

STANDARDS OF EVALUATION

Grant applications are evaluated against several standards established by the Trust Board and by state law and regulation. These standards are summarized in this section for easy reference.

Trust Board Funding Categories Any project or portion of a project funded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust must achieve one or more of the following Trust priority areas. These priority areas are equally important.

Habitat: actions to preserve or restore native habitats and areas critical to at-risk, rare or endangered species; other preservation actions for at-risk, rare or endangered species including actions to understand ecosystem relationships which inform sound management; community habitat enhancement emphasizing native and ecologically appropriate plantings which provide food and shelter for wildlife; actions to inform and educate which contribute to the attainment of this category.

Surface and Ground Water: actions to preserve or restore lakes, streams and ground water from degradation or depletion; actions to research, design or foster best management practices; actions to conserve water and/or efficiently and effectively manage water use; actions to inform and educate which contribute to the attainment of this category.

Waste Management: actions promoting and implementing source reduction, waste management or toxicity reduction; actions promoting and implementing the development of recycling markets; actions promoting and implementing reuse and other disposal diversion actions; actions to inform and educate which contribute to the attainment of this category.

Air Quality: actions promoting and implementing clean air strategies; actions to research, design or foster best management strategies; actions to inform and educate which contribute to the attainment of this category.

Soil Management: actions and strategies to preserve, conserve and restore soil health; actions to research, design or foster the implementation and management of these strategies; actions to inform and educate which contribute to the attainment of this category.

Project Eligibility Criteria – All projects must meet all of the following criteria to be considered for funding. For the complete text of the regulations defining eligibility, please see our web site link to Title 137, Chapter 5.

1. The applicant must demonstrate that the project is environmentally acceptable. The project shall not cause harm to the environment and results in a net gain for the environment.
2. The project must have clear and direct environmental benefits.
3. The project must make a real contribution to achieving the Trust Board's environmental categories.
4. The project must provide public benefits.
5. The funds requested will provide assistance only to proposals which are deemed technically feasible.
6. The funds requested will provide assistance only to proposals which are deemed financially feasible.
7. The funds requested shall not be used to provide direct assistance to regulatory programs.
8. The funds requested shall not be used to implement actions mandated by regulations except remediation.
9. The funds requested shall not pay for private benefits or provide assistance to projects whose benefits are primarily private in nature.

- 10. The funds requested shall not be used to relieve private liability for environmental damage.
- 11. The funds requested shall not pay for projects which have direct beneficiaries who could afford the costs of the benefits without experiencing serious financial hardship.
- 12. The funds shall not pay for land or easements acquired without the full and express consent of the landowner.

Application Rating Scale – All projects that are judged eligible are scored using the following scale. For the complete text of the rules governing project rating, please see our Web site link to Title 137, Chapters 7 and 8.

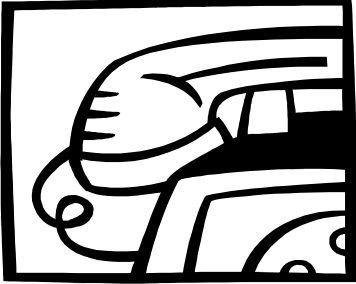
Mandatory Rating Factors – Every eligible project is rated on the following factors:

Ratings Statement	N/A	Low	Below Avg.	Avg.	Above Avg.	High
Addresses Trust Categories	0	5	10	15	20	25
Evaluation Plan	0	5	10	15	20	25
Distribution of Information	0	5	10	15	20	25
Number of People or Communities Educated	0	5	10	15	20	25
Public Benefit	0	5	10	15	20	25
Matching Funds and In-Kind Contributions	0	2	4	6	8	10
Public/Private Partnerships	0	2	4	6	8	10
Cost-Effectiveness	0	2	4	6	8	10
Economic Impact	0	2	4	6	8	10
Direct Environmental Impact	0	2	4	6	8	10
Replication Potential	0	2	4	6	8	10
Total Points Available						185
Geographic Points – vary each year and are announced in August (Up to 15 points)						

Optional Rating Factor – Additional points can be awarded for:

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

In order to ensure equitable distribution of funds across the entire state over time, the Trust may assign points to a project benefiting an area deemed previously under-served by Trust funded projects. The Trust defines seven districts to determine geographic distribution, and usually assigns points based on the district in which a project will be accomplished. This factor is not used every year. Many projects do not receive any points in this category.



Help Is Available. If you have questions or would like to discuss a project, you are encouraged to contact the Trust office. We will be happy to answer simple questions immediately, or to arrange an appointment for you to discuss a draft proposal in detail with staff. You can reach our office at (402) 471-5409.