

The Link - The Newsletter of The National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees

The National Organization of Professional Black Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees

2003 Executive Board

The President's Message President's Message

September 2003

President
William Hunt
Minnesota

Vice President
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Minnesota

Treasurer
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Financial Secretary
Wayne Griffin
Texas

Corresponding Secretary
Kandace W. Dye
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Patricia H. Gaines
Mississippi

Parliamentarian
Charlie Williams
Arkansas

Historian
Patti Jackson-Kelly
Minnesota



I hope that by now you're all as excited as I am, anticipating another fun, learning, and networking time at our 2003 William Hunt Annual

Training Conference in St. Louis! Mark the Dec 1- 5, 2003 date on your calendar and make your Millennium Hotel reservations early.

Just as important, review the preliminary conference program offerings and course descriptions with your supervisor, reach agreement on your ASK needs and conference attendance, and document your training needs on your Individual Development Plan.

Our Employee Development and Planning Committees under the able leadership of Carl Hunter, Shirley Merritt, Demitrice Boozer, Estella Williams, Shawn Anderson, Patti Jackson-Kelly and Ann English, are finalizing their work on the program agenda and conference arrangements.

As always, we are promising a full agenda of hot career enhancing topics. Information to help you stay abreast of current developments, prepare for emerging issues and opportunities for you to interact with the top management of NRCS and partners -- all the "movers and shakers" in our private lands national conservation program.

Again we are offering one of the best leadership and technical training bargains in government.

Partnering with our National Employee Development Center, NHQ, other Centers and Institutes, national program leaders, land-grant universities and private consultants we're offering quality courses in basically every subject you need to succeed.

We want you and our fellow employees to surround yourselves and take this important opportunity to network with so many successful people attending our conference as participants and subject matter experts.

Thanks to Chief Knight you will have the opportunity to informally meet members of the Chief's Executive Team.

Their meeting is on Monday and many will attend at least part of the Tuesday session; in fact some will be with us all week!

We anxiously look forward to the Chief's message on Tuesday morning along with those of our other national organization and land grant university partners.

Also, all day on Monday, the national Black Emphasis Program Managers are one again having their training on-site with us this year. Thank you Andrew Johnson and Thaddeus Hamilton for your leadership and partnership support.

I'm confident this will again prove that we and the agency are much better served by training together with Special Emphasis Program Managers, other Organizations and sharing mutual concerns and synergy rather than meeting separately.

Looking forward to seeing all of you in December at the Millennium Hotel in St. Louis.



Unlocking the Gateway to Natural Resources Through Awareness, Knowledge, Leadership, and Service

Knowledge, Leadership, and Service

Preliminary Agenda

Monday, December 1, 2003

8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.	BEPM Meeting	
8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	Exhibits and Poster Setup	Chouteau
10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.	NRCS Chief's Executive Team Meeting	
1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.	Registration	St. Louis East
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	College/HR Fair	
4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	African American Advisory Council Employee Listening Forum	
4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	Silent Auction	Shaw
5:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.	Executive Board Meeting	President's Meeting Suite
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.	2004 Membership Drive	
5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	The Organization's Store	
6:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.	<u>Committee Meetings</u>	<u>Conference Rooms</u>
	Awards	Lewis
	Budget	Jefferson A
	Communications	St. Louis West
	Constitution and By-Laws	Jefferson B
	Employee and Career Development	Jefferson C
	HBCU	Jefferson D
	Liaison	Jefferson E
	Urban	Jefferson F
	Ways and Means	Shaw
	Exhibits	Chouteau
	Membership	Clark
7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.	<u>Regional Meetings</u>	
	East	Jefferson A
	Midwest	Jefferson B
	Northern Plains	Jefferson C
	South Central	Jefferson D
	South East	Jefferson E
	West	Jefferson F
8:45 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.	Moderator's Meeting	Lewis

Tuesday, December 2, 2003

6:00 a.m. to 7:15 a.m.	Continental Breakfast	
6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	Registration	St. Louis East
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	College/HR Fair	Chouteau
7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.	Opening Ceremony & General Session I Presentation of Colors	Mississippi & Illinois
	Charles Whitmore Terry Cosby William Hunt Bruce Knight Rodney Crim	Midwest Regional Conservationist Assistant State Conservationist, MO President of The Organization Chief of NRCS Director, St. Louis Development Corp
9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.	Break	

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Break

9:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Welcome: Leadership of other Employee and Professional Organizations

- Joe Cantu, National Association of RC&D Councils
- Herb Webb, American Indian/Alaska Native American Association for NRCS Employees

Unlocking the Gateway to Natural Resources...

