

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 Business Plan

Mission: Helping People Help the Land

Customers: The people who make decisions about natural resource use and management on non-Federal lands.

Our primary customers are:

- Farmers and ranchers, people who own, operate, or live on farms and ranches.
- Other members of the private sector who support production agriculture and natural resource conservation.
- Governments and units of government with responsibility for natural resource use and management.
- Non-profit organizations whose mission aligns with aspects of natural resource management.

Business Lines

1. Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation
2. Conservation Implementation
3. Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment
4. Natural Resource Technology Transfer
5. Financial Assistance

Management Initiatives

6. Ensuring Civil Rights
7. Improving Internal Management

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
1	Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation - NRCS provides data, information, or technical expertise that helps people collect and analyze information to identify natural resource problems and opportunities, clarify their objectives, and formulate and evaluate alternatives. This includes Conservation Plans, and Technical Consultations and Planning Assistance.	10/01/08	09/30/09		72%	
1.1	Develop a strategy for defining and accurately measuring conservation planning and program delivery activities that can be implemented in Fiscal Year (FY) 2010.	10/01/08	09/30/09	RCs, PGM, SPA	Deferred	Pursue dialogue with leadership, develop strategy. (SPA) 6/30 - Coordination meeting with PGMS & RC's office to determine overlap with item 1.1. RC's effort was planned forward and will address this item so no further SPPD action in FY2009.
1.2	Continue the implementation of the national campaign, including a focus on the NRCS foundation goal of healthy soil.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PAD, SSRA	75%	PAD: Campaign's Featured Employees appearing individually in NRCS This Week. Campaign exhibits continues to be displayed at conferences and meetings. DVDs produced with all campaign video/vnr products. 3rd Qtr (PAD): Changed with Chief White: National campaign materials still available, but reduced emphasis; developing new natl campaign with 3 topic areas and related audiences/key messages: backyard/urban conservation, greening offices, community gardens.
1.3	Finalize and implement "Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) Program Next Generation" action plan.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PGM, S&T, SSRA, SPA,	40%	A concept paper has been developed (CPTAD). 3/31/09 The Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative has been reviewed and common ground between the Initiative and Next Generation has been identified. Coordination of the two projects has begun. Three states have been identified as potential pilot sites for the Next Generation: Oregon, Colorado, and Indiana. Oregon has already volunteered to serve as a pilot.
1.4	Complete policy and operational procedures for EQIP farm bill conservation activity plans.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PGM, S&T	100%	Policy and operation drafts due for review by 1/15/09 to be finalized. (FAPD-75%); Finalizing procedures and mechanisms for developing and managing EQIP conservation activity plans in Customer Service Toolkit, linked to ProTracts. (Vrana-10%); Policy and operational areas are being identified for updating (CPTAD) . 3/31/09 FAPD - procedures for activity plan with business tools team is 95% complete. Roll out plan was developed; NetMeeting briefing was given to NTSCs on 3/12/09; a NetMeeting briefing to states on 3/17/09. 6/22/09 (CPTAD) Eleven CAP Technical Criteria finalized and loaded on to State's EFOTG; Payment schedule development bulletin was releases; TSP criteria was developed and uploaded to TechReg. Narratives and Conservation Activity Plan Codes were loaded for use in ProTracts and Toolkit. Guidelines for data collection and lessons learned report developed. States chose which CAPs they will pilot in 2009.
2	Conservation Implementation - NRCS helps customers install on their land conservation practices and systems that meet established technical standards and specifications. This includes Designs, Follow-up, and Checks and Reviews.	10/01/08	09/30/09		65%	

