner deliverables are clearly identified and achievable – 5 pts • Timeline and implementation schedule is reasonable and achievable – 5 pts • Project staff has technical expertise needed – 5 pts • Budget is reasonable and justified– 5 pts 	
8	<p>Proposal Leverages Non-Federal Resources (Does not include producer contributions through contracts):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes provisions for partner contribution of both financial <u>AND</u> technical assistance to eligible program participants. 50 pts • Proposal includes provisions for partner contribution of financial assistance <u>OR</u> technical assistance to eligible program participants. 25 pts. • Proposal does not include any partner contribution of technical assistance or financial assistance to eligible program participants. 0 pts 	
9	<p>Proposal Includes Ranking Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal offers appropriate project area criteria that NRCS could use in ProTracts AERT to prioritize and rank agricultural producer EQIP program applications. (No criteria offered = 0 pts.) 25 pts 	
10	<p>Partner Collaboration (Agricultural producers may not be counted as a “partner”):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal identifies two or more partners who will collaborate to help achieve project objectives – 25 pts • Proposal identifies one additional partner who will collaborate to help achieve project objectives – 15 pts 	
11	<p>Project Priority Area (Refer to AWEP Priority Area Map & County List):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal addresses water quantity resource concerns within one of the following regions: – 75 pts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Snake River: Idaho • Puget Sound: Washington • Ogallala Aquifer: South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico • Sacramento River Basin: California, Oregon • Upper Mississippi River Basin: South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri • Red River of the North Basin: North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota • Everglades: Florida (Not located within AWEP priority area = 0 pts.) 	
12	<p>Conversion to Dryland Farming (For Water Conservation Related Projects) Proposal Will Promote Use of the Following Practices to Support Conversion on Cropland: Conservation Crop Rotation (328); Residue Management (329, 344, 345, 346); Nutrient Management (590); Pest Management (595); Well Decommissioning (351).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal will promote use of all the listed practices for conversion activities: 25 pts. • Proposal will promote use of four or more of the listed practices: (less than four = 0 points) 10 pts 	
13	<p>Conversion to Dryland Farming (For Water Conservation Related Projects) Proposal Will Promote Use of the Following Practices to Support Conversion of Cropland to Grazed Land: Pasture & Hayland Planting (512); Forage Harvest Management (511); Range Planting (550); Prescribed Grazing (528); Nutrient Management (590); Fence (382); Pipeline (516) and Watering Facility (614).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal will promote use of all the listed practices for conversion activities: 25 pts. • Proposal will promote use of four or more of the listed practices: (less than four = 0 points) 10 pts 	
14	<p>On Farm Water Conservation and Water Quality Practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal includes efforts to promote on-farm conservation practice implementation or support of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Conversion of flood surface water irrigation systems to drip or micro-jet system, and -Implementation of complete new tailwater recovery (447). 50 pts • Proposal includes efforts to promote on-farm conservation practice implementation or support of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Conversion of open ditch, surface mainlines/laterals to buried or surface “no-leak” systems, and -Replacement of existing buried leaky mainlines or laterals, and -Conversion of flood surface irrigation systems to sprinkler system. 20 pts • All other proposed irrigation system improvements or project water quality related. 10 pts 	
	<p>Total Score (maximum 445 points)</p>	

This ranking score and process provides a numerical ranking of the partner proposal, but is not the only consideration used for selection or approval of funding. Additional evaluation is completed by the review team to provide “commentary” and other strengths and weaknesses of the proposal that will be considered by the Review Board and Chief. The numerical rating, commentary, STC letter of review and any other information deemed appropriate by the Chief may be considered in the evaluation and approval process. The evaluation and commentary shall specifically address the following requirements of the RFP proposal requirements and ranking considerations:

Proposal addresses one or more priority agricultural water enhancement activities such as:

- Water conservation restoration or enhancement
- Conversion of irrigated land to less-intensive or dryland
- Water quantity restoration or enhancement
- Irrigation system improvements or efficiency enhancements
- Practices to address drought (e.g. water storage)
- Other water quality or conservation proposal on agricultural lands.
- Water quality or water conservation plan development, including resource condition assessment and modeling.

Proposal partner capacity, land treatment and producer participation:

- Demonstrates ability to commit to long-term effort to promote water conservation or quality improvement.
- Demonstrates ability to coordinate efforts among producers.
- Shows ability to provide non federal funds or other resources.
- Partner provides support for monitoring and evaluation for project.
- Provides capacity to deliver final project performance report.
- Proposal includes criteria for ranking producer applications.
- Describes collaboration efforts to achieve project goals for each partner, including roles, responsibilities, capabilities, etc.
- Describes water enhancement activities to be carried out and practices to be applied within project time period, NTE 5 yrs.
- Describes the AWEF funds needed for entire project & annually.
- Describes the amount and source of non-federal resources to be leveraged by the partner.
- Proposal project implementation schedule.
- Includes a map of project area.
- Description of the water quantity concerns to be addressed.
- Description of the water enhancement objectives to be achieved.
- The total number of acres anticipated to be treated.
- The proposed enhancement activities to be implemented.
- Proposal includes the number of producers likely to participate.
- Proposal includes the total number of producer in the project area.