(Preliminary Agenda - Continued)

Tuesday, December 2, 2003

9:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

- Pooh Vongkhamdy, Asian Pacific Islander Organization
- Pedro Ramos, Jr., National Organization of Professional Hispanic NRCS Employees

Motivational Speaker

Dr. David Henson President, Lincoln University, MO

12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Life Members Award Luncheon

1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Concurrent Training Sessions

3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Concurrent Training Sessions

5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Picture Session

TBA

5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Silent Auction

Shaw

5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Organization's Store

5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

2004 Membership Drive

5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Executive Board Meeting

President's Suite

6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Networking Session

Wednesday, December 3, 2003

6:00 a.m. to 7:15 a.m.

Continental Breakfast

7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Registration

St. Louis East

7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

General Session II

Panel Discussion – Field Office Review and Restructuring

Gary Margheim Special Assistant to the Chief

Kalven Trice, State Conservationist, AR

Don Gohmert, State Conservationist, LA

IT Convergence

Rich Robert, USDA, OCIO

Rich Robert, USDA, OCIO

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.	Break	
9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Concurrent Training Sessions	
11:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.	Exhibits/Poster Papers	
12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.	Small Farmers Award Luncheon Cecil Currin, State Conservationist, Massachusetts Awards Committee Chairperson	
1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Concurrent Training Sessions	
3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Break	
3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	Concurrent Training Sessions	
5:00 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.	2004 Membership Drive	
5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	Silent Auction	Shaw
5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	The Organization' s Store	
5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	Chapter/Regional Pictures	TBA

Unlocking the Gateway to Natural Resources...

(Preliminary Agenda - Continued)

Wednesday, December 3, 2003

5:15 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. Executive Board Meeting President's Suite

6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Business Meeting

Thursday, December 4, 2003

06:00 a.m. to 7:15 a.m. Continental Breakfast

07:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

General Session III
RC&D Underrepresented Task Force Report
James Ghent, Jr NARC&D Councils

Streamlining Farm Bill Programs & Accountability
Dana York, Director
Operations Management & Oversight Division
Break

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Concurrent Training Sessions

9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

11:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Exhibits/Poster Papers

12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.

Luncheon
2007 Farm Bill
Craig Cox
Executive Director, SWCS

1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Concurrent Training Sessions

3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

General Session IV

Direct Charges
Debbie Curtis
Budget Analyst

Training Session Close Out
William Hunt
President

5:00p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Organization's Store/Silent Auction

6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Banquet

9:00 p.m.

Mixer

Friday, December 5, 2003

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Organization Executive Board, MO Chapter, and selected Chapter Presidents

11th Annual Training Conference December 1 - 5 2003

The National Organization of Professional Black Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees hosts its 11th Annual Training Conference at the Millennium Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri, December 1 - 5, 2003. This year's theme is "Unlocking the Gateway to Natural Resources Through Awareness, Knowledge, Leadership, and Service".

The conference will offer an opportunity for leaning and sharing of ideas. Participants will select the concurrent sessions they wish to attend. To assist participants with making their selection, course descriptions are provided for each session. Participants much complete and return courses you wish to attend with 1 being the highest.

11th Annual Training Conference Course Registration Form

Mail completed course registration form, with conference registration and payment, to:
 Shawn Anderson, Conference Co-Chair Planning Committee
 P.O. Box 2052
 Jefferson City, MO 65102

**11th Annual Training Conference of the National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees
 December 1 - 5 2003
 St. Louis, Missouri**

Name

Phone

Address

E-mail

Please prioritize the courses you wish to attend with 1 being the highest. If the session is full you will be scheduled in the next available session.

Tuesday Afternoon (1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)	
COURSE TITLE	Speaker
ArcGIS Part A	Tommy Parham
Homeland Security	Carlos Henning
Effective Presentations	NEDC
CNMP's	Robert Anderson/Dr. Burns
Open Forums - Deputy Chiefs - SPA and Management	Kathy Gugulis, Dwight Holman
E-Government	Owen Unangst
Outreach/Limited Resource Farmers/Beginning Farmers	Wille Pittman
Technical Paper #1	
Time Management (XP Outlook)	Jack Carlson
Effective Listening	Jill Butler

Wednesday Morning (9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.)	
COURSE TITLE	Speaker
Homeland Security	Carlos Henning
Conservation Information System	Ken Tootle
CNMP's	Robert Anderson/Dr. Burns
Federal Grants, Contribution, and Cooperative Agreements	Ed Biggers
Management Tools for the Future	Dana York
Networking Skills	Stacia Robinson
Open Forums - Deputy Chiefs - (Science & Technology & Soil Survey)	Larry Clark/ Maurice Mautsch
Conservation Planning Certification Process	David McKay
A Diverse View - Customer Service	Gwen Gitten
Time Management (XP Outlook)	Jack Carlson

