



Agriculture and Markets

Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program Round 28 Questions and Answers April 11, 2022

(Please also review the Round 28 RFP, Highlights and Proposal Rating Sheet for more information. If you do not find the answer to your question in any of these documents, please contact Bethany Bzduch, Bethany.bzduch@agriculture.ny.gov)

Round 28 Questions

Communities with active Drinking Water Source Protection Program Plans:

- Village of Clayville

- 1) I have been asked by an agricultural research institute to apply on their behalf for Ag NPS grant funding for a waste storage facility. They operate a Medium CAFO Dairy Farm. In order to comply with new CAFO regulations, they need to increase waste storage capacity. Is the institute eligible for state funds from the Ag NPS program?**
 - A. Program funds are available for nonpoint source abatement and control projects that plan or implement Ag BMPs on New York State farms. The definition of farm in the Agriculture and Markets Law (which is the definition that is used for the AgNPS program) is: "Farm operation" means the land and on-farm buildings, equipment, manure processing and handling facilities, and practices which contribute to the production, preparation and marketing of crops, livestock and livestock products as a commercial enterprise (AGM Article 25-AA § 301). Because this facility identifies itself as an educational institution it is not eligible to apply for funding through the AgNPS program. (2017, Round 23, updated Round 28)
- 2) Is there a list of BMP's that require a CNMP?**
 - A. The AGNPS program only requires a CNMP be developed when proposing to implement a Waste Storage Facility (NRCS – NY Standard 313). (2019, Round 25, updated Round 28)
- 3) I'm looking to apply for round 28 AgNPS funding to construct a bunk silo for a farm I'm working on. Can a NM-Core plan suffice in place of a full 590 CNMP?**
 - A. Through the AGNPS program, if a landowner is seeking funds for an implementation project, they must have completed an AEM Tier 3 plan, which could include a Tier 3A, Tier 3B, or Tier 3C. If the landowner is seeking funds to implement a Waste Storage Facility (NRCS NY 313), the program requires that a CNMP be completed prior to application. If you will be applying for funding to construct a new bunk silo, please make sure to review the Relocation of Silage Bunks/New Bunk Construction Policy.

4) Is a not-for-profit farm eligible?

A. To be eligible for the AGNPS program, participants must be a landowner who is currently renting the land to an agricultural operation or the participant must meet the definition of a "farm operation" as defined in the Agriculture and Markets law: *"Farm operation" means the land and on-farm buildings, equipment, manure processing and handling facilities, and practices which contribute to the production, preparation and marketing of crops, livestock and livestock products as a commercial enterprise ...*" (AGM Article 25-AA § 301). A not-for-profit farm could be eligible if it meets the criteria of being a commercial enterprise, regardless of its 501(c)3 status.

5) A farm is currently producing compost from waste (i.e., manure, bedding, silage) that is imported to the farm. The farm has no on-farm generated waste. Can they apply for a manure composting facility through AGNPS if all of the waste is brought in from other local dairy farms?

A. Yes, the farm would be eligible to apply for a manure composting facility through the AGNPS program.

6) Are landowners that are non-farmers eligible to participate in the program? The landowner interested in applying to the AGNPS program currently rents land to an agricultural operation.

A. Non-Farming landowners could be eligible to participate in the AGNPS program. The land where the best management practice will be located must be actively worked by a farm operation. A rental agreement between the non-farming landowner and the farm operation must be in place for the lifespan of the proposed best management practice system. Additionally, the proposed best management practice system must be documented in the AEM Tier 3 plan developed for the operating farm.

7) A farm received cost share assistance through AGNPS in a previous round. The farm has since been sold and is now under new ownership. Would a new landowner but same farm qualify as a farm who has not previously received cost share assistance through the program?

A. If the new owner of the farm has not received cost share assistance through a previous Round of AGNPS they would qualify.