FY 2010 AWEP Proposals

INDIVIDUAL COMMENTARY WORKSHEET

Project Name: _____ **Application Number:** _____

Partner Name: _____

Reviewer: _____ **Score:** _____

(Do not use the enter key in the boxes. Use the arrow down key to start a new statement.)

Strengths of proposal as related to RFP criteria:

Weaknesses of proposal as related to RFP criteria:

Review Panel Consensus Commentary Worksheet

Partner Name: _____ **Project Number** _____

Project Name: _____

Facilitator/Leader: _____ **Combined Consensus Score:** _____

(Do not use the enter key in the boxes. Use the arrow down key to start a new statement.)

Strengths of proposal as related to RFP criteria:

--

Weaknesses of proposal as related to RFP criteria:

--

AWEP

Attachment

Example Proposal

Example Template

DISCLAIMER: The following is an **example** of what an AWEP proposal might look like. It does not reflect an example that will score high or low. The submission of an AWEP proposal is subject to a competitive process and so following this template will not guarantee the proposal will be assigned high priority or a score which leads to approval and funding. The partner should not rely only on this example for development of a proposal. Partners should fully examine the notice of the request for proposals (RFP) for complete details to develop a proposal which meets the requirements of AWEP and the project goals associated with water conservation and water quality objectives.

Optional items included in the proposal may include:

- Transmittal-Introduction letter
- Copy of letter from partner to State Conservationist(s) requesting “letter of review”

SUNNYSIDE PARTNERSHIP

Proposal for Agricultural Water Enhancement Program

***Improving Groundwater and Water Quality Conditions
within the Four Mile Watershed – Any State***

*John Doe, Project Director
Sunnyside Partnership
111 Water Street, Suite 2
Your Town, Any State 00000
(555) 555-5555 ext 2*

John.Doe@sunnysideprtnshp.net

Proposal for Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP)

“Improving Groundwater and Water Quality Conditions within the Four Mile Watershed”

*John Doe, Project Director
Sunnyside Partnership
111 Water Street, Suite 2
Your Town, Any State 00000
(555) 555-5555 ext 2
John.Doe@sunnysideprtnshp.net*

Partners Associated with Proposal:

- Sunnyside Partnership – Lead Partner (See contact information above)
- Four Mile Irrigation District
- Four Mile Watershed Council
- Sunnyside Soil and Water Conservation District
- Any State Department of Environmental Quality

Section 1 Proposal Summary

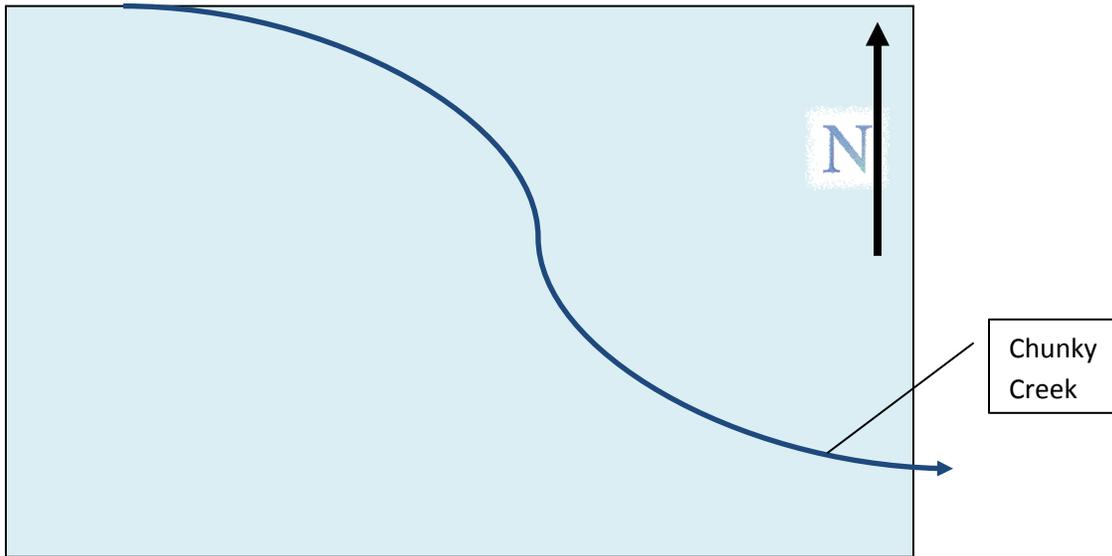
Sunnyside Partnership seeks to obtain \$3,912,300 over a five year period (2010-2014) through the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, for the purpose of encouraging producers within the Four Mile Watershed to enroll voluntarily into the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP). The entire partnership effort will contribute \$3,977,500 in non-Federal resources and services. This program would provide financial benefits to participants who enter their land into AWEP contracts and voluntarily install conservation practices that will conserve irrigation water from groundwater sources and improve surface quality within the project area. The project area, located in Dryland County, was identified after consultation with partners within the watershed. The proposal includes use of AWEP financial resources to assist producers within the project area to implement the conservation practices identified below to address water conservation and water quality resource concerns. The partners will also provide resources to assist producer in conservation planning, assessment of irrigation systems and monitoring activities to help meet State regulatory water quality requirements along Chunky Creek, a major tributary within the watershed.