Thursday Morning (9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.)	
COURSE TITLE	Speaker
All in the Family	Sam Bass
Financial Planning	Lilly Vette Montalvo
Mind Mapping	Donna Taylor
Parliamentary Procedures	Iowa Chapter
Protracts ("New Contracting Mechanism")	Terry Schmid
Retirement System (CSRS)	Regina Michalson
Retirement System (FERS)	Aubrey Ash
Skills Information Management System (SIMS)	Craig Dickerson
Intergrated Acquisition System	Ed Biggers
Unconscious Discrimination	Kathie Starkeweather

Tuesday Afternoon (3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.)	
COURSE TITLE	Speaker
E-Government	Owen Unangst
Conservation Information Systems	Ken Tootle
Effective Presentation	NEDC
Ethics pertaining to Farm Bill	Caryl Butcher
E-Directives Management System	Phyllis Williams
Flexible Spending Accounts	Karen Little
Leadership Skills Forum	K. Brown, R. Trevino, R. Heard, and H. Wilkes
Networking Skills	Stacia Robinson
Open Forums - Deputy Chiefs (Programs)	Jose Azevedo
ArcGIS Part B	Tommy Parham

Wednesday Afternoon (1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)	
COURSE TITLE	Speaker
Federal Grants, Contribution, and Cooperative Agreements	Ed Biggers
Executive Briefing	Larry Butler
Financial Planning	Lilly Vette Montalvo
SmartTech Program	Bill Boyer
E-Directives Management System	Phyllis Williams
GPS/Digital Camera Part A	Tommy Parham
Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP)	Deryl Lund
Leadership Skills Forum	D. Dominick, R. Jones, L. Woods and H. Hernandez
Employee Relocation	Mildred Watkins
Writing KSA's	Bill Barber

Thursday Afternoon (1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)	
COURSE TITLE	Speaker
Executive Briefing	Larry Butler
Employee Relocation	Mildred Watkins
Protracts ("New Contracting Mechanism")	Terry Schmid
E-FOTG	Craig Dickerson
Ethics Pertaining to Farm Bill	Caryl Butcher
GPS/Digital Cameras Part B	Tommy Parham
Parliamentary Procedures	Iowa Chapter
Rhythm of Life	Ron Groas
Sexual Harassment Awareness Training	Barbara Compton
Intergrated Acquisition System	Ed Biggers

Wednesday Afternoon (3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.)	
COURSE TITLE	Speaker

Wednesday Afternoon (3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.)	
COURSE TITLE	Speaker
Management Tools for the Future	Dana York
Skills Information Management System	Craig Dickerson
Mind Mapping	Donna Taylor
All in the Family	Sam Bass
Rhythm of Life	Ron Gross
Retirement System (CSRS)	Regina Michelson
Retirement System (FERS)	Aubrey Ash
Unconscious Discrimination	Kathie Starkweather
A Diverse View- Customer Service	Gwyn Giten
Effective Listening	Jill Butler

Please send the completed Course Registration form to the following:
 NOPBNRCSE
 Shawn Anderson, Conference Co-Chair Planning Committee
 P. O. Box 2052
 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

Click PDF or Microsoft Word links below for full sized course registration form.

The Following Documents Require  [Adobe Acrobat](#) or  [Microsoft Excel](#)

 [Course Registration Form](#)  [Course Registration Form](#)

11th Annual Training Conference: Course Descriptions

Time Management (Using XP Outlook)

The Participants will receive the latest tips on the efficient and effective use of Microsoft Office XP Outlook. The course will cover the use of the XP Outlook Calendar, XP Outlook E-mail, XP Outlook Address Book/Contacts, XP Outlook Task Tool and XP Outlook Notepad. The question of how to use these tools to better manage your time will be answered. The objective of this course is to improve the use of time by learning

Civil Rights Program (Title VI and Title VII)

This course will look at the agency's official policy and procedures covering Civil Rights. The training will include identifying the required Civil Rights training for all employees. How can the necessary Civil Rights training be obtained? The question will be answered, am I in compliance with Civil Rights regulations. Upon completing this course, the participants will know how to determine if they are in compliance with Civil Rights

Its purpose is to assist the agency in managing resources efficiently and effectively. CIS was designed to answer several key questions that agency managers are asked each day about our Agency's performance, budget, and costs. It is a web-based system that gives real-time, on-line access to relevant management information in a format useful to managers at all levels of our agency. CIS is designed to provide the best estimate of the cost (based on location worked)

Leadership Skills Forum

During this session the participants will learn the definition of leadership and some chief qualities of a good leader. The objective of this course is to provide skill enhancement tools that afford individuals opportunities to become a more effective leader.