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
2.1	Implement Farm Bill programs including roll out, training, and program guidance to the field.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PGM, S&T, SSRA, MGT, PAD, LAD	75%	<p>HFRP rule published. Rules drafted; manual and training drafted (EPD-80%); AMA interim final rule published in the federal register. The rules for EQIP, WHIP and CSP are currently in the clearance process either with the Department or OMB and draft policy manuals have been drafted for the above mentioned programs. (FAPD-50%); High level changes to ProTracts, Customer Service Toolkit, and FundManager have been identified and a plan for development put into place; initial business requirements have been drafted for major areas of change, but additional details and decisions will occur as rules are finalized; changes to tools not requiring finalization of rules, such as changes to the 1200 application form have been implemented. (Vrana-10%); The State Technical Committee (STC) rule was published in the Federal Register on 11/25/08, an updated STC policy, including standard operating procedures, is in the final stages of review(CPTAD). A NOFA for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative has been submitted for publication in the Federal Register (CPTAD). 25%</p> <p>23 internal net conferences, 11 external net conferences conducted; 1 national training session have been scheduled in July for Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) implementation; 2 internal net conferences have been conducted on program business tools. Draft policy manuals have been distributed to the States for all Farm Bill Programs except for CSP, WRP, FRPP and GRP. ProTracts is being adapted to meet the requirements of the 2008 Farm Bill. States have posted EQIP payment schedules and ranking criteria. National funding categories for EQIP are in ProTracts. A new self-screening tool and Conservation Management Tool (CMT) have been developed and will be used to streamline CSP program delivery. Requests for Proposals over 370 have been received for Conservation Innovation Grant projects. AWEP proposals received are nearing 200. The RFP for CCPI has been extended to 4/23/09. Historically Underserved guidance provided to the States. Separate funding pools for SDA/BF are in ProTracts. NRCS coordinated with the Farm Services Agency to utilize consistent definitions of a SDA entity.</p> <p>A new 2008 Farm Bill Conservation Programs brochure has been drafted and is in clearance. (PAD) A new 2008 Farm Bill Conservation Programs brochure and specialized topics inserts have been drafted and are in clearance. CSP postcard designed and approved; web-based tools for producers (self assessment and list of enhancements) were edited. 18 At-A-Glance Program sheets finalized; 7 Fact Sheets finalized. 21 news releases rolled out new FB Programs to media and State PASSs, incl EQIP Organics Initiative. Public comment for State Technical Committee interim final rule received media attention nationwide. 6/23/09(mp)-CBWI policy draft completed. Draft policy to be reviewed by Chesapeake Bay STCs. (PGM)June 2009: Nat'l Instruction 410-301, Tribal Consultation, A Guide for NRCS Employees" posted to NRCS Electronic Directives System, June 2009. (PGM) Provided copies of all NRCS Interim Final Rules and Notices to USDA Partners group so that they could disseminate to them through their community based organizations.</p>

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
2.2	Develop and implement credit trading policy and procedures to support market-based conservation.	10/01/08	09/30/09	S&T, PGM	75%	<p>Mar 2009: Issued National Bulletins (NB-440-9 and 410-9-1) and Fact Sheets on Historically Underserved definitions, program participation opportunities, and tribal consultation requirements. • June 2009: Credit Trading policy and procedures progressing through draft clearances (already cleared/signed by Programs and Soils Deputies). Conducted training sessions at National RC&D Council meeting.</p>
2.3	Begin implementation of the Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative to refine business process models for technical and financial assistance programs that ensure field technical staff can focus their time and efforts on the Agency's core missions.	10/01/08	09/30/09	SPA, PGM, S&T, MGT, SSRA, FMD, OOC	35%	<p>• Prepared a National Instruction that provides a "how to" guide on effective tribal consultation. FO CRM appears to be delayed indefinitely. The AIMS team will build an IDEA report that allows users to query for various practices to assist with quality assurance activities. This will likely be all that can be accomplished until the FO CRM process begins.25% MGT: 3/31: Streamlining Initiative staff have been hired and office established in North Carolina. Contract support for business process analysis now in place. Identified teams from volunteer database for FY 2009 – 2010 tasks. Team work to verify existing business process models completed, updating processes for new farm bill programs. Team work for updating planning processes and resource concern/quality criteria in progress. 45%</p> <p>Streamlining Core team meeting met and identified quality assurance business process steps that will be built into the next generation "Common Desktop" application. This will be carried over into FY2010. (PGM) 6/23/09(mp)-provided conservation planning background material (GAO rpt) to Cons Delivery Streamlining team leader.</p>
2.4	Emphasize market-based incentives to increase private-sector investment in conservation activities--completing all budgeted actions and those carrying ITC support as scheduled.	10/01/08	09/30/09	S&T, PGM, MGT/OCIO/ITC		
2.5	Implement 2008 Farm Bill TSP initiative	10/01/08	09/30/09	S&T, PGM, RC's	75%	<p>June 2009: Established FY09 State-level TSP Goals. Provided oversight and assistance with implementation of the TSP Plug In (in the RFP stage). Conservation Planning Modules 1-5 have been updated (100%)-- at NEDC for deployment. Assisted with the development of criteria for the newly implemented Conservation Activity Plans. Working on establishing MOU with Organics Organizations. Established the TSP Streamlining Team to review TSP processes and make recommendations for improving the process. Provided oversight/technical assistance for the TSPR process. Maintained updates to TechReg and provided current information to State-level TSP Coordinators. Facilitated monthly State-level TSP Coordinators teleconferences. Developed TSP 2nd Qtr report--illustrating the distribution of TSP funds to date. The current TSP obligations are at 30% (normal) and on schedule for 100% by 9/30/09. Published TSP Express newsletter. Reviewed comments that were provided in response to the Interim Final Rule. Prepared response to comments and briefing material for development of the Final Rule.</p>