Specific NRCS approved conservation practices that are anticipated to be installed to address water quantity include: PC 449 Irrigation Water Management, PC 441 Irrigation System, Microirrigation, PC 442 Irrigation System – Sprinkler, PC 351 Well Decommissioning, and PC 447 Irrigation System-Tail Water Recovery. Water quality practices include: PC 340 Cover Crop, PC 320 Irrigation Canal and PC 393 Filter Strips. In addition to the NRCS resources requested, the partner proposes to provide services to producers to help plan and monitor efforts to conserve irrigation water and address regulated water quality issues within the project area. Specifically, the Four Mile irrigation district will provide irrigation system design services to producers participating in the project area. The Sunnyside Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will make the services of their mobile lab available to conduct on-farm evaluations of irrigation systems and to help monitor application rates, crop needs and will provide recommendations to help implement water management. The Department of Environmental Quality of Any State will provide on-farm monitoring of water quality to assure project objectives are met along with permit and regulatory requirements in the project area.

Example Template

The project area is located entirely in Dryland County, Any State, and serving Congressional District 013. The project is not located in a national AWEP priority area, but has been designated by the U.S. Geological Survey as a priority groundwater depletion zone.

Map of Four Mile Watershed, Dryland County and AWEP project area:



A more detailed map of the project area is found at the end of the document.

2. *Project Natural Resource Objectives and Actions:*

- a. Specific targeted goals include reduction of groundwater pumping in order to preserve the remaining groundwater basin and improvement of surface water quality to meet State regulatory requirements. Benefits would be an estimated 100 acre-feet reduction in use of groundwater per year and improved surface water quality to help producer meet State regulatory requirements. By the end of the project, the partnership hopes to provide a 25% percent decrease in overall use of groundwater resources and anticipates helping about 20% of participating producers meet State water quality permit requirements.
- b. The specific actions to be completed with AWEP funding for resource concerns addressed by the project are outlined in the table below.

Water Conservation Resource Concern:

AWEP Funded Practices	Planned Extent for Project	Estimated AWEP Resources Needed
Irrigation Water Mgt 449	7,380 acres - \$50/acre	\$369,000
Irrigation System – Micro 441	45 systems - \$19,722/ea	\$887,500
Irrigation System - Sprinkler 442	72 new systems - \$8,000/ea	\$1,888,000
Well Decommissioning 351	20 wells - \$1,500/ea	\$30,000
Total AWEP Resources Needed:		\$3,174,500

Example Template

Water Quality Resource Concern:

AWEP Funded Practices	Planned Extent for Project	Estimated AWEP Resources Needed
Cover Crop 340	5,000 acres - \$125/acre	\$625,000
Irrigation Canal 320	33,000 Feet - \$0.35/Ft	\$11,550
Filter Strips 393	750 Acres - \$135/Ac	\$101,250
Total AWEP Resources Needed:		\$1,612,800

Total NRCS AWEP Program Funds Requested: \$3,912,000.

The actions being addressed using non-federal resources or fund sources are detailed in the table under section (d). Generally, they include:

1. Reductions in use of ground water will be verified by evaluation of irrigation system before and after implementation of AWEP funded practices by the conservation district mobile lab.
 2. The State permitting agency will provide estimates of water quality improvements upon issue of discharge permits. Together the partnership will be able to provide seasonal outcome based measurement of water savings and water quality improvements.
 3. The Sunnyside Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will make the services of their mobile lab available to conduct on-farm evaluations of irrigation systems and to help monitor application rates, crop needs and will provide recommendations to help implement water management. They will also install soil moisture sensors on the property to assist producers in identifying areas to reduce water use.
 4. In addition, the Sunnyside SWCD will provide staff time and services to conduct all outreach and a portion of the conservation plan development.
 5. The Four Mile Watershed Council will also provide direct technical assistance in conservation plan development.
- c.* The entire proposed project area is 100,000 acres of which 80,000 acres are irrigated cropland to be addressed by project participants. There are approximately 75 eligible producers irrigating rotations of corn and soybeans in the project area with an average farm size of 850 acres. However, the specific resource concerns to be addressed lie within an 8,500 acre area that runs adjacent to Chunky Creek, which is the main tributary for the watershed. Twenty-five landowners are adjacent to the Creek. The goal of the project is to work with all 25 landowners. The project will focus first on those producers utilizing groundwater that are also located along Chunky Creek where water quality permits are required by Any State. The table in section 2(b) specifically outlines the project goals for producer assistance and acres treated with AWEP funding. Partner funding will focus on different activities on the same acres.
- d.* The table below outlines the specific activities to be completed by the partners. Letters are provided (attached) indicating the partners' willingness to participate and full commitment to this effort.