Management Tools for the Future

The business tools that the field office uses- PRMS, Toolkit, TCAS – will be undergoing significant

to manage a schedule using XP.

Introduction to ArcGIS I (For ArcView 8.3, ArvEditor 8.3, and ArcInfo 8.3)

Participants will be exposed to ArcMap, ArcCatalog, and ArcToolbox, and explore how these applications work together to provide a complete GIS software solution for conservation planning and wetland, and water quality activities. The course introduces thorough demonstrations fundamental GIS concepts, as well as how to create, edit, and work with georeferenced spatial data applied to NRCS business activities. Attendees will observe how to manipulate tabular data, query a GIS database, and present data clearly and efficiently using maps and charts. Instructors at NCGC will provide demonstrations using USDA spatial data. A few additional topics designed for NRCS/USDA will also be discussed such as using an Internet Map Service (IMS), Spatial Analyst, and 3D applications. The

regulations.

Effective Listening

This session will include discussions of common barriers to effective listening and key skills for effective listening.

Conservation Nutrient Management Plans (CNPM)

This session will provide training on waste utilization and handling which are important component of nutrient management. The regulations and policies we should be familiar with will be pointed out. The instructor will identify some of the experts in the field of nutrient management and discuss how we can get help to assist our customer. Course is designed to provide continuing education credits for person certified as Nutrient Management Specialist and increase skill level in CNMP Conservation Information System (CIS) The Conservation Information combines data

of programs and activities by location across the country and to relate these costs to performance accomplishments. Information is available by National, Region, State, County Office and Congressional District reports. The system will also help meet the requirements of GPRA and the President's Management Agenda for Budget Performance Integration. Participants will learn about the relationships between the NRCS accountability databases and how this information can help them to manage for better operational efficiency. Participants will receive a thorough understanding of the CIS, including its development and purpose. Participants will also learn how to access the site, and the reports available, and how the data can best be used to analyze agency performance. Limitations of the date will also be covered.

changes for Fiscal Year 2004. New tools will be available. Conservation Journal, Program Operations Information Tracking System, and Program Contract System. Because these systems are web based, we will be able to mine information from an information warehouse and use it for numerous applications such as to reporting progress. This will decrease the amount of data entry required from the field and increase the quality of our information. The discussion during this session will center on how these new processes will provide us superior information to articulate what NRCS does with its programs funding. Participants will learn about new field office business tool efficiencies and what they will provide. They will show how the Agency has been successful in using the information collected in these systems to articulate how NRCS utilizes the resources that the

objective of the course is to introduce participants to ArcGIS and provide an introduction of how to become a successful ArcGIS user within NRCS. from several major System (CIS) accountability systems and provides information that is useful for agency management.

agency is given to achieve outcomes on the ground.

Mind Mapping: A Tool Critical Thinking

Many concerns faced by leaders are complex and fuzzy and have multiple causes and solutions.

Mind mapping is a creative, real-time, energizing method for illustrating issue complexity.

Mind mapping promotes creative problem solving by helping participants to visualize data, to see leadership interrelationships among data elements, and to look at new solutions to old problems. The objective of this course is to provide participants with a method of analyzing complex problems by reframing the issues to find a better and creative solution.

Outreach/ Limited Resource/ Beginning Farmers

This course will look at how the Farm Bill programs and activities address Outreach/

Upon completing this course the participants will be able to determine the best way to help Limited Resources/Beginning Farmers use the Farm Bill programs.

Networking Skills

This session will look at best ways to do networking. How to set up and maintain networks, both internal and external to the agency. Methods to improve our business process through the use of networking will be explored. This course will also cover the very important social graces of networking. Upon completing this course, the participants will be able to identify and use networking tools to improve the business process.

Protracts

Protracts is a web-based application for managing NRCS conservation programs at all levels of the agency. The

Employee Relocation

This course explains in plain language the allowances provided to eligible employees making a permanent change of duty station. It covers travel authorizations, advances and vouchers, house hunting, en-route travel, temporary quarters, shipment of household goods/automobiles, and real estate expenses. Upon completing this course, participants will have an understanding of relocation benefits and allowable expenses that can be claimed when changing permanent duty locations.