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
3	Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment - NRCS assesses, acquires, develops, interprets, analyzes, and delivers natural resource data and information to enable knowledge-based natural resource planning and decision making at all landscape scales. This includes Data Gathering Protocols, Databases and Delivery, and Assessments and Analyses.	10/01/08	09/30/09		69%	•
3.1	Implement department-wide Resource Conservation Act (RCA) by developing a plan, initiating surveys and modeling studies, and hosting information forums.	10/01/08	09/30/09	SSRA, PGM, MGT, SPA, S&T, OOC, RC's	75%	• Executed contribution agreements with NACD, NCDEA, and NARC&DC to received program delivery assistance. Primary steps in progress for items noted - progress toward RCA implementation is minimal - PL & DL 3rd quarter update – USDA and CEQ leadership were briefed on the RCA and status of activities. Five public listening sessions scheduled and two were completed in the 3rd quarter. The State Technical Committee survey instrument is in draft form. Rangeland data acquisition and scoping for wildlife analysis initiated. USDA interagency team established and initial team meetings were held.
3.2	Integrate Conservation Effects Assessment Project - Natural Resources Inventory (CEAP-NRI) results into program allocation data mart, strategic planning process, technical applications, electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG) quality criteria, and the RCA process.	10/01/08	09/30/09	SSRA, PGM, SPA, S&T	40%	CEAP efforts have been accelerated for the Chesapeake Bay Program (CPTAD). Much discussion has occurred regarding this integration effort across the Deputy Area - a strategy has been recommended and processes are being developed - DL
3.3	In support of web soil services, assist states and MO offices implement Major Land Resource Area (MLRA) restructuring and develop the Standards of Use for Dynamic Soil Properties.	10/01/08	09/30/09	SSRA, S&T, MGT	100%	Processing requests for waivers for moving staff to MLRA Soil Survey Offices; Processing responses to National Bulletin for Directed reassignment of unfunded positions; Users guide for Dynamic Soil Properties is currently being printed. Directed reassignment of unfunded positions has been resolved for 3 of 4 affected staff; The Dynamic Soil Properties Guide has been printed.
3.4	Prepare programmatic Environmental Assessments (EA's) or Environmental Impact Statements (EIS's) for 1-2 multi-state areas for environmental compliance tiering and/or Endangered Species Act programmatic consultation agreements.	10/01/08	09/30/09	S&T, PGM	60%	3/20/09: Areas selected. Stimulus work and work with West Virginia has delayed continued progress. PGM: NRCS in Maine is undertaking pilot work for conservation planning purposes (CPTAD). June 2009: S&T: Regarding EA's/EIS's, OR & WA suspending action due to lack of FY09 funding. Regarding ESA Programmatic Agreements: MD & PR completed Programmatic Agreements. Engaging National Marine Fisheries Service on a programmatic agreement on salmon and sturgeon in ME. On schedule for 100% complete by 9/30/09.
4	Natural Resource Technology Transfer - NRCS develops, documents, and distributes a wide array of technology pertaining to resource assessment, conservation planning, and conservation system installation and evaluation. This includes Technology Tools, Training and Certification, and Plant Materials.	10/01/08	09/30/09		81%	

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
4.1	Implement the Geospatial Report by: Re-purposing the National Cartography & Geospatial Center, gathering agency geospatial business requirements, implementing a governance model and developing guidance and policy for geospatial sciences.	10/01/08	09/30/09	SSRA, PGM, MGT, SPA, S&T, OOC, RC's	65%	NCGC Re-purposing Team chartered. Conducted 3 Re-purposing Team meetings. Re-purposing Team proposal presented to RIAD Director and SSRA Deputy Chief.
4.2	Develop Field Office Technical Guide restructuring plan to synchronize with the Conservation Streamlining Initiative.	10/01/08	09/30/09	S&T, PGM	75%	3/20/09: Plan is proceeding in discussions with the Streamlining Team. However, FB implementation has slowed progress. June 2009: Plan for FOTG redesign 75% complete; funds may be needed and funding will be considered FY2010; Several key Nat'l/State Conservation Practice Standards most effective in conserving nutrients being revised & 75% complete/on schedule for 9/30/09 completion; Review of TSP proficiencies to improve ease of certification 75% complete/TSP Streamlining Committee addressing other processes to make the use of TSP's more efficient; Providing improved wind and water prediction tools is 75% complete --WEPS ready to go into final testing of wind & climate databases and targeted for completion by mid-Aug, 2009 and once CCE-approved, expect 1st Qtr FY2010 delivery; Development/Deployment of enhancement-based environmental performance payment index tool for the Cons. Stewardship Program 80% complete.
4.3	Identify and integrate appropriate field office technical tools into Conservation Streamlining Initiative development plans.	10/01/08	09/30/09	S&T, MGT, PGM, SSRA, SPA	100%	3/20/09: Field Office technical tools have been identified and integrated into a S&T 5-year IT Management Strategy, in conjunction with Conservation Development Streamlining Initiative team participation. June 2009: S&T 5-year IT management strategy is complete. 6/29/2009: Programs Business Tool Team participating in Conservation Streamlining Integration Team (6/2009).
4.4	Integrate and implement technical tools, policies, and procedures to assist agricultural producers to meet new rules and regulations regarding animal agriculture.	10/01/08	09/30/09	S&T, PGM	75%	3/20/09 S&T: MMP ".net" integration underway; FY09 State-level rollout is on track for 15 States; Tools for pathogen management being developed by UC Davis--2nd draft of Pathogen Mgt Handbook underway; Changes to CNMP policy to make CNMP more usable by producers/States, and partners is continuing. CNMP MAP adopted earlier FY09 and respective Divisions making progress on assigned action items. PGM -03/13/09(mp)-Integrating GM-180 CNMP policy and GM-190 CNMP policy. 80% June, 2009: Ensured Animal industry groups and Certified Crop Advisor leadership engaged to facilitate expansion and adoption of MMP and CNMP development; ensured Purdue Universities delivery of campus-based training sessions; Met with EPA regions and with Sate Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Coordinators to discuss effect of CAFO rule and how to implement without adversely affecting production. A number of States are reporting a very large influx of requests for CNMPs resulting from the implementation of the CAFO rule. (PGM) 06/23/09(mp)-CPTAD met w/AHCWD on 6/4/09 & identified CNMP policy items for GM-180 and GM-190.
4.5	Support the Farm Bill by finalizing technical tools for programs like the Conservation Security Program (CSP) and by evaluating standards to address resource concerns associated with specialty crops, organic production, and precision agriculture.	10/01/08	09/30/09	S&T, PGM	90%	3/20/09 S&T: Technology support for development of CSP tool is 90% complete. All standards have been reviewed in accordance with FB CSP requirements. PGM: Developing Conservation Measurement Tool for the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) that will rank applications and determine payments on contracts. Also developing a screening tool for (CSP). 75% June 2009: Work to finalize CSP enhancements, practices, and resource conserving crop rotation for the CSP Program 90% complete. Assisted with National net-meeting training on CSP. (PGM) CMT is in the process of being put into a web based format for the initial CSP sign-up.