8) A farm rents a bunk silo to store some of their feed. The rented bunk silo does not currently have any silage leachate treatment practices in place. The farm would like to expand their existing on-farm bunk silo to accommodate all of their feed storage needs and discontinue the use of the rented bunk silo. Would this project be considered a Bunk Silo relocation project? If not, can the farm still expand their bunk floor as landowner match only and cost share the Heavy Use Area and, structure for water control, separator basin upgrade, subsurface drainage?

A. This project would not be considered "bunk silo relocation" or "new bunk silo construction" and therefore the Relocation of Silage Bunks/New Bunk Construction policy would not apply. This project would be eligible provided that all of the necessary silage leachate treatment practices are in place and are appropriately sized to manage the expanded bunk.

9) Would a streambank project to protect agricultural fields from eroding using a structural practice (rock riprap) with bioengineering qualify through AgNPS Round 28?

A. Yes, this project would be eligible through the AGNPS program. These practices would be part of a Stream Corridor and Shoreline Management System.

Frequently Asked Questions

Soil Health System

The Soil Conservation Cultural System title has been changed and will now be referred to as “Soil Health System”. This change is reflected in the Ag BMP Catalogue. The policy titled, “Soil Conservation Cultural System Implementation Guidance” shall be used when applying for Soil Health Systems through Round 27.

Population Served by Public Drinking Water Supply

The following website can be used when determining the population served by a Public Drinking Water Supply:

https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/pws_contacts/map_pws_contacts.htm. For further assistance, Districts can also reach out to their county health departments or contact Ashley Inzerillo, NYS Department of Health Source Protection Section, Bureau of Water Supply Protection (Ashley.inzerillo@health.ny.gov) or (518-402-7650).

Q. A farm has animal numbers currently that makes them CAFO size and they are now going through the correct process to officially be a CAFO. They are not a registered CAFO with DEC yet but are taking necessary steps to do that. For the application: How do I answer questions 1,4, and 20?

A. The application questions need to be answered based on the current status of the farm at the time of application.

Q. A Bedded Pack system which will have a scrap alley to a small storage is being proposed. Because it is roofed does a screening tool for both HUAP and for the Waste Storage Facility need to be completed?

A. The Waste Storage and Transfer System – Bedded Pack/Composted Bedded Pack Cost Share Eligible Practices Policy states that both screening tools need to be completed when implementing a Bedded Pack or Compost Bedded Pack System.

Q. A farm is interested in putting in a waste storage facility for chicken manure, specifically a stacking facility. Will the grant be able to cover full walls instead of a partial wall? The engineer and farmer have concerns with the amount of snow/rain, along with the wind may push the snow/rain into the storage if partial walls were to be installed versus having a complete full wall. Odor is another issue that could be reduced with full walls.

A. “Any Waste Storage Facility cost shared through the AGNPS program must meet NRCS Standard 313. The standard states that walls are permitted when implementing a stacking facility. The wall height shall be determined using the anticipated stacking angle of the waste material (please note the additional criteria for Poultry Litter Stacking Facilities). A roof may be added for the purpose of clean water exclusion and all designs shall incorporate adequate safety features to prevent failure. The facility must be operated and maintained as

a Waste Storage Facility for the duration of the Best Management Practice System lifespan. Additionally, when applying for a NRCS Standard 313 - Waste Storage Facility, a CNMP must be completed PRIOR to the application due date.”

Q. A farm would like to construct an Agrichemical Handling Facility. The farm currently gets water from a neighbor’s pond to fill his sprayer. Wells in the area are not an option due to lack of water supply. Can we construct a small pond as a water source for the A.H.F with the sole purpose being water supply for the facility?

A. According to the NRCS NY Standard Agrichemical Handling Facility (309), it is necessary to provide an adequate water supply for mixing agrichemicals, rinsing tanks and containers, and for emergency health and safety needs as appropriate for the facility. If the proposed Agrichemical Handling & Storage System requires a new water supply (i.e., a well or pond) this would be an eligible cost.

Q. A farm previously received AGNPS funds to implement a collection apron for a silage bunk. The collection apron is still within the O&M lifespan. The remaining portion of the bunk is becoming degraded and the farm would like to apply the AGNPS program to address the new resource concern. Is this an eligible project?