Retirement System (CSRS)

Retirement is something most of us will do one day. But how do we plan for it? This course will discuss planning for retirement, health and life

Skills Information Management System (SIMS)

Over the past year a small group of people within NRCS has been working to develop and implement a system that tracks skills and competencies of employees. The Skills Information Management System (SIMS) will provide critical information to assist agency leadership in decision-making as well as help NRCS capitalize on employees' skills and identify additional skills needed to meet the agency's goals and objectives. SIMS benefits to employees include an additional career planning tool, an enhanced training program, ability to update skills, and stay with technology.

Parliamentary Procedure

Presenters will demonstrate "How to conduct a successful meeting using proper

Limited Resources/Beginning Farmers. The following subjects will be covered by detail discussions:

1. The use of Minority Technical Service Providers
2. Are the Limited Resources/Beginning Farmers concerns covered in our 'g' provision?
3. How is the Farm Bill programs and provision being communicated to Limited Resources / Beginning Farmers?
4. Are the Farm Bill programs and policies design to address Limited Resources / Beginning Farmers concerns?

course will provide an overview of the software's capabilities and an update on current and future enhancements. The objective of this course is to provide awareness on how the software program is being used to make program contracting more efficient and data tracking easier and accurate.

RUSLE 2

RUSLE 2 is the new field tool to be used by NRCS in 2003. It is a Windows-based model that will be placed in field offices for used by field personnel for conservation planning. The speaker will discuss the development and demonstrate the use of RUSLE 2 in a windows based computer environment. RUSLE 2 will replace the hard copy lookup tables used with the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE1).

insurance benefits after retirement, creditable service, thrift saving plan and other aspects under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). The objective of this course is to help people think about the need to set goals, objectives, and develop plans for their golden years.

Rhythm of Life

Improve the quality of your life through a lifelong practice of moderate regular physical activity. The evidence linking physical activity to numerous health improvements is astounding. Regular physical activity greatly reduces the risk of coronary heart disease, developing diabetes, hypertension, and many other diseases. This course provides tips on healthy living even with hectic schedules. The objective of this course is to show how regular physical activity and eating healthy is an achievable means to a healthier life.

Parliamentary Procedure". The skit will involve actual events as well as role-play events. This demonstration will enhance the skills of leaders and members, whether experienced or inexperienced. The objective of this course is to provide organizational leaders and members with skills in conducting high quality and efficient meetings.

E-Directive System

This course will look at the agency's official filing system. Training will include how documents are entered into the e-directives systems. The question will be answered, what items are currently in the e-directive system and how do I retrieve them? Upon completing this course, the participant will know how the E-Directive system works and be able to retrieve information from the system.

Open Forum With the Deputy Chief for Science and Technology and the Deputy Chief for Soil Survey and Resource Assessment

The Deputy Chiefs will provide an update on current activities in their areas and answer questions from participants. The objective for this course is for participants to have a good understanding of current initiatives and the future direction of the Agency.

Effective Presentations

This course will outline the steps speakers must take to develop and deliver public presentations. They will also discuss various presentation, media, methods, and styles of delivery. The objective of this course is to demonstrate presentation techniques, which will enable the participant to present or exchange information in an effective professional manner.

E-Government

This course will look at the various tools that make up electronic government. How is NRCS currently using e-Government? Also, new ways

Retirement System (FERS)

Retirement is something most of us will do one day. But how do we plan for it? This course will discuss planning for retirement, health, and life insurance benefits after retirement, creditable service, and thrift saving plan, social security, and other aspects under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). The objective of this course is to help people think about the need to set goals, objectives, and develop plans for their golden years.

Ethics Pertaining to the Farm Bill

This session will look at the things we should know when government employees are participating in Farm Bill programs. The session is designed to answer the question, what and where are the regulations pertaining to Ethics for government employees? As an employee how do I manage Ethics while implementing the Farm Bill? The objective of this course is designed to familiarize the participant with the various components of Ethics do's

investing. The objective of this course is to provide information that will help participants make decisions now to prepare for the future.

Open Forum with the Deputy Chief for Programs

The Deputy Chief will provide an update on current activities in the Program area and answer questions from participants. Upon completing this course participants will have a good understanding of current initiatives and the future direction of the Agency.

Federal Grants, Contribution, and Cooperative Agreements

Presents basic information to employees who use grants, contribution or cooperative agreements to support the mission of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and to help them determine the appropriate legal instrument to use. Its use is designed for anyone who has a role in processing agreements or grants with other Federal agencies, State, and local governments and private sector organizations. Emphasis will be placed on

Unconscious Discrimination

Unconscious discrimination is something we all do, but are unaware of because it happens as a result of two things: how we are socialized and the way our brains take in and process information. Because it occurs without our conscious realization, it can have real impacts on the work environment – how we hire and retain; how successful we are in our outreach efforts. At the end of this course, you will be more aware of your own hidden biases and see how unconscious discrimination can have an impact in the work environment.