Example Template

Partner	Responsibility	Capability	Funding
Sunnyside SWCD	Outreach	Newsletter, website, landowner meeting capabilities	\$ 50,000
Four Mile Irrigation District	Evaluation of Existing Irrigation Systems	expertise in irrigation system design and efficiency evaluations	\$ 43,000
Four Mile Watershed Council	Conservation Plan Development	Certified conservation planners	\$ 32,000
	IWM Project monitoring	expertise in irrigation system design and management	\$ 57,000
	Installation of Soil Moisture Sensors	Private contract	\$ 77,000
	Mainline Engineering Design	contract to private engineering design firm	\$ 290,000
	Fish Passage (required at intake)	contract to private construction firm	\$ 50,500
Any State Dept of Environmental Quality	Mainline Engineering Design	in-house equipment and contract to private construction firm	\$ 3,250,000
	Conservation Plan Development	Certified conservation planners	\$ 20,000
	Project Monitoring - stream flow and temperature	ability to install temperature and flow stations on critical stream reaches	\$ 100,000
TOTAL INVESTMENT			\$ 3,977,500

The table under Section 2(b) outlines specifically the activities that will be implemented using AWEP financial assistance. Generally, they include PC 449 Irrigation Water Management, PC 441 Irrigation System, Microirrigation, PC 442 Irrigation System – Sprinkler, and PC 351 Well Decommissioning. Water quality practices include: PC 340 Cover Crop, PC 420 Irrigation Ditch Canals and PC 393 Filter Strips.

3. Partnership Capacity

- a) There are 4 partners for this proposal: Four Mile Irrigation District, Four Mile Watershed Council, Sunnyside SWCD, and the Any State Department of Environmental Quality. The long-term conservation commitments of these four partners are described below:

Four Mile Irrigation District was formed in 1975 to assist landowners in the Four Mile Watershed with delivery of groundwater for irrigation purposes and eventually developed to management of water resources due to overdraft.

Four Mile Watershed Council was formed in 1960 to assist local landowners and water users within the Four Mile Watershed.

Sunnyside SWCD was established in 1950 to promote locally led conservation and assist landowners and operators apply conservation practices.

Any State Department of Environmental Quality was established in 1955 to assist the state with environmental resource concerns and regulation of water quality.

- b) District conservation efforts required working cooperatively and closely with ag producers within the watershed. All 25 producers in the projected area were visited individually, field work was assisted with and final projects were inspected. The district and watershed council are highly respected in the area and have leveraged investments of over \$15 million in the county through various state and federal sources over the last 10 years to address both water quality and quantity resource concerns in the region.

Example Template

- c) All funds indicated in table provided for the response to 2(d) above are a part of existing programs and funding sources, as well as an approved grant from the state DEQ for the installation of on-farm soil moisture sensors to reduce irrigation runoff by improving on-farm irrigation water management. No additional federal funds are requested. The irrigation district, Department of Environmental Quality, Watershed Council and SWCD all have access to leveraged funds through their existing programs. As attached letters of support indicate, all entities are prepared to provide direct investment pending approval of the AWEP project.
- d) The Department of Environmental Quality already has existing monitoring stations in place for water quality (temperature/nutrient/sediments) along Chunky Creek. These stations will be utilized to provide baseline and ongoing monitoring data to show improvements in water quality based on project implementation.

Sunnyside SWCD has a state-of-the art mobile lab that will be available and used on-site to provide irrigation system evaluations throughout the summer. In addition, this analysis will be tied directly to the soil moisture sensors when installed to provide real-time analysis of irrigation needs and efficiency gains.
- e) Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council have participated extensively in previously successful grant applications. Both organizations have staff and capacity to provide quarterly reports and a final report outlining both project implementation and associated monitoring. The Watershed Council executive director is formally trained in grant writing and federal reporting requirements.
- f) Producer Ranking Criteria: The Sunnyside Partnership have contacted and worked with NRCS staff within Any State and offer the following criteria for ranking of AWEP producer applications within the project area.

