



## **MRBI – EQIP Sixmile Creek Watershed Plan of Operations for Fiscal Year 2015**

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) offers financial assistance to agricultural producers to implement on-farm conservation practices. Eligible land is determined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and is based on an identified resource concern. Eligible producers may apply for financial assistance for conservation practices that will address the identified resource concerns.

### **Eligible Watershed Areas:**

Producers located within the Sixmile Creek watershed are eligible to participate in the Sixmile Creek MRBI-EQIP sign-up.

In order to be eligible for funding, over 50% of a field or pasture must be within the boundaries of these watersheds.

### **Eligible Practices and Payment Rates:**

See the documents posted on the WI NRCS website for the list of eligible practices and payment rates for MRBI-EQIP.

Core conservation practices are critical to addressing the targeted resource concerns for MRBI and to achieve the desired environmental outcomes for the Initiative. Contracts developed under MRBI must include at least one of the applicable core practice, or must be completing a conservation system that supports core practices that are documented as already applied on the land under contract.

### **Application Period:**

EQIP applications are accepted on a continuous basis throughout the year. The FY2015 Sixmile Creek MRBI-EQIP batching date (application deadline) is June 26, 2015. All eligible applications received by the close of business June 26, 2015 will be processed using a screening tool to assign a high, medium, or low priority. Applications will then be further evaluated and ranked, as available funding allows. If sufficient funding is still available after the first signup period, additional application signup periods may be announced.

Interested agricultural producers may apply in person at the Dane County USDA Service Center at 5201 Fen Oak Drive, Madison, WI 53718. Applicants may also request EQIP assistance by telephone (608/224-3750 x114), e-mail (adam.dowling@wi.usda.gov), or letter.

### **Fund Pools:**

The following table identifies the fund pools established for MRBI-EQIP applications.

## MRBI-DCLWRD-Sixmile

Producers applying for financial assistance available will be competing for funds within this fund pool.

Applications for Conservation Activity Plans will be single practice, stand-alone applications.

### **Screening:**

All applications will be screened using the EQIP 2015 Application Screening Tool posted on the WI NRCS web site and assigned a High, Medium, or Low priority based on their screening status as of June 26, 2015.

### **Ranking:**

Ranking of the applications will be done according to the ranking system posted on the WI NRCS web site for the Sixmile Creek MRBI-EQIP. High priority applications will be ranked first, followed by Medium priority, if funding allows. Low priority applications will not be ranked. All rankings will be conducted in ProTracts. In the event of application ranking score ties, the application that has the higher tracking code (i.e. random number generated in ProTracts) will receive funding priority.

### **Funding:**

NRCS will allocate the available Sixmile Creek MRBI-EQIP funds based on the numerical ranking system set forth on the WI NRCS website. Applications will be selected for plan development and contracted in ranked order according to Priority and ranking score, as funds allow. If there are insufficient funds available to fund an application, applications not selected for contracting will be deferred to the next application ranking period.