GPS/Mobile Data Collection/Digital Camera Training

This course will provide an introduction of how Geospatial technology can benefit the NRCS user. The students will be exposed to the 3 different levels of GPS implementation and the applications and capabilities of each. The first level is the use of the GPS receiver for "in the field" conservation

to expand e-Government will be explored. The objective of this course is to expand participant knowledge on how e-Government can be used to better serve our internal and external customers.

Open Forum with the Deputy Chief for Management and the Deputy Chief for Strategic Planning and Accountability

The Deputy Chiefs will provide an update on current activities in their areas and answer questions for participants. The objective for this course is for participants to have a good understanding of current initiatives and the future direction of the Agency.

and don'ts of the Farm Bill.

Executive Briefing Methods

Many opportunities occur to brief management on various programs, reports, and activities. This session will look at the best ways to package your information and deliver it to management.

The course will cover the do's and don'ts of executive briefings. Upon completing this course the participant will know how to conduct an effective briefing for management.

Financial Planning

This session will provide basic information on financial planning, protecting your heir property, wills, trusts, and insight on the power of

requirements for program implementation. The objective of this course is to enhance employee's knowledge of NRCS contracting procedures, regulations, and requirements with emphasis on program implementation.

Flexible Spending Account

Flexible Spending Account (FSA) is another benefit available to federal employees to ensure availability of funds to pay out-of-pocket medical expenses or dependent care of a child or parent and the tax benefits. The course will provide enough information for employees to decide if the program will meet their needs, how to enroll, and how to estimate allotments.

and resource inventory functions. The second level will explore using the GPS data to create GIS point, line, and polygon features. The third level of implementation will look at using mobile computers for GIS on-site and real-time mapping applications. Instructors from NCGC will demonstrate the application of the digital camera and simulate use of the GPS for GIS feature creation with and without the use of a mobile device for real-time mapping. The course objective is to provide an introduction to GPS applications and equipment available to NRCS through the USDA GPS purchase contract currently being deployed.

11th Annual Training Conference: Course Descriptions

Homeland Security

A Department – wide National Interagency Incident Management System (NIMS) is being implemented. This course highlights some of the pertinent features of this system, which includes command and control, coordination, and publications management. USDA has developed additional security procedures for use when the threat of terrorist attacks increases. These too will be discussed. Upon completing this course participants will understand the different threat levels and be prepared to respond to national emergencies.

Integrated Acquisition System (IAS)

Integrated Acquisition System (IAS) is a modern, web-based e-Procurement solution designed to streamline and automate contract

1. Sexual Harassment Facts
 2. Sexual Harassment Liability
 3. Elements of a Claim of Sex Harassment
 4. Types of Sexual Harassment
 5. Tools for Preventing Sexual Harassment
- Upon completing this course participants will learn how to recognize and prevent sexual harassment and understand its negative impacts on productivity in the workplace.

Writing KSAs

Discusses and explains selected items in the NRCS Human Resources Merit Promotion Plan in addition to providing “tips” on how to respond to KSAs for federal employment. The objective of this course is

Effective Conservation Assessment

The National Resources Inventory (NRI) Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) is designed to measure environmental benefits effects on conservation programs. This study is a partnership effort between NASS, FSA, ARS, and NRCS. The attendee will learn about the study content and design. The objective of this course is to help attendees understand how the NRI-CEAP will

E-FOTG

The Electronic Field Office Technical Guide was one of the first tools developed in SmartTech initiative. This course will highlight how the E-FOTG can be optimized in service centers and in the public and private sectors. The speaker will inform attendees how NRCS is progressing in its goal of having the

Registration Information

Hours

The registration area will be open:
 December 1, 2003 – 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 December 2, 2003 – 6:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 December 3, 2003 – 6:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Form

Complete and return [the registration form](#) along with the appropriate registration fee.

Additional registration forms can be printed from The Organization home page at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/organ>

Fees

The training conference registration fee covers program materials, 3 continental breakfasts, all morning and afternoon breaks, three luncheons, one banquet ticket, and other materials for each participant. Early registration fees are \$290.00 for members and \$340.00 for nonmembers if received and post marked by **November 1, 2003**. Registration fees will increase to \$335.00 for

management and acquisition processes throughout USDA, and ultimately enhance support of USDA missions-critical activities. This course will teach how this system will be used within NRCS to lower purchasing costs, reduce lead time to complete acquisitions, improve customer service, support integrated planning and budgeting and increase opportunities for female, minority, and small and disadvantaged businesses. The objective of this course is to make employees aware of IAS and benefits of using this electronic procurement tool.