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
5	Financial Assistance - NRCS provides financial assistance to encourage the adoption of land treatment practices that have been proven to provide significant benefits to the public. Financial assistance is awarded to participants who voluntarily enter into contracts, easements, and agreements to conserve natural resources. Financial assistance is provided through Cost-share/Incentives, Easements, Grants, and Stewardship Payments.	10/01/08	09/30/09		87%	
5.1	Deploy software application for developing and managing contract documents for easement, conservation innovation grants and emergency watershed protection program funds as part of the lean 6 sigma grants departmental initiative.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT, PGM, FM	60%	Direct assistance provided (2 staff weeks per month) to FTC (EPD-50%); Work continues to be completed on the LSGP-Easements, LSGP-EWP, and LSGP-CIG projects. Current deployment date for LSGP-Easements is 10/1/2009. (Vrana) LSGP-CIG is still on track to be deployed during the 3rd quarter of 2009; LSGP-Easements is on track to be deployed at the beginning of FY2010 as per schedule, though this may be impacted by the competition for IT resources for the ProTracts/Fund Manager 2008 Farm bill changes; LSGP-EWP is somewhat on hold while the other LSGP efforts move ahead. (Vrana) 50% MGT: 3/31 WRO: LSGP Easements, CIG, and EWP are scheduled for deployment for October 2009 with production deployments starting in May 2009. Development is on schedule for release 1, which includes WRP, FRPP, EWPP-FPE, and CIG functionality completed in first and second quarter of FY 2009.
5.2	Complete rules for 2008 Farm Bill programs.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PGM, S&T, SSRA, CRD, LAD	95%	EPD Programs all drafted and at OMB (EPD-75%); HFRP rule published; AMA interim final rule has been published in the federal register with public comments due on or before January 20, 2009. The rules for EQIP, WHIP and CStP are currently in the clearance process either with the Department or OMB. (FAPD-80%); The State Technical Committee Rule was published in the Federal Register on 11/25/08 (CPTAD). All rules, with the exception of CSP, have been published. Public comments are being collected and analyzed. June 2009: (S&T), 100%: Provided input to complete the TSP Final Rule; Assisted with rules, environmental reviews, cost-benefit determinations, and training for all new or revised NRCS programs, with emphasis on CSP, EQIP, and TSP. PGM -CSP rule is at the OSEC for clearance.
5.3	Complete program policy and procedural manuals for Farm Bill programs.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PGM, S&T, SSRA, MGT, FM, CRD, LAD	90%	All EPD programs all drafted (EPD-75%); EQIP, WHIP, AMA, CIG, CSP and CPM Part 512 policy manuals are in draft status and have or very soon will be reviewed by the NRCS policy team. (FAPD-70%); An updated policy, including standard operating procedures for State Technical Committees has been developed and is in the final stages of review (CPTAD). All policy manuals have been drafted. All policy manuals, with exception of CSP, WRP, FRPP, and GRP have been distributed to the states. June 2009: S&T: Participated in development/revisions of policy documents, environmental review, economic cost-benefit, guidance documents, and special initiative technical input for EQIP, CSP. Provided extensive staff time to rate and rank the Request for Proposals for the CIG and AWEP programs.