A. This is an eligible project because the farm is addressing a new resource concern that was not present when funding was previously applied for. However, in this instance, the proposed project meets the definition of a Repeat BMP System and would need to be designated as such in the application.

Q. The farm currently uses treated pond water for their water source for drinking water and all other farm uses. According to the farm the treated water tests well, but the treatment is costly and quantity has been an issue at times. There is a village public water line approximately 900 feet from the farm that they would like to connect to if possible. Can the water line from a village to a farm be included as a practice within the Agrichemical Handling & Storage System? Livestock Pipeline is a practice within that system, but I’m not sure that it is applicable. The second part of this question is can the farm use the water line as part of their in-kind percentage if it is not an eligible bmp but they want to connect to village water anyway?

A. Establishing a new water supply for the *ENTIRE* farm is not eligible for cost share assistance. According to the NRCS NY Standard Agrichemical Handling Facility (309), it is necessary to provide an adequate water supply for mixing agrichemicals, rinsing tanks and containers, and for emergency health and safety needs as appropriate for the facility. The costs associated with providing a water supply to the agrichemical handling facility from an existing water supply for the farm can be cost shared. Additionally, if the proposed Agrichemical Handling & Storage System requires a new water supply (i.e., a well) this would be an eligible cost. Only costs that are directly associated with the proposed Best Management Practice System are eligible for match.

Q. A CAFO farm wants to apply for a satellite waste storage. A waste transfer would move the waste from the main pit to the satellite pit using a PTO pump that could be moved. Is the mobile pump eligible for cost share or landowner match? A second waste transfer would move waste from the satellite pit, 4000 feet south to a large block of land where the manure would be land applied. Would the underground piping and pump be eligible for cost share or only for landowner match? There would be a frac tank and pump to unload the tank and fill the spreaders at the end of the

second waste transfer. Could this equipment be either cost shared or landowner match?

A. A portable manure pump shall be considered as landowner match only. The underground piping and pump for the waste transfer would be eligible for cost share or landowner match. Items that are integral to the function of the BMP system may be considered for cost share or landowner match, however, portable pumps shall be considered as landowner match only.

Q. While siting a location for manure storage a private planner shows it adjacent to a wet area with wetland vegetation that IS NOT mapped as a state or federal wetland. What is the proper action to continue with a grant application? Should the Army Corps of Engineers be contacted prior to the application?

A. Given the proximity of the proposed storage location to an area displaying characteristics of a wetland, the landowner, private planner, and SWCD may want to consider alternative locations. If this is not possible, NRCS should be contacted to begin the process of a conducting a wetland determination. The District may still submit the application, with the understanding that it is the responsibility of the District/LO to determine the need for and obtain all permits necessary. Note, permits do not need to be obtained prior to submitting the application. While not required, as much of this as possible should be worked out prior to application to evaluate feasibility of the project. Additionally, when constructing a 313 Waste Storage close to a seasonal water table extra design criterion must be considered. Geological assessments/permits/extra design criteria can result in project delays and/or increased project costs.

Q. Under the Ag Nonpoint Source Program, is it a requirement for earthen waste storages to be lined (regardless of suitable soils) as in the CAFO Program?

A. No, this is not currently a requirement through the AGNPS program. However, synthetic liners are eligible for cost share as components of a Waste Storage and Transfer system.

Q. A farm is interested in applying for funding for a standalone waste transfer. The transfer system they are wanting to implement would connect the existing waste storage at their main farmstead to a satellite storage (approximately 2 miles away) that has not been built yet. This satellite storage is a NRCS funded project that is intended to be built this year, but currently does not exist. The proposed waste transfer would need to cross multiple landowners, several roads, several streams, as well as crossing between two HUC 12's to connect the two storages. Is this proposed waste transfer eligible for funding?

