

NRCS Forestry & Wildlife Sub-Working Group

August 25, 2010

Arkansas River Room, ANRC, Little Rock, AR

Requests / Recommendations to NRCS Staff / State Technical Committee

1. Change EQIP areas by moving Ashley and Drew Counties into Zone #7

Has been done.

2. Forestry Funding should be allocated to each of the EQIP areas based on the percentage of non-industrial forestland owners acres

- a. AFC can use FIA data to get NIPFL acres for each EQIP area if they have the shape file**

AFC provided the amount of non-industrial forestland in each of the EQIP areas. Data is with program staff.

3. Allow more flexibility for timing of prescribed burns

- a. Avoid burns during the nesting season unless approved by the private land biologist and NRCS.**

This request was made by those with a misunderstanding. The group understands now the timing of prescribed burns is limited only by the nesting season.

4. Change nesting season time frames to May 1st – July 31st. (now starts in April)

After much discussion the group decided on this recommendation. Later subgroup meetings found this recommendation hard to accept. At this time the nesting season dates are unchanged.

5. Recommend fire breaks be 15 foot, not less than 8 foot, with the debris scattered
 - a. Eliminate the 30 foot vegetated fire break option
 - b. 30 foot clearings should be used as part of Forest Stand Improvement, but not fire break
 - c. Water bars need to stay in the practice

After this recommendation was made, a poll of the DCs revealed about half wished to keep the 30 foot vegetated fire break. The staff decided to keep the 30 foot vegetative fire break.

The other recommendation for the 15 foot fire break is so close the existing standard (minimum width on existing is 10 feet) the staff left the existing standard in place.

The main concern of the group is not how wide the fire break is, but the debris buildup next to the fire break. The Practice Specifications have been changed so the debris has to be scattered and not piled next to the fire break.

6. Forestry funding to be increased to at least 15%.

Recommendation passed on to the State Technical Committee and program staff.

7. Request copies of ranking questions for ALL Programs (WHIP, WRP, & CSP)

Group received new ranking questions for EQIP & WHIP.

8. Request a schedule be developed of when the local county working groups meet so that other conservation partners and landowners can participate and give input.

- a. Several working group meetings are scheduled with short notice and/or little notification

No progress on this request

9. Members of the committee requested additional information on how EQIP 2011 Zones were developed

Other than discussion at the meeting, no progress on this request.

10. Members of the committee requested shape files for the EQIP 2011 Zones

Group received the shape files

11. Request a list of practices that also includes the scenario for each component of the practice.
 - a. Need better understanding of how practices are intended to be implemented

Staff is currently working on such a document

12. Recommend Mid Management Practices for CRP will have as little action as possible. Will request permission from National FSA to not have any mid-management activities

FSA required mid management practices. Sub-committee is working on revisions.

13. Suggested Local EQIP ranking questions for the NRCS staff to consider.

EQIP ranking questions suggestions came from subcommittee and resulted in one new local question and changes in the clarifiers on two other questions.