



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
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To Be Sent Via Electronic Mail

February 11, 2004

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 300-4-15

SUBJECT: LTP – EQIP – FY-2004 DISTRICT AND AREA FUNDING AND TIMELINES

Purpose. To inform all offices of the Minnesota EQIP allocation.

Expiration Date. September 31, 2004.

Minnesota received \$23.1 million in EQIP cost-share funds for 2004. Attached to this bulletin is the initial listing of EQIP allocations. As in 2003, funds will be distributed based on SWCD and Area boundaries. Although funds are distributed by district boundaries, the District Conservationist has sole responsibility to decide on local priorities using the local work group process, to approve and sign EQIP contracts, and to insure that total local obligations do not exceed local allocation. DC's will use ProTracts to track their local obligations.

In addition to the local and area allocations, \$500,000 has been allocated to the Areas for Tribal outreach. These funds will be reserved for Tribal contracts so that only tribal applications would compete for these dollars.

Each ASTC(FO) will have the authority to move funds as needed between their counties. The State Office will also retain approximately \$259,000 for modifications and errors.

Also attached is an EQIP timeline for 2004.

March 22 is the cut-off date for the first local ranking period. On March 23, DC's should take all applications received through the 22<sup>nd</sup>, score, rank and approve applications for funding within their local allocation. DC's must use ProTracts to indicate applications as "Approved" under the Applications tab. Applications cannot be "Approved" in ProTracts until a plan has been uploaded from Toolkit and the rules check completed.

DC's should have all approved applications from this first ranking period earmarked as "Approved" in ProTracts by March 29. The State Office will generate an approved applications report from ProTracts for use by the State Conservationist to request additional EQIP funding from NHQ.

Offices should continue to:

- Take applications;
- Develop plans in Toolkit;
- Enter them into ProTracts; and,
- Provide all applications, both approved and not approved, to FSA as you receive them through the end of May.

Providing applications to FSA early in the process helps determine that participants are eligible and if a potential contract would be administered out of a different FSA office. As indicated on the timeline, additional ranking dates will be at the end of April and May unless all funds are already obligated.

On June 7, unobligated local funds will be rolled into their respective Area Office allocation. Unobligated Area funds will be transferred between Areas as needed, with a goal to have all funds obligated by August 31, 2004.

WILLIAM HUNT  
State Conservationist

Enclosure: 2004 EQIP Allocations  
2004 EQIP Timeline

DIST: AC  
DC  
ARC  
EQIP State Office Team