Water Conservation Resource Concern:	Suggested Ranking Criteria:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aquifer Overdraft 2. Inefficient Water Use on Irrigated Land 3. Inefficient Flows in Water Courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On-farm system improvements will result in actual reductions of groundwater pumping and water savings. 2. AWEP applicant will decommission wells and find alternative source of irrigation water. 3. AWEP applicant will convert from a surface (flood) irrigation system to a new sprinkler system. 4. AWEP applicant will convert from a surface (flood or sprinkler) to a micro jet irrigation system.
Water Quality Resource Concern	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Excessive Suspended Sediment & Turbidity in Surface Water 2. Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water 3. Excessive Pesticides in Surface Water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On-farm conversion of cropped irrigated land to non-irrigated crop land. 2. Replacement of earthen ditches with lined concrete to reduce erosion and sedimentation. 3. Establishment of filter strips in areas within 250 feet of Chunky Creek to reduce runoff and pollution of the watershed.

Example Template

- g) Please see the following table for detailed description of RFP Sections G, H and I to address required items. In addition, documentation letters are provided indicating commitment of financial and staff resources for the project.

All four partners (irrigation district, SWCD, Watershed Council and DEQ) are fully committed to this project. Restoration of water quality on Chunky Creek is listed as the top priority on both the Watershed Council and SWCD strategic plans. DEQ has identified Chunky Creek as fourth on its statewide list of impaired streams, and has prioritized this groundwater depletion zone as Tier A (the top listing for a depletion zone in the state). The irrigation district is committed to assisting its producer members to meet all goals of this project as well, and was a leader in initiating this partnership effort.

- h) Please see the following table for detailed description which addresses RFP Sections G, H and I as cited in the AWEP notice. The following table provides the support requested from AWEP and resources provided by the partner for each year of the project.
- i) A description of the resources (financial and/or technical assistance) requested annually from AWEP for producer contracts and the non-Federal resources provided by the partner that will be leveraged by the Federal contribution is found in the following table.

Example Template

Description of Federal and Non-Federal resources and collaborative efforts to implement the project:

Description	Fund Source	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		Total
		NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	
Project Outreach to landowners	SWCD		\$15,000		\$18,000		\$12,000		\$5,000			\$50,000
Mainline Engineering/Design	Irrigation District		\$290,000									\$290,000
Mainline Installation	Irrigation District		\$3,250,000									\$3,250,000
Fish Passage (required at intake)	Irrigation District		\$50,500									\$50,500
Existing System Evaluations	SWCD		\$25,000		\$18,000							\$43,000
Conservation Plan Development (40 landowners)	SWCD		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$8,000		\$2,000	\$40,000
Conservation Plan Development (20 landowners)	watershed council		\$2,000		\$8,000		\$8,000		\$2,000			\$20,000
449 - Irrigation Water Management (7,380 acres at \$50/acre)	NRCS	\$50,000		\$75,000		\$75,000		\$75,000		\$94,000		\$369,000
441 - 45 Irrigation Systems (Micro Systems - \$19,722 ea)	NRCS	\$355,000		\$532,500								\$887,500
442 - 72 Irrigation Systems (Sprinkler - \$26,222 ea)	NRCS	\$524,440		\$917,770		\$445,790						\$1,888,000
351 Well Decommission - 20 Wells, \$1500 ea	NRCS	\$7,500		\$7,500		\$10,500		\$4,500				\$30,000
340 Cover Crop 5,000ac \$125/ac	NRCS	\$125,000		\$156,250		\$156,250		\$156,250		\$31,250		\$625,000
420 Irrigation Ditch Canals - 33,000ft @ \$0.35/ft	NRCS	\$2,310		\$2,310		\$2,310		\$2,310		\$2,310		\$11,550
393 Filter Strips - 750Ac @ \$135Ac	NRCS			\$25,380		\$25,380		\$25,380		\$25,110		\$101,250
Installation of Soil Moisture Sensors	SWCD		\$32,000		\$16,000		\$16,000		\$8,000		\$5,000	\$77,000
Project Monitoring - Water Quality	DEQ				\$28,000		\$22,000		\$25,000		\$25,000	\$100,000
Project Monitoring - IWM	SWCD				\$12,000		\$15,000		\$15,000		\$15,000	\$57,000
		NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	NRCS EQIP	Partner	\$0
Totals		\$1,064,250	\$3,674,500	\$1,716,710	\$110,000	\$715,230	\$83,000	\$263,440	\$63,000	\$152,670	\$47,000	\$7,889,800

Example Template

Total Resources by Federal and Non-Federal Sources:

TOTAL NRCS REQUEST	\$3,912,300
TOTAL PARTNER INVESTMENT	\$3,977,500

4. *Lands to be treated:*

The proposal should describe the geographic area to be covered by the partnership agreement. Specifically, the proposal should include:

- a) A very simplified map is provided at the beginning in this example. A very detailed map is included at the end of this document. This project is located in a high priority stream reach for temperature, sediment and nutrients. In addition, the project area has been designated by the U.S. Geological Survey as a priority groundwater depletion zone.
- b) A description of the agricultural water quality or water conservation issues to be addressed by the partnership agreement. This was adequately addressed in the Project Natural Resource Objectives, section of this proposal.
- c) Specific outcomes for this project specifically include:
 - ✓ An estimated 100 acre-feet reduction in use of groundwater per year and
 - ✓ Based on water quality monitoring data, reductions in nutrients (specifically nitrogen and phosphorous), and sediment to levels that will ensure that Chunky Creek's water quality is improved to a level that ensures it will meet or exceed State regulatory requirements.
 - ✓ A 25% percent decrease if overall use of groundwater resources and plan to help 20% of participating producers meet water quality permit requirements.
- d) The priority areas for treatment are 8,500 acres along Chunky Creek that also draw groundwater resources for irrigation water. All 25 landowners in this reach have been contacted and have indicated initial willingness to participate. These landowners are the priority, as the major contributor to groundwater reductions is irrigation water use, and in addition, tail water leaving these specific irrigated lands is entering Chunky Creek, which reduces water quality by increasing both sediment and nutrients in-stream. These properties are the highest priority properties for the project.

5. *Producer Information:*

- a) There are an estimated 624 producers farming on irrigated crop land in Sunnyside County (USDA, NASS, 2007). 75 of those are located within the Four Mile Watershed. However, of these, the project is very specifically focused on the 25 landowners who have the most direct impact on both water quality and groundwater depletion in the area. The expected participation of those producers is 100%, based on informal participation surveys and landowner meetings. The landowners in the area, along with the irrigation district, are well aware of the challenges relating to groundwater use and water quality in their watershed and have been very receptive to assist in identifying ways they can help address the problem.

Example Template

6. Proposal Implementation Plan and Schedule:

Fiscal Year	Activity	Responsible Entity	Date to be Completed	Notes
2010	Landowner neighborhood meetings	Sunnyside SWCD	2/15/2010	Landowner meetings have been held throughout Four Mile River watershed - 3 meetings in total
	Announce signup in Newsletter and with mailings	Sunnyside SWCD	5/15/2010	Date dependent on when national AWEF is announced. Newsletter and mailings will be sent immediately after announcement
	Complete engineering design for mainline installation	Four Mile Irrigation District	5/15/2010	
	Take signups and obligate funds	NRCS	8/15/2010	Date dependent on national signup and obligation deadlines
	Complete system evaluations on applicant properties		6/15/2010	
	Develop initial conservation plans for 12 initial landowners as identified in plan	Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council	7/10/2010	Assume 12 producers will participate in first year
	Install first set of soil moisture sensors	Sunnyside SWCD	8/15/2010	
	Complete installation of mainline including fish passage	Four Mile Irrigation District	9/15/2010	
2011	Landowner neighborhood meetings	Sunnyside SWCD	10/15/2010	Same locations as previous year
	Announce signup in Newsletter and with mailings	Sunnyside SWCD	12/1/2010	
	Take signups and obligate funds	NRCS	3/15/2011	Date dependent on national signup and obligation deadlines
	Complete system evaluations on applicant properties		10/31/2010	
	Begin stream flow monitoring	Dept of Environmental Quality	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	Stream flows will be monitored and graphed weekly during irrigation season
	Begin IWM Monitoring	Sunnyside SWCD	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	IWM monitoring will include both the telemetry reports and monthly surveys with landowners. Irrigation district will provide water use data for each participating landowner from flow meters
	Develop initial conservation plans for 18 initial landowners as identified in plan	Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council	1/31/2011	Assume 18 producers will participate in second year
	Install soil moisture sensors	Sunnyside SWCD	6/15/2011	
2012	Landowner neighborhood meetings	Sunnyside SWCD	10/15/2011	Same locations as previous year
	Announce signup in Newsletter and with mailings	Sunnyside SWCD	12/1/2011	
	Take signups and obligate funds	NRCS	3/15/2012	Date dependent on national signup and obligation deadlines
	Complete system evaluations on applicant properties		10/31/2012	
	Develop initial conservation plans for 18 initial landowners as identified in plan	Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council	1/31/2012	Assume 18 producers will participate in third year
	Stream flow monitoring	Dept of Environmental Quality	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	Stream flows will be monitored and graphed weekly during irrigation season
	IWM Monitoring	Sunnyside SWCD	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	IWM monitoring will include both the telemetry reports from the Internet-linked soil moisture sensors (daily feedback) and monthly surveys with landowners. Irrigation district will provide water use data for each participating landowner from existing flowmeters
	Install soil moisture sensors	Sunnyside SWCD	6/15/2012	