A. The standalone waste transfer practice would be eligible as a part of an Agricultural Waste Storage and Transfer System. NRCS funding counts as landowner match so the funding devoted to the storage would be reported under the landowner column as a part of the entire system. The state share for the transfer would be reported as a part of the entire system and listed under state contribution. The District and landowner would be responsible for obtaining all permits to cross landowner boundaries, streams, roads, etc. for this transfer. As much of this as possible should be worked out prior to application to evaluate feasibility of this approach. Tentative landowner permissions and a list of required permits should be obtained prior to application to evaluate the feasibility of this approach. If the project is selected for funding the landowner will be required to have a lease or easement in place on all non-owned property that the transfer line would cross over prior to the development of a contract with the District.

Q. A farm is interested in doing a combination of no-till and cover crop. The three-year plan, as they want it written, has no-till in all three years, but cover crop in only one due to crop rotation limitations. According to the new Soil Health policy, the BMP system needs to have a three-year commitment. In our scenario, the no-till and cover crop are technically the same system, but we do not have a three-year commitment from this farm on cover crop alone. Is this something that would be eligible? Or do we need to have a three-year commitment on the cover crop and no-till separately?

A. The Soil Health Policy states, "...component practices with per unit rates will be cost shared for a three-year term for competitive cost share programs or two-year term for AEM Base cost-share. The commitment to a three-year or two-year term is aimed to facilitate successful practice adoption considering the need to demonstrate practice success over more than one growing season." If cover crop is included in the system as a component practice, the farm must be committed to implementing it for three years. However, there is not currently a rule against changing fields for cover crops based on rotation as long as the total acres proposed to be cover cropped is implemented.

Q. Under Ag. Non-Point, under the cover crop vegetative practice specification, lime can be added as a soil amendment using requirements of NYS Ag. & Markets by soil test. Can a District recommend a much higher rate of lime application while utilizing cover crops and reduced tillage management to further reduce sediment and nutrient removal via surface runoff or leaching?

A. Recommending a higher rate of lime application would not make the cover crop project ineligible. When planning for implementation, this recommendation should be detailed and explained in the AEM Tier 3A Cover Crop Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation Tool (or similar planning document). It should also be noted that recommending a higher application rate of lime can increase the overall project cost which should be taken into consideration if utilizing a flat rate per acre.

Q. We are writing an application for the implementation of cover crops. The farms that are going to be installing the cover crops have many fields covering the whole county, multiple watersheds and HUC areas. When we fill out the application should we just be putting the watershed and HUC that the farmstead is located on, even though some of their tracts that the cover crops will be put on will be on different ones?

A. The Application Form states, "Please list the 12 Digit Hydrologic Unit Code(s) being addressed by the proposed project". Please list all HUCs that will be addressed by the proposed project. The HUC that the farmstead is located in should be listed on the SW 1 – Participating Landowner form.

Q. Can you confirm yes or no, if a farm operation (50 acres of vineyard) which also presses grapes would be eligible for cost share assistance? Specifically addressing the wastewater and sludge produced at the press operation.

A. If it is a facility that requires a SPDES permit to handle process waste, then it is considered a point source and therefore not eligible for funding under this program. (2005, Round XII)

Q. If a farm is under a consent order from DEC, are they eligible for funding through the Ag NPS program?

A. A farm would not be ineligible because of the consent order. It should be noted, however, that due to the time frame of the grant program, applicants should not expect to use grant funds for a problem that requires an urgent, immediate remedy. (2002, Round IX)

Q. [UPDATED – 11/4/10] Q. Referring to Question 5. “Are all regulated CAFO farms compliant with appropriate requirements? (CAFO = Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation.)” Can a CAFO that has not yet met CAFO requirements be included on an application?

A. No, a CAFO that has not met CAFO requirements is not eligible to be included on an application and cannot be considered for funding. (2004, Round XI).