Sexual Harassment

This course will provide a definition and overview of sexual harassment along with the following:

to provide tips to assist the participant in responding to KSA's.

Technical Paper Session

New science, techniques, and improvement are being made each day in the scientific community. These sessions are a series of topics that will provide information on the latest technology, products, and services in the area of crops and livestock production, wildlife, air quality, and the interaction of agriculture and the environment.

The various technical papers will provide ideas and research that is available that can be used to solve new and old problems related to the technical and social issues related to conservation implementation.

completed FOTG available electronically and how it will be used at the National level to update technical guidance and future developments.

All in the Family

The instructor will provide information on the importance of becoming knowledgeable of the political and economic implications of land ownership. Participants will become knowledgeable of the type of family land-holding and business organization that perpetuate land ownership. This will be done by examining and understanding four principal tactics used to prevent involuntary land loss.

A Diverse View – Customer Service in Your Office

The course will explore some of the dos and don'ts of good customer service. It will also provide you with some fresh ideas on how to improve your customer

members and \$385.00 for nonmembers for registration received after November 1, 2003.

Family members and guests can purchase individual luncheon(s) and banquet tickets as listed on the registration form. Tickets may be purchased on site. Tickets will be included with your registration materials.

Life Members

Organization members who are life members qualify for a 20% discount on registration and merchandise sold by The Organization, special luncheon and banquet seating, and a special meeting registration line. Life members are entitled to attend all activities.

Students

Student rates are available to individuals who are full time students and have proper identification.

Payment

Payment for the annual training conference registration will be accepted in US funds through money orders, checks, or credit cards. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH THROUGH THE MAIL.

service.

Cancellation Policy

Cancellation of training conference registration must be received in writing by November 1, 2003, to receive a full refund. Cancellation in writing received after November 1, 2003 is subject to a processing fee of \$45.00. No refund will be made for the training conference after November 8, 2003. Due to commitments made to the service providers this policy must be followed.

Special Needs

Please indicate on the registration form any physical, dietary, or other special needs. The planning committee and Missouri Chapter volunteers will be present at the registration area and are available to assist all conference participants.

Accommodations

The Millennium Hotel is holding accommodations including suites, standard kings, queens, and double rooms. The price of the room is \$76.00 per night plus tax. For reservations, individual may the reservation department toll free number at 1-866-866-8086 or 314-241-9500 between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday (be sure to request The National Organization Of Professional Black NRCS Employees room block). Cut-off date for room reservation is November 1, 2003. The address of the hotel is 200 South Fourth Street, St. Louis, Missouri. The hotel does not accept debit cards.

Transportation



Activities At A Glance

Monday, December 1, 2003

Exhibits and Poster Setup	8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
College/HR Fair	1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Registration	1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Silent Auction	4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Executive Board Meeting	5:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.
Membership Drive	5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Organization's Store	5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Committee Meetings	6:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.
Regional Meetings	7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Moderator's Meeting	8:45 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.

Tuesday, December 2, 2003

There are several options for local transportation. A taxis cab ride is \$25.00 one-way. To ride the Metro Link from the Airport to downtown is \$3.00 (www.metrostlouis.org or call 314-231-2345). The Transexpress is \$13.00 one-way and \$21.00 round trip to the hotel (www.transexpress-stl.com or call 314 -428-7799). In addition, rental cars are available at the airport.

Parking

Parking is available at a garage directly connected to the hotel by an enclosed walkway. Registered hotel guests have unlimited in-out privileges. The current parking fee is \$10.00 per day, subject to change.

Continental Breakfast	6:00 a.m. to 7:15 a.m.
Registration	6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
College/HR Fair	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Picture Taking Session	5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Silent Auction	5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
2004 Membership Drive	5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Executive Board Meeting	5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Organization's Store	5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Networking Session	6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 3, 2003

Continental Breakfast	6:00 a.m. to 7:15 a.m.
Registration	7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Membership Drive	5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Silent Auction	5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Chapter/Region Pictures	5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Organization's Store	5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Executive Board Meeting	5:15 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.
Annual Business Meeting	6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 4, 2003

Continental Breakfast	6:00 p.m. to 7:15 a.m.
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Exhibits/Posters Breakdown 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Banquet 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Mixer 9:00 p.m.

Friday, December 5, 2003

Training Conference Evaluation 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

****Remember to include both the course and conference registration forms when sending in your information**

Conference Registration Form.

