

**2024 NH Conservation Districts Climate Resilience Grant Ranking Matrix**

Applicant Scoring, Total Possible Points= 100\*

**Please Note: Only \$15,000 can be awarded to energy projects per district**

	Exemplary (10 Points)	Adequate/Needs Improvement (5 Points)	Missing (0 Points)	Score	Comments
Project Focus	Project has significant focus on climate change mitigation and/or adaptation	Project has some focus on climate change mitigation and/or adaptation	Projects has no focus on climate change mitigation/and or adaptation	<b>(Multiply X2 weighted to emphasize importance)</b>	
Implementation Plan	Project has a strong implementation plan (clearly defines what is to be done, how it will be done, who will do it, and when it will be done).	Project has some components of a strong implementation plan	Project has no components of a strong implementation plan		
Project Sustainability	Project has a strong plan to ensure sustainability of project	Project has some components of a plan to ensure the sustainability of project	Project has no components of a plan to ensure the sustainability of project		
Project track record	Project has a proven track record of success	Project has a some components with a track record of success	Project has no components with a track record of success		
Willingness to Partner	Applicant has a demonstrated commitment/willingness for farm	Applicant has expressed some interest in farm education/research/sh	Applicant has expressed no interest in farm education/research/s		

	education/research/sharing project story with conservation districts	aring project story with conservation districts	haring project story with conservation districts		
Budget	Applicant has created a realistic and well-researched budget (i.e., has researched multiple quotes, supply costs, etc.)	Applicant has created a budget, although only some components of it are realistic, may not seem thoroughly researched.	Applicant has created a budget, no components of it are realistic, or thoroughly researched		
Timeline	Project can realistically be completed within project time-frame	Applicant has created a timeline, although only some components of the project can be completed within the project time-frame.	Project cannot be completed within project time-frame		
Technical Advisor	Strong collaboration on project planning and implementation	Project has limited assistance from advisor	No advisor identified		
<b>TOTAL SCORE (* add 10 points if historically underserved*):</b>					

**\*Add 10 points to ranking if the applicant self-identifies as historically underserved (USDA Definition:**

**[https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/people/outreach/slbfr/?cid=nrcsdev11\\_001040](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/people/outreach/slbfr/?cid=nrcsdev11_001040), includes limited resource farmer/rancher, beginning, socially disadvantaged, veteran)**

## **Ranking Process**

Program applications are due on February 1, 2024. District staff will create their own independent selection committees to review applications. Staff may choose to include their entire boards, or create a selection subcommittee of staff, board members, and/or partners. In December, district staff will begin to set a date for an application review meeting to take place before Feb. 20th.

Review committee members will review applications and submit a filled out ranking matrix prior to meeting. The filled out matrix will serve as a record for reasoning, in addition to meeting notes, should applicants have any questions regarding their application or ways to improve their application in the future.

## **Working with USDA NRCS**

If applicants indicated that they applied for USDA NRCS funding for their project, whether funded or not, it is recommended that the Conservation District staff checks in with the Conservation Planner to review the project and receive their input for ranking. The Planner may have intimate knowledge of the project that the Conservation District would benefit from in their ranking process.

- **This funding is intended to fill the gaps that USDA NRCS and other federal and state programs are not meeting. Some examples of this are below:**

- o Sometimes good projects and practices will not rank high enough to get funded as a result of the NRCS ranking tool.
- o Sometimes the NRCS practice rate is lower than market rates and needs to be supplemented to make it worthwhile for producers to move forward (e.g. fencing, heavy use areas/manure storage, barnyard management, etc)
- o Sometimes the NRCS paperwork requirements are enough to scare people away for small contracts (benefit doesn't outweigh input of time) and sometimes some applications will not rank high enough to get funding

- o When producers are no longer eligible for NRCS funding support, ex. After 6 years of cover crop funding producers can no longer receive financial assistance unless they continue to make things more complex which is not always desirable for farms.
- o Some funding gaps for energy efficiency projects, ex. cooling for milk and cooling for cows