The Department of Environmental Conservation recommends and the Ag NPS contract requires that funding not be provided to a CAFO that has been issued a Notice of Violation under the terms of the CAFO General SPDES Permit by which the farm is permitted at time of application (CWA Permit – GP-04-02 or ECL Permit – GP-0-09-001). If a CAFO that is part of a funded project receives a Notice of Violation for either type of permit, it must agree to a consent order with a compliance schedule or otherwise resolve the Notice of Violation with DEC, in order to release Ag NPS funding [UPDATED – 11/4/10].

Letter from Division Director to Undisclosed District (January, 2006) “The [AgNPS Program] requires that participating farms be in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations. The DEC-Division of Water has informed us that the Blank Farm is not in compliance with their CAFO General Permit and has not addressed the terms of the Consent Order issued on... When the Blank Farm is in compliance with the terms of the Permit, we can release funds for the projects identified on the plan of work. Until such time, however, no state funded expenses can be allocated to the Blank Farm’s portion of the contract. Consequently, all entitled advances cannot include state funds for the Blank Farm portion as identified on the plan of work.”

Equipment Eligibility

The purchase of specialized equipment may be considered an eligible expense under the program if deemed a reasonable percentage of the total project cost as determined by the State Committee and is considered an integral component of the project. *If considering the purchase of specialized equipment (cost share or landowner match), approval must be obtained by the State Committee prior to equipment purchase.* Manure spreaders will no longer be considered for funding but can be used as part of the farmer’s match if the waste storage system being implemented requires the farmer to purchase a different type of spreader, i.e. liquid vs. solid. (2002, Round IX, updated 2018)

Q. In an implementation project, though most equipment is not eligible for state funding, would a pump for a waste storage facility be considered equipment?

A. Items that are an integral part of the BMP may be considered for state funding. Other related equipment may be eligible as a match. In either case, equipment should be listed in the Other Direct Expenses category. (2002, Round IX)

Q. Can the AgNPS Program provide cost share for BMP Systems that utilize NRCS Standards from other states for the purpose of design, implementation, and certification?

A. BMP Systems cost-sharable under the AgNPS Grants Program must be identified in the Agricultural Best Management Practice Systems Catalogue and the individual Conservation Practices must meet NRCS-NY Practice Standards. If NRCS-NY has approved the use of a

particular standard or suite of standards to address a NPS pollution concern, standards from other states cannot be used in place of the NRCS-NY standard(s). If no NRCS-NY Practice Standard exists for a particular NPS pollution concern, then the Practice must be designed to meet nationally recognized standards (e.g. American Concrete Institute Standards). All practices implemented must be approved by an individual with appropriate approval authority. *(Round 19, 2012, updated Round 22, 2016)*

Q. Can grant funds be used to pay for roof structures where a consultant engineer will not allow/approve a wastewater treatment strip?

A. Grant funds may be used to cost-share a roof structure if the project engineer documents that the roof is needed to meet the water quality objectives of the planned best management practice. This alternative may be costly. If proposing this alternative, the Screening Tool for Covered Heavy Use Areas must be completed, signed and submitted with each copy of the proposal. Please refer to the Roofs and Covers for Livestock Heavy Use Area Runoff Management Systems: Cost Share Eligible Components to determine what components are eligible for cost share. *(Updated for Round 20)*.

Q. Would excluding livestock and establishing a marginal pastureland wetland buffer (CREP CP 30) that meets the appropriate NRCS-NY Standard(s) qualify for preference points pursuant to the Proposal Rating Sheet?

A. Yes, the purpose of the preference points is to encourage the adoption of livestock access control and buffers for all hydrologically sensitive areas, including wetlands. In order to qualify for the points, all livestock on the farm must be excluded from all wetlands where they currently have access. *(Round 19, 2012)*

Q. If a BMP being applied for is on rented property; should the lease between farmer and landowner be for the life of the practice (10Yrs) or the life of the practice plus the years in the contract (13-14yrs) (the BMP doesn't get implemented until the last year of the contract)? Also, should the lease be on file and submitted with the application or do we not need it until the Plan of Work?

