

Part 407 – Documentation, Certification, and Spot Checking

Subpart A – Policy

407.0 General

A. NRCS has responsibility to provide technical assistance to help producers implement conservation practices approved in agency technical standards to help protect natural resources and support public safety, health, and well-being and address other authorized purposes. To ensure compliance with technical and regulatory requirements, it is essential that adequate assistance be provided to support the purpose of the practice implemented for the established lifespan and help the producer properly maintain and operate the practice to achieve the intended conservation benefit.

B. This subpart sets forth NRCS policy and responsibility to—

- (1) Record appropriate supporting data for practices applied through NRCS assistance.
- (2) Certify conservation practices installed.
- (3) Provide for spot check of implemented practices to assure compliance with standards and specifications, regulatory requirements, and appropriate follow up to encourage appropriate operation and maintenance.

407.1 Policy

Responsibility for compliance with this policy is assigned to line officers. Line officers are specifically responsible to enforce and implement the following:

- (1) Provide training and oversight to staff to implement this policy
- (2) Ensure that assigned staff and delegated activities support specific duties and actions cited in this policy
- (3) Ensure assigned staff obtain, record, and file appropriate data and information associated with each implemented practice
- (4) Verify that all practices implemented with NRCS assistance support meet approved technical standards and specifications and are recorded in an NRCS approved conservation plan consistent with section 407.10
- (5) Establish an annual plan to ensure adequate spot checks are completed for all implemented conservation practices in accordance with the requirements of this policy
- (6) Ensure spot checks are supported with field visits and provide documentation of findings and identification of any followup or corrective actions needed to assist producers operate and maintain conservation practices
- (7) Check a sufficient number of certified practices in accordance with Section 407.20, “Amount of Spot Checking”
- (8) Record appropriate data, information, and evidence that any necessary corrective actions identified during follow up have been completed

407.2 Responsibilities

Each Regional Conservationist (RC) will ensure that each State Conservationist (STC) and Director in their region complies with their responsibilities related to this policy. Each STC

Title 450 – General Manual

and the Directors, Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas, will establish and maintain State policy and procedures needed to—

- (1) Plan, install, and certify information to be obtained, recorded, and filed for all practices.
- (2) Establish the requirements and procedures to complete spot check of implemented practices (may also include review of implemented resource management systems, land adequately treated, etc.). Adequate checks of conservation practices are to be made to ensure quality work.
- (3) Ensure that appropriate staff and delegations of authority are provided to qualified personal assigned to certify implementation of conservation practices.
- (4) Develop and issue policy on accepting work of those outside NRCS consistent with program requirements cited in Title 440, Conservation Programs Manual, Part 504, “Technical Service Provider Assistance.”
- (5) Issue policy or procedure statements outlining the responsibilities of line officers.
- (6) Establish the format and documentation requirements for recording data and information for each implemented practice and filing requirements.
- (7) Include checks of supporting data and the spot-checking procedure in program and functional appraisals.