Example Template

Fiscal Year	Activity	Responsible Entity	Date to be Completed	Notes
2013	Landowner neighborhood meetings	Sunnyside SWCD	10/15/2012	Same locations as previous year
	Announce signup in Newsletter and with mailings	Sunnyside SWCD	12/1/2012	
	Take signups and obligate funds	NRCS	3/15/2013	Date dependent on national signup and obligation deadlines
	Complete system evaluations on applicant properties		10/31/2013	
	Stream flow monitoring	Dept of Environmental Quality	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	Stream flows will be monitored and graphed weekly during irrigation season
	Develop initial conservation plans for 10 initial landowners as identified in plan	Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council	1/31/2013	Assume 10 producers will participate in fourth year
	IWM Monitoring	Sunnyside SWCD	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	IWM monitoring will include both the telemetry reports and monthly surveys with landowners. Irrigation district will provide water use data for each participating landowner from flow meters
	Install soil moisture sensors	Sunnyside SWCD	6/15/2013	
2014	Landowner neighborhood meetings	Sunnyside SWCD	10/15/2013	Same locations as previous year
	Announce signup in Newsletter and with mailings	Sunnyside SWCD	12/1/2013	
	Take signups and obligate funds	NRCS	3/15/2014	Date dependent on national signup and obligation deadlines
	Complete system evaluations on applicant properties		10/31/2014	
	Develop initial conservation plans for 2 initial landowners as identified in plan	Sunnyside SWCD and Four Mile Watershed Council	1/31/2014	Assume 2 producers will participate in final year
	Stream flow monitoring	Dept of Environmental Quality	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	Stream flows will be monitored and graphed weekly during irrigation season
	IWM Monitoring	Sunnyside SWCD	Ongoing - begins 3/31/11	IWM monitoring will include both the telemetry reports from the Internet-linked soil moisture sensors (daily feedback) and monthly surveys with landowners. Irrigation district will provide water use data for each participating landowner from existing flow meters
	Install soil moisture sensors	Sunnyside SWCD	6/15/2014	

7. Letter of Review from State Conservationist – SEE ATTACHED

AWEP

Attachment

FY2010 Proposal List

Recommended Reading

AWEP Project Proposals Approved for Fiscal Year 2010:

Following is a list of Fiscal Year 2010 AWEP project proposals approved by NRCS. Project proposals are approved based upon an estimated amount of funding requested by the partner and the final approved funding may change during the process to approve the partnership agreement. At this time, all available AWEP funding has been allocated to approved projects. After the partnership agreements have been approved, the projects are announced by NRCS in each State and eligible farmers and ranchers may apply for program benefits. Program applicants must meet eligibility requirements of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) – More information about EQIP can be found at the following website: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/>.

The following information includes the State(s) in which the project will be carried out, the name of the partner organization, the project title, and the total amount of NRCS funding requested by the partner.

ST	Name of Organization/Partner	Project Title	Project Description	FY 2010 Fund Request
CA	Honey Lake RCD Lower Susan River Watershed Partnership	Addressing Water Conservation and Water Quality Concerns within the Lower Susan River Watershed	Install conservation practices that will conserve irrigation water from surface and groundwater sources and improve surface water quality within the project area.	\$749,429
CA	Colusa Glenn Sub watershed Program	To Improve Surface and Ground Water Quality and Quantity in Colusa Basin Watershed	To encourage irrigated landowners within the Colusa Basin Watershed to implement BMPs that will increase irrigation efficiency, decrease runoff, sediment and flooding and improve surface and groundwater quality.	\$1,199,800
CA	Yolo County and Western Shasta Resource Conservation District	A Partnership to Improve Water Quality and Enhance Conservation Efforts on Rangeland in the Sacramento Valley Cluster	To develop a number of remedies to address water quality, quantity, and natural resource issues on rangeland of high conservation concern.	\$750,000
CA	Fall River Resource Conservation District	Addressing Water Conservation and Water Quality Concerns within the Lower Pit River Watershed	This project will address both water conservation resource issues and water quality resource issues.	\$400,000
CA	Western Shasta Resource Conservation District	Improving ACID Water Use Efficiency	Implement water conservation and water quality projects on irrigation laterals with sever infrastructure degradation that affects water quality and water use efficiency.	\$607,434
CA	Western United Dairymen	Dairy Infrastructure and Retrofit Project to Promote Groundwater and Surface Water Conservation and Water Quality Improvement in the California Central Valley	This project will address both water conservation resource issues and water quality resource issues.	\$1,000,000
CA	San Diego County Farm Bureau	San Diego County Water Enhancement Program	The project will assist growers in improving the efficiency of their farm operations, which will eventually lead to water savings, water quality enhancement and water conservation.	\$800,000
CA	Columbia Canal Company	Improving Irrigation Efficiency and Protecting Groundwater Resources	This project encourages the conversion of existing flood-irrigated row crop land to micro/drip-irrigated orchards.	\$215,050
CA	Palo Verde Resource Conservation District	Eastern Riverside	This project will provide water quality benefits through reduced runoff and leaching of nutrients and provide water conservation benefits by improving water use.	\$175,000