A. According to the RFP, "BMPs to be implemented on rented property should not be submitted for funding unless there is a written lease for the use of the property for the life span of the BMP (see attached BMP Operation & Maintenance Guidelines, Page 17)." In order to qualify for funding under the AG NPS program, the farmer must have an existing lease with the landowner. The lease would need to cover application, award, construction, and the lifespan of the BMP. In your scenario, if the BMP system is not implemented until the last year of a 4 year contract and there is a 10 year lifespan, the lease would be 14 years plus the application time period. According to previous Q and A, "The District should ensure that the lease exists, but it need not be included in the application. If funding is awarded, a copy of the lease may be required." *(2002, Round IX, 2017, Round 23)*

Q. I have a question in regards to cost-sharing mulch installation on vineyard lands. I understand that once we have cost-shared mulch installation for three years with one farm, they are not eligible in the near future for additional mulching cost-share payments. Is that only for those vineyard blocks or is that for any vineyard lands the farm has under their control. If a vineyard owner picks up a new piece of property that has never had mulch installed before, if they could be eligible for AgNPS grant funds for mulch installation at the new property.

A. With cover crops and mulching, the AgNPS Program is piloting an approach that supports the learning phase with a new practice for three years so a farmer can efficiently adopt it within their own farm budget post-contract. After contract completion, farms may reapply

based on new technologies being available, local priorities of the AEM Strategy, and/or the Soil Health System practice is needed to address additional concerns than what were dealt with in the original contract. (Round 21, 2015, updated 2019, 2021)

Q. The Soil Conservation Cultural – System implementation guidance identifies two categories for cover crop payment: Cover Crop – Basic and Organic/Non-Organic and Cover Crop Multiple Species Organic and Non-Organic. Can we assume that if we sign someone up based on the Multiple Species program and they can't pull it off one year (due to weather constraints, etc.), but can plant a Basic Species that we could count it and just have to pay them at the lower rate?

A. Yes. If the farmer cannot complete the Multiple Species due to weather constraints, etc., a Basic Species may be planted and would be eligible to be reimbursed at the lower rate if it can be certified (2016, Round 22, updated 2019).

Q. Is a Center Pivot Irrigation System eligible for cost share? This is a system that is fixed in a field and pivots around the well water source to irrigate a large tract of land. It will be computer controlled, with drop water nozzles that regulate the water flow to match field conditions and crop needs.

A. Implementing conservation systems on acreage that is rotated between specialty crops and field crops is acceptable. Implementing an irrigation system that would provide a water quality benefit would be acceptable as part of an Irrigation Water Management System. (2017, Round 23)

Q. A CAFO dairy farm currently buries their dead animals. They are interested in purchasing an incinerator in order to manage animal mortalities. Is it possible to fund an incinerator through the ag nonpoint source program?

A. This would be an eligible practice through the Ag Non-Point Source Program. It will need to be implemented in accordance with the NRCS-NY 316 -Animal Mortality Facility Standard and Specifications. The District will need to verify the requirement for special permits prior to implementation. (2019, Round 25)

Q. We have 2 barnyards on the same farm that we are applying for Roofs and Covers (367). The barnyards run parallel to one another and are only separated by 20 feet. Do we need to submit separate barnyard screening tools for each barnyard or can we define each barnyard on the same screening tool.

A. If these projects are considered two separate Livestock Heavy Use Area Runoff Management systems then a Covered Heavy Use Area Screening Tool would need to be completed for each system. If they are part of the same system, one screening tool may be submitted.

Q. Does the "Screening Tool For Roofs and Covers for Heavy Use Areas" need to be filled out for an Agrichemical Handling and Storage System?

A. The Screening Tool for Roofs and Covers for Heavy Use Areas does not need to be filled out for an Agrichemical Handling and Storage System.

Q. A farm has a silage bunk located on a Trout stream and the only solution is to relocate the bunk and provide treatment at the new site. Can the new bunk pad, exterior wall, and, the treatment system be cost shared? The farm will also require an access road which will be used to maintain the VTA, pump out the tank, etc. Can the access road be included as part of the Silage Leachate System?