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
5.4	Complete briefings with House and Senate Agriculture Committees on all new rules in the 2008 Farm Bill.	10/01/08	09/30/09	LAD, PGM	90%	All complete (except for CSP) after 4/2/09 briefing
5.5	Provide all appropriations committee members and members of the Agriculture Committees with briefing paper on conservation program investments in their Districts.	10/01/08	09/30/09	LAD, PGM, FM, SPA, RC's	Deferred	Will be developing templates.
5.6	Establish policy and procedures, Quality Assurance and Quality Control, for establishing the FY 2010 payment schedule.	04/01/09	09/30/09	S&T, PGM, RC's	100%	3/20/09 S&T: Policy and procedures established in the "Payment Schedule Handbook" -- progressing through directives clearance process; and cleared by S&T Deputy Chief. June 2009: S&T: Policy and procedures established in the "Payment Schedule Handbook" dated March 2009, was published and released to field offices, April 2009.
6	Ensuring Civil Rights: Equal Employment Opportunity and Fair and Equitable Service Delivery - Achieve a culturally diverse workforce and provide equitable service to all customers.	10/01/08	09/30/09		92%	
6.1	Enhance policy and procedure for conducting Civil Rights Compliance Reviews in accordance with Departmental Regulations and other statutory guidance.	10/01/08	09/30/09	CRD	80%	Revised Compliance Review Guide tentatively scheduled for web release by 7/09. Final draft provided to Acting RC'ss for comment; due to CRD 4/17/09. Revised Compliance Review Guide tentatively scheduled for web release by 7/09. Incorporated Acting RC's comments.
6.2	Ensure modifications to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the EEO Complaint Processing policy.	10/01/08	09/30/09	CRD	100%	Completed modifications to the Pre-Complaint and ADR processes and currently we are working to complete a section on our EEO Complaints Analysis process. Completed modifications to SOP for the EEO process.
6.3	Ensure delivery of Department's Annual Training; provide CR/EEO training to increase awareness, understanding, and appreciation of diversity.	10/01/08	09/30/09	CRD	100%	USDA Mandatory Civil Rights training was successfully and timely completed Agency-wide as of 2/13/09; and 40% of the NRCS/CRD FY-09 Civil Rights Training Plan is complete.
6.4	Ensure training for National Special Emphasis Program Managers.	10/01/08	09/30/09	CRD	100%	The NRCS National SEPM Training Conference (March 9-13, 2009) was a success. The highlights are as follows: Met with Dana York, Associate Chief, Joseph Hairston, Civil Rights Director, and Samora Bennerman, Chief of the Affirmative Employment and Compliance Branch, CRD, who expressed their visions, expectations and appreciation for the NSEPMs; The Department's ASCR/Office of Workforce Diversity and Inclusion provided an MD-715 presentation; Met with Eloris Speight, Acting Director, Human Resources and the Human Capital Manager to discuss working together on Agency-wide outreach and recruitment initiatives; met with Debra Vangergrift, ARS, who provided an agency's perspective on MD-715; and team flushed out NSEPMs' SOP and GM policy outlines for agency-wide updates.
6.5	Develop and implement a National Recruitment Strategy that includes a component for increasing workforce diversity.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT	73%	Cross-agency team formed. First of three meetings held to document Current State. Three meetings held to document Current State. In process of completing first draft of implementation plan. Vendor drafting final product for Agency review.