ST	Name of Organization/Partner	Project Title	Project Description	FY 2010 Fund Request
CO	Neegronda Irrigation Partners	Neegronda Irrigation Project	The primary concern of this project is water quality and water quantity with goals to provide viable options to address limited water resources with management and structural practices.	\$303,800
CO	Central Colorado Water Conservancy District	On-Farm Conservation, Telemetry Monitoring and Groundwater Conservation Program	This project provides applicants the opportunity to install conservation equipment on their irrigation operation through CACO, build a green reservoir, and install radio telemetry on their groundwater well for conservation and water quality monitoring.	\$226,000
FL	Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	Reducing the Use of Groundwater and Improving Water Quality in the Dover/Plant City Study Area of Florida	To improve water conservation and water quality within the project area.	\$750,000
KS	Big Bend Groundwater Management District Number Five	Reduction of Irrigation Acres in the Rattlesnake Creek Sub basin in Kansas	The objective of this project is to reduce water use by addressing resource concerns relating to aquifer overdraft and insufficient flows in a water course.	\$572,844
KS	Northwest Kansas Local AWEP Partnership District #4	Conversion of Irrigation Cropping to Permanent Non-Irrigated Cropping for Consumptive Groundwater Use Conservation	To slow the water table decline rate in specifically designated aquifer subunits and to extend the economic life of the local aquifer.	\$2,666,666
KS	Equus Beds Groundwater Management District No. 2	Improving Groundwater Irrigation Management & Efficiency in the Equus Beds Groundwater Management District- Kansas	To address groundwater resources issues, specifically inefficient water use on irrigated land and aquifer overdraft.	\$1,135,000
MT	Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project Board of Control	Lower Yellowstone On-Farm Water Conservation Measures	The project will address water conservation issues.	\$998,600
NE	Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District	Groundwater Quality and Supply Conservation Project in the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District	Participants will install conservation practices that will conserve irrigation water from groundwater sources and improve groundwater quality within the project area.	\$1,012,530
NE	Lower Republican Natural Resources District (LRNRD)	Lower Republican AWEP Partnership	This proposal will address water conservation resource issues in the counties of Furnas, Harlan, Franklin, and portions of Webster and Nuckolls in the Republican River Basin of the state of Nebraska.	\$999,240
NE	Nebraska Department of Natural Resources	Ogallala/Platte River Recovery AWEP	The project would be used to reduce water consumption in a critical habitat area through the conversion of ag land from irrigated farming to non-irrigated land uses.	\$2,000,000
NY	Watershed Agriculture Council	Encouraging Diligent Implementation of Nutrient Management Plans in the New York City Watershed	This project proposes to offer an incentive for participants to precisely implement their NMP and to provide manure application records to document this compliance.	\$120,000
OR	Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District	Protecting Surface Water Quality and Quantity within Oregon's Upper Tualatin River Watershed	The project objective is to improve water quality and quantity in the Upper Tualatin River Watershed target area through ranked conservation practices.	\$364,728
OR	Fruitvale Water Users Association	Restoration and Upgrade of the Irrigation System in the Middle Branch of Mud Creek - Oregon	To assist producers within the project area to implement practices to address the most efficient use of available irrigation water and reduce soil erosion.	\$69,900

ST	Name of Organization/Partner	Project Title	Project Description	FY 2010 Fund Request
OR	Talent Irrigation District	Talent Irrigation District E12 Water Quality Improvement Project Jackson County, Oregon	Install conservation practices that will properly utilize limited surface water resources, improve water quality on floor irrigated land by converting to more efficient irrigation systems, and to apply proper irrigation water management to eliminate irrigation runoff.	\$160,000
WA	Kittitas County Conservation District	Manastash Creek: Restoration for Water Quantity, Streamflow and Fish Passage	Install conservation practices that will increase efficiency of irrigation delivery and on farm irrigation.	\$148,500
WA	Department of Ecology	Hangman Creek Collaboration: A Comprehensive Watershed Restoration Initiative	This project proposes to offer participants approved conservation practices that will deliver the water quality protections needed to restore the Hangman Creek Watershed.	\$221,500
WA	North Yakima Conservation District	Purdin Ditch Piping - Water Conservation and Water Quality Project	This project seeks to address high priority water conservation, water quality, and fish and wildlife resource concerns.	\$1,320,402
WA	Washington Water Project of Trout Unlimited	Upper Columbia Methow Tributary Enhancement Project	This project will help fund irrigation efficiency improvements for irrigators who wish to upgrade their handline systems to pivots.	\$250,000
WY	Laramie County Conservation District	Ogallala Aquifer Conservation Restoration in the Laramie County Conservation District	The project provides incentives to agriculture producers for irrigation water management and ultimately conversion of irrigated cropland to dryland crops or pasture grazing.	\$545,070
				\$19,761,493.00