A. Pursuant to the Bunk Silo Relocation Policy/New Bunk Silo Construction Policy which was updated in November 2021, the new bunk floor for the relocated bunk silo can be cost shared if it is the same size as the original bunk floor or smaller. Any amount over the size of the original floor must be considered Landowner Match Only. The treatment system may also be cost shared. Exterior walls will be considered Landowner Match Only. The access road is an allowable practice and can be cost shared as it will be used to maintain the VTA, pump out the tank, etc. (2016, Round 22, updated 2018 Round 24, updated 2022 Round 28).

Q. I am working with a farm that would like to address issues from a bunk silo area. The current silo does not have a concrete floor, only crushed stone and millings. Can a concrete floor be cost shared or only landowner match?

A. The bunk silo floor can be cost shared or used as landowner match as part of a Silage Leachate Control and Treatment System. (2018, Round 24)

Q. Could a project be allowed for funding if the silage leachate (i.e., total collection) goes to an existing six-month storage that was not designed by an engineer?

A. The waste storage facility that will collect the silage leachate must meet the NRCS 313 Waste Storage Facility standard and be certified by a professional engineer in order to be eligible. (2018, Round 24)

Q. Can the AgNPS Program cost share the construction of a ramp into an existing waste storage to facilitate the clean out of manure? The existing storage does meet NRCS Standards but clean out is difficult.

A. Construction of the clean out ramp would not be eligible in an existing certified storage as it is not a standalone water quality BMP. (2014, Round 20)

Q. A farm is interested in installing a satellite storage away from the farmstead. The farm indicates that there is a used storage (slurry store) that they can purchase for a reduced cost. If they were to purchase the used slurry store, can they apply for Ag Non Point to help offset the costs of installing the slurry onto their property?

A. A used Slurrystore can be used and cost shared provided a representative of Slurrystore oversees the construction of the storage. The storage as set up in its new location will need to be certified that it is structurally sound and meets the NRCS standard 313 – Waste Storage Structure. All other program requirements such as the use of the Waste Storage Screening Tool, and a CNMP eventually being developed or revised to reflect the presence and proper use of the Slurrystore must be met (Round 22, 2016).

Q. Are Bedded Packs [or Composted Bedded Packs] eligible practice system[s] for manure storage and feeding? If so what components would be cost shareable?

A. Yes, both Bedded Packs and Composted Bedded Pack Systems for manure storage or composting are eligible practice systems through the Ag NPS Grant Program. Components that are an integral part of the practice standard being applied may be considered for state funding. Other related or indirect components may be eligible as a match. The SWCC approved a policy on February 18, 2014 outlining the requirements for Waste Storage and Transfer System - Bedded Pack / Composted Bedded Pack Cost Share Eligible Practices Please contact the SWCC office for a copy of this policy. (Updated for Round 21).

Q. We have a farm that has previously received funding to install a waste storage facility that only receives silage leachate. They are now applying for funding for a waste storage facility that will only receive manure. Is this considered an expansion

related practice and does that mean that they should provide “significantly more cost share” as it says in the guidance manual? The farm does already have manure storage and they have expanded, but we never cost shared their existing manure storage just their leachate collection storage.

A. If the manure storage is being proposed to address a water quality concern that originated from intentional farm growth that occurred within the past 5 years then it is considered an expansion related practice. Landowners implementing expansion related practice systems must provide a contribution significantly greater than that required by the program (refer to the Match Requirements section of the RFP for more information). Previous guidance indicates that the amount of contribution may be determined by the applicant and the landowners involved. (2017, Round 23)

Q. The District is working with a farmer whose primary facilities are located in our county. The farm has a heifer facility in a neighboring county where they would like to construct a waste storage structure. Can our District write an AgNPS grant for the farm if the project location would be outside of the county?