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
6.6	Ensure Civil Rights program delivery training.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PGM, CRD, PAD, S&T, MGT (NEDC)	100%	National Bulletin #440-9-6 dated December 17,2009 was sent to the states to clarify definitions NRCS uses for program participation and services to Historically Underserved Individuals and Groups. 3/31/09 CR delivery training has been provided to States through net-conferences and bulletins. Executed contribution agreements with the National Society for Minorities in Agriculture (MANRRS) and Thurgood Marshall College Fund to recruit minorities for NRCS jobs during and after college. PAD: Employed chiefly communications forums (Conservation Corner, Speeches, talking points) to to emphasize importance of civil rights (serving all our customers) and diversity in our workforce (recruitment & retention). The following CRD Lunch and Learn Training Sessions have been completed: Civil Rights Compliance & Program Delivery Update, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and Civil Rights Impact Analysis. CRD Fully Completed.)
7	Improving Internal Management - Use good management business processes and resources to effectively and efficiently implement operations.	10/01/08	09/30/09		59%	
7.1	Strengthen the financial environment of the Agency to improve the budget process and correct internal control weaknesses.	10/01/08	09/30/09	FM, SPA	40%	Draft OMB Circular A-123 plan developed. Majority of controls and test plans are approved. Start testing. Four of six test plans completed.
7.2	Manage the FY 2009 financial audit to ensure the completeness, reliability and accuracy of Agency financial information.	10/01/08	09/30/09	FM, ALL	75%	Plan being developed for 2nd quarter. Plan completed, disseminated, and is on schedule. Plan is on schedule.
7.3	Plan for implementation of the Financial Management Modernization Initiative (FMMI) accounting system which will replace the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS).	10/01/08	09/30/09	FM, PGM, SPA	75%	Work ongoing. Contractor being added. Support contract RFP issued and proposals are under evaluation. Completed clean-up of GL 1410. Identifying NRCS data feeds (front and back feeds) to FMMI. Accenture contractors are on board. Developed proposal for two NRCS feeder systems and matrix for obligations.
7.4	Develop and implement a financial management reorganization to satisfy the increasing requirements.	10/01/08	09/30/09	FM	Deferred	1010 package developed and approved by Chief. Awaiting Department action. No further progress. No further progress. Original 1010 package not going forward. Addressed under NHQ realignment and audit response.
7.5	Revise Agency financial policy and develop financial standard operating procedures and a financial "owner's manual."	10/01/08	09/30/09	FM, PGM	35%	Branch Chief position announced. Draft policy for accruals, obligations, and reimbursements drafted and being coordinated. Accrual and Obligation policies are complete.
7.6	Establish a professional development program and provide on-the-job training for all financial management personnel	10/01/08	09/30/09	FM	25%	Working with NEDC to develop a survey. Behind schedule. No change.
7.7	Implement alternative system to replace SCS Personnel Expense and Reporting System (SPEARS) which is used to develop a budget for personnel services expenses.	10/01/08	09/30/09	FM, MGT	30%	Working with IT to develop requirements. No further progress. Developing requirements that include State level involvement. Lack IT priority.

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
7.8	Implement Year 1 of 5-year IT strategy by maintaining and operating the PCC core business applications, developing improvements to those applications, and ensuring the security of the applications for effective delivery of technical assistance.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT, SPA, S&T, SSRA, PGM, FM, OOC	75%	Agency Business Tools Liaisons Committee is currently developing recommended priorities for the development and implementation of software applications to meet high-risk needs of the agency. To be presented at the January 2009 Business Tools Council (BTC) meeting. (Vrana) June 2009: S&T, 100%: Implemented a FY2009 IT Strategic Plan for addressing Year 1 of the 5-year IT Strategy. Project plans have been developed with ITC for completion of priority applications addressing all goals and tasks identified in the S&T plan. Implementation straddles FY2009 and FY2010. S&T objectives are 100% complete. 6/29/2009: Key critical business tools currently deployed or under development - 2008 Farm Bill changes to ProTracts, CSP-CMT, and LSGP-Easements.
7.9	Implement Year 1 of 5-year Human Capital Strategy to improve NRCS' long term ability to deliver high quality technical assistance by conducting skills gap analysis, developing and providing training, and by implementing mentoring/recruiting programs.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT, SPA	75%	Will encompass workforce etc. Agency requirements developed in SOW. Scheduled to review vendor submissions. (SPA) Bulletin soliciting cross-agency team members by eDirective sent out, June 30, 2009. Meeting with contractors and team to begin developing individual performance metrics, July 21-21, 2009 in Nashville, TN.
7.10	Develop, improve, and maintain electronic (IT) tools, access, and processes: Improve security of IT applications, streamline IT systems for conservation delivery and improve process of evaluating agency IT investments.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT	50%	3/31 WRO: On schedule with new development and maintenance efforts associated with PCC. Web Soil Survey 2.1 released. Farm Bill updates to ProTracts on schedule for May release. NASIS will be delivered in October.
7.11	Implement the most efficient organization (MEO) plan for the National Headquarters (NHQ) Administrative Support Unit.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT	100%	
7.12	Implement NRCS Continuity of Operations Plan and exercises at national and state levels to ensure the agency's ability to respond appropriately to any major natural or domestic incident.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT	50%	COOP plan has been updated, in process of scheduling meetings to plan for exercise in June. National exercise completed. State Training is under development.
7.13	Conduct agency wide study of administrative functions to identify opportunities for streamlining delivery of services.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT, RC's, STC's, FM	Deferred	
7.14	Implement Quick Hire Nationwide.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT, RC's	60%	Met with team in 11/08. Identified series. Working on guidance.
7.15	Develop fund management, activity costing, reports and human resources system capability to incorporate into departmental WEBTA time keeping and cost accounting system to replace WebTCAS.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT, FM, SPA	100%	USDA agreed to delay implementation to FY2010
7.16	Develop and implement a streamlined and automated process for allowance changes.	12/01/08	01/31/09	PGM, RC's, FM	Deferred	No Activity to report.