A. Since the main facility is located in your county and the AEM records for the heifer facility are maintained by your SWCD, you may submit an application for a project located in a neighboring county. The two Districts may want to approve the application by way of a motion or joint resolution. (2017, Round 23)

Q. For BMPs on rented property, does a copy of the lease have to be included with the application?

A. No. The District should ensure that the lease exists, but it need not be included in the application. If funding is awarded, a copy of the lease may be required. (2002, Round IX)

Q. Can an applicant mix recommended and actual salary rates for District staff?

A. Typically, applicants assign either recommended or actual rates for District staff and cannot mix the two rates (2002, Round IX). The exception to this would be if a District employs a Professional Engineer and wishes to charge their actual hourly rate. If using an actual hourly rate for a District Engineer overhead expenses cannot be charged. *See *current RFP for further details*. (Updated 2019)

Q. Is there a specified hourly rate for landowner match? May the \$5/hour overhead be used?

A. No hourly rate has been specified for landowners. Districts determine a reasonable rate, based on the work the landowner will be performing. The \$5/hour overhead may not be used for landowners; it is to be used for agency personnel only, and only when the recommended hourly rates are used. Landowner match must be documented on the SW 3 form, NOT the SW 4 Personnel Worksheet (2002, Round IX, updated Round 27 2021)

Q. Can a grass mower with a bagging system for the clippings be used as landowner match for a Silage Leachate Control and Treatment System in order to collect and remove the clippings/nutrients from the Vegetated Treatment Area (VTA)?

A. In this case, the grass mower would be used to maintain the VTA. Costs associated with operation and maintenance are not eligible expenses through the AgNPS program. Therefore, the mower would not be eligible to cost share or as landowner match.

Q. Multiple proposals from a county must be clearly prioritized. How is this done? What section must this information be present?

A. Priorities are assigned by the local SWCD which submits multiple proposals. The application form includes a section for Project Priority ID#. Instructions pertaining to the assignment of a Project Priority ID are included in the RFP highlights document. (1995, Round III, updated 2019, 2021)

Q. For a broad agronomic or nutrient management project like cover cropping, that covers many areas of the watershed, are we able to include a farm scale "project area map" for each farm in place of a "project site map".

A. Yes, a farm scale map showing all fields and indicating which are to be cover cropped would satisfy the farmstead/field AEM plan map requirement. A farm scale map can be submitted in lieu of a project site map for the following Best Management Practice Systems: Feed Management System, Irrigation Water Management System, Integrated Pest Management System, Nutrient Management System-Cultural, Soil Conservation System – Cultural (this includes cover crop), and Waste Storage & Transfer System.

In addition, projects proposed to protect public drinking water over a sole source aquifer can supply one project map with the farms identified and the sole source aquifer overlaid.

The intent of asking for the farmstead or field map from the AEM Plan as described in the RFP is to show the project evaluators a visual of the existing condition and resource concern including the flow-path and distance to a receiving waterbody or groundwater recharge area.

A farmstead/field AEM plan map for **project site locations** as described in the RFP shall be included for the following BMP Systems: Access Control System, Agrichemical Handling and Storage Systems, Composting System - Animal, Livestock Heavy Use Area Runoff Management System, Pathogen Management System, Petroleum and Oil Storage System, Process Wash Water Management System, Silage Leachate Control and Treatment System, and Stream Corridor and Shoreline Management System, Prescribed Rotational Grazing System, and Riparian Buffer System (2015 – Round 21, updated Round 22).

Q. Can letters of support be included in the grant application?

A. No. Applicants should substantiate an organization's support and are free to obtain support letters for their own files, but these letters should not be included in the application. Any letters that accompany an application will be removed prior to distribution to reviewers. Applicants may list agencies and groups who support the proposal in the project narrative of the application form. (2002, Round IX, updated 2019)

Q. Can before and after photographs of past projects be included in a proposal to demonstrate the effectiveness of a practice?

A. Yes, photographs may be included as supporting documentation.

Past Performance

In the project ranking process, the review committee will consider the project sponsor's ability to complete previous projects in a timely manner. (memo from John Wildeman, 6/16/99)