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
7.17	Develop and implement an agency-wide communication plan in order to strategize, direct, and assess internal and external communications on new programs, initiatives, and other significant activities for increased understanding, support and action.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PAD	50%	Several specialized communications plans have been developed (e.g., Financial Audit; UMRB CEAP; Recovery Act; ACES; Farm Bill); 3rd Qtr: preliminary work on the overall strategy has been started in conjunction with USDA Office of Communications
7.18	Develop agency crisis/emergency communication plan.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PAD	50%	Emergency communications checklist provided; test page for my.NRCS and test of Public Affairs list serve conducted during COOP exercise (Jun 2009); PAD working w/COOP Coord to develop training and other comms needs
7.19	Develop and implement the web governance and web operations plans.	10/01/08	09/30/09	MGT, PAD	25%	PAD: Draft document prepared by contractor. PAD briefed BTC on vetted and approved business requirements for Web migration platform and asked for decision on moving forward or staying within current, outdated system. If business requirements are changed, re-vetting will be required. PAD suggested options to Associate Chief and awaits discussion with IT. PAD 3rd Qtr: Led coordination/demonstration with Forest Srvc; developing proposal for Chief's/Assoc Chief's approval for website presence and migration
7.20	Conduct national training for public affairs professionals and volunteer coordinators.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PAD	25%	Site recommendations determined and meeting justification drafted. Meeting approval forms/justification prepared for Chief's signature; now at Dept for approval. Topics survey sent to all PASs, VISs, and ET Coordinators.
7.21	Conduct four legislative training workshops for states.	10/01/08	09/30/09	LAD	Deferred	No funding available for FY 2009.
7.22	Complete and deliver Operations Management training to states to improve operations management functions throughout the Agency.	10/01/08	09/30/09	SPA, ALL, RC's, States	100%	12/31/08 SPA: Finalizing training material through NEDC and contractor. Tentative completion date 3/31/09. Training session scheduled in Indiana for the week of May 11. Training session completed in Indiana in May with 16 participants from 6 states. Additional sessions being planned for Utah and Florida in early FY2010. Carryover.
7.23	Implement the new volunteer tracking system.	10/01/08	09/30/09	PAD	95%	System developed. Training to be delivered in mid-February. Testing production site.
	Complete strategic planning resource analyses and performance updates, and assessment of customer segment alignment with Agency products and services.	10/01/08	09/30/09	SPA, SSRA, PGM	50%	Draft out to steering team this week. 3/31-Revised draft under review by steering team, final comments due April 10. Next step is broader agency review and comment. Met with ERS to scope typology development. Agreement reached and now waiting on data availability to complete initial analysis task. During the Summer of 2009, NRCS, in partnership with NACD, NASDA, the National Association of RC&D Councils, and others, will co-host stakeholder listening sessions to assess the condition of the Nation's natural resources and the current and future needs of our customers. Evaluating potential for a survey of State Technical Committees and local work groups to examine existing conservation programs in addressing resource needs and potential to meet new and emerging natural resource issues, such as renewable energy, carbon sequestration, and global climate change. Each mission goal has been evaluated and information developed on progress toward the quantitative targets established in the 2005 Strategic Plan. Preliminary targets have been established for the period 2011 to 2014.

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
7.24						<p>Efforts are underway to incorporate this information in the agency performance web presence. Reviewing current section 3&4 PRS reports with National Civil Rights Committee (NCRC) against state Civil Rights reviews and new Farm Bill report requirements. Assessed existing data quality and availability to address planning and accountability needs. SPPD established a preliminary set of recommendations to enable an accurate response to future questions. These recommendations appear similar to established objectives of other SPA/PGM teams. Next step: discuss options for broader review with other deputy areas. Draft planning document is under review. Although OBPA has not provided guidance or requested performance updates, performance tracking and internal quarterly reporting is on track. Initial meetings conducted with ERS on customer typology and conservation adoption analyses.</p> <p>6/30 - Final draft completed and is being distributed for broad agency review. Coordination with ERS on conservation adoption barriers. ERS will present information at the SWCS RCA session. Collaborating with ERS on the State Tech Committee survey instrument on conservation adoption barriers, which will be completed in July. Conducted RCA listening sessions with NARC & DC and NACD to obtain stakeholder feedback on natural resource priorities and customer needs; up to 6 additional listening sessions to be held in the coming months. Survey instrument under development to solicit State Technical Committee input on how NRCS could improve its products and services. Initiating efforts to obtain similar information from the Local working group in partnership with NACD. Final draft plan completed, undergoing final review. Staff provided support for the NCRC quarterly meeting. Coordination meeting with PGMS & RC's office to determine overlap with item 1.1. RAC effort was planned forward and will address this item so no further SPPD action in FY2009.</p>
7.25	Implement the Balanced Scorecard in NHQ to improve accountability and measure progress toward achieving strategic objectives	10/01/08	09/30/09	SPA, MGT, PGM, SSRA, S&T, OOC	100%	3/31-NHQ card completed and populated with data from all Deputy Areas. Next steps are to review card and determine potential improvements. 6/30-RFP for consultant services issued to assist with review of BSC initiative and improvements to existing scorecards.
7.26	Implement the state office Balanced Scorecard pilot to identify the most efficient process for rollout to remaining states.	10/01/08	09/30/09	SPA, RC's, STCs	60%	3/31-BSC Training and Strategy Maps completed at all 7 states. Now working on measures and targets. 6/30-6 out of 7 pilot states have completed their scorecards. Next step is to collect data and establish baselines for the measures.
7.27	Provide guidance to States in the development/revision of State Efficiency Plans to address future changes in business needs.	10/01/08	07/31/08	SPA, MGT, RC's	Deferred	12/31/08 SPA: Process initiated through discussions with MGT Deputy Area on P.M.A. Human Capital Report requirements. Guidance on hold pending decision on updating plans.
7.28	Fully implement the revised program allocation formulas.	10/01/08	12/31/08	PGM, S&T, SSRA, SPA, FM	100%	Allocation formulas implemented with October/December allocations. (PAMST); Developed and implemented a Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative allocation formula (CPTAD). Developed and implemented an updated CTA and GLCI formula (CPTAD).

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
7.29	Develop a plan to re-establish technical oversight of applied conservation that is integrated with State Quality Assurance Plans.	10/01/08	09/30/09	S&T, SPA	75%	3/20/09 S&T: Spot Checking Policy (S&T Title 450 & SPA Title 340) revision progressing through directives clearances -- which reestablishes S&T oversight on State Quality Assurance Plans. Several spot checking and OMOD operational reviews completed. S&T Discipline leaders represented on the newly established risk-based approach State operational reviews. Further progress delayed due to FB implementation and Stimulus Package work. June 2009: S&T: State operational reviews on schedule. Spot check policy revisions are complete, and S&T is awaiting OMOD's workload analysis of revised policy changes before forwarding to MSD for issuance.
7.30	Develop processes to ensure recommendations/findings/action items resulting from appraisals/Oversight & Evaluation (O&E) reviews are fully executed.	01/01/09	09/30/09	RC's, SPA, MGT, PGM, SSRA, S&T, FM	85%	Developing a tracking system to follow-up on all corrective action (MAPs & CAPs). RC's will participate in exit conferences.
7.31	Conduct national reviews as part of the Agency's internal control process including leadership, operations management, administrative, financial management and civil rights reviews to ensure compliance with applicable regulations and identify innovative techniques used in states and national centers that can be shared. See attachment 1 for planned reviews.	10/01/08	09/30/09	SPA, MGT, FM, PGM, SSRA, S&T	94%	12/31/08 SPA: Phase 1 O&E reviews conducted in conjunction with FM as part of the audit review process. Phase 2 O&E audit review process initiated. Leadership and Operations Management reviews scheduled in February 2009. 3/31/09 Leadership reviews: cancelled. Operations Management Reviews: 5 of 10 completed. Administrative reviews: 4 of 4 completed. Financial Management Reviews: 5 of 10 completed. Civil Rights reviews: 8 of 12 completed. O & E Open Obligation site reviews: 25 of 25 completed. O & E Studies: 4 of 4 completed. All Leadership Reviews for the year have been cancelled at the direction of the Chief. (MGT) Remainder of administrative reviews canceled for FY 2009 to redirect staff effort to policy development and to correcting other key audit findings.
8	Addendum - Major initiatives NRCS has prioritized for FY 09					
8.1	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)			PGM, PAD, LAD, RC's, SPA, S&T	75%	June 2009: S&T: Working with B.Julian and Programs on proposing new categorical exclusions for ARRA actions & tracking the NEPA environmental documents prepared for each ARRA action.
8.2	Financial Audit and Review of Open Obligations			FM	100%	Provided training to STC's and staff on proper accounting and recording practices. Developed the ROOT tool for the 100% review of obligations, which provided allowance holders a means for validating their open obligations. Each obligation was reviewed and certified. Corrective actions were taken based on the results of their review.
8.3	Corrective Action Plan (CAP)			FM, Associate Chief	75%	Developed summary level CAP, which was approved by OIG in February 2009. Completed and disseminated to all allowance holders and financial staffs a detailed CAP which provides specifics of our plans to correct the weaknesses identified during the FY 2008 audit, identifying due dates and staff responsible. Plan is on schedule.
8.4	10 Million Omnibus Expenditure Plan			Associate Chief	30%	Prebrief completed for audit remediation contracting firm.

NRCS Fiscal Year 2009 BUSINESS PLAN

4th Quarter Update August, 2009

ID	Goal	Start Date	End Date	Lead; other participants	% Comp	Progress / Comments 1st QTR comments in Black 2nd QTR lead comments in Red and other 2nd comments in Blue 3rd QTR comments in Green
	Contracting firm brought on					
	Contractor deployed to states					
	Workforce planning					