Mail completed conference registration form, with course registration and payment, to:

Shawn Anderson, Conference Co-Chair Planning Committee

P.O. Box 2052

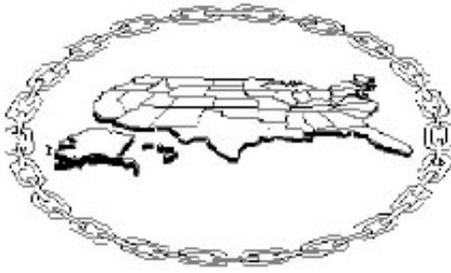
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Click PDF or Microsoft Word links below for full sized conference registration form.

The Following Documents Require  [Adobe Acrobat](#) or  [Microsoft Word](#)

 [Conference Registration Form](#)

 [Conference Registration Form](#)



The Organization Logo: Origin and Meaning by James Tatum Chairperson President's Advisory Committee

A logo typically consists of symbols, trademarks or emblems. This holds true with the chain that serves as the logo for the National Organization of Professional Black

Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees (The Organization). In the early stages of development of The Organization a request was sent out to all current members asking them to submit suggestions for a logo. Members responded to that request by submitting various types of logos--one being the "chain," and the map of the United States was added. The chain with its strong links and the map of the United States became The Organization's logo. The logo was to symbolize to its members that no matter where you are as a member you are connected.

A logo can mean different things to different people. Even our Organization's chain around the United States may be perceived to mean something different than our intent. The essences of that difference can be compared to the parable about three individuals who were blindfolded and then asked to describe an elephant. The first individual identified it as a large rope, because he had only touched the snout; the second individual identified it as a large quilt because of its soft hairless skin; and third individual identified it as a tree with roots because he only touched the foot and leg. It was not until their blindfolds were removed did the three see the total elephant.

We may sometimes need to "remove our blindfolds". The selection of the chain was never meant to be a reminder of the days when we held in slavery or jails in shackles. Logos may be perceived differently than their original intent. This story was intended to highlight that fact as well as enlighten members about our logo.

Mentoring **By Burthel Thomas, Assistant State Conservationist for Field Services - NRCS Arkansas**

The art of mentoring, has been practiced for many years. The word 'mentor' was personified in The Odyssey. Mentor was a close friend of Odysseus who cared for Odysseus's son, Telemachus for 10 years while Odysseus traveled. Mentor, as the goddess Athena in disguise, embodied both male and female personas. She was the ideal mentor, being nurturing, supportive, and protective as well as aggressive, assertive, and risk taking.

The mentor, Athena, played all of the roles that a mentor should play today: teacher, friend, guide,

'Character is both developed and revealed by tests, and all of life is a test'

'The truth will set you free, but first it may make you miserable'

'Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less'

and protector.

Mentoring is a very subjective art. A mentor can be many things to many people. In the agency, the mentor should teach the mentored individual to learn the values and standards of the profession. At the same time the mentor must provide a sense of career direction. This perhaps where some fail to embrace the full scope of the mentoring process.

**Excerpts from The Purpose
Driven Life by Rick Warren**

Employees in leadership positions need to recognize the potential impact that they may have on the lives of young employees, simply by providing time for a few moments of professional guidance. All too often leaders find themselves too busy to talk with young employees about the agency and their careers.

Finally if the agency is to remain the king of professional organization comprised of champions and winners, and provide the opportunity to be one, we must be about the business of mentoring our gifted and talented employees. In doing so we transition them in the agency of the 21st century. NRCS recently issued a new mentoring policy to encourage this opportunity. Therefore, each of us should seek a mentor to help us in our career. Similarly, those of us who are in a position to serve as mentor need to seek those whom we can help.

Book Review - By Patti Jackson-Kelly, Minnesota

Book: Managing from the Heart

by Hyler Bracy, Jack Rosenblum, Aubrey Sanford, and Roy Trueblood

All of the authors are executive officers of the Atlanta Consulting Group. They have trained hundred of managers. While they accept the behavior of their adult trainees, some of the trainees have challenged them to show how caring can produce tangible results. Those experiences led them to write the book.

What makes managers effective in doing their jobs with competence, confidence and caring. Almost everyone would agree that competence and confidence in a manager would make a lot of sense, but the question becomes, "Where does caring fit in?"

Would it be fair to say that a company or business cannot maintain high quality employees, products, and profits unless it is managed with compassion and caring? I would say "Yes". While these qualities are crucial in effective management, their roles can be sometimes misunderstood, particularly in the expression of caring. It is not that managers need to care more, but they may

need to learn to make their message more evident and express it more effectively.

This book offers a simple and direct way to show managers the way to open their hearts. Managing from the heart is how the authors demonstrate caring and respect throughout the business world.

The Authors illustrated what it meant to be a caring manager and indeed, a caring human being, through the fictional story of a rough edged manager. Harry Hartwell was a composite character drawn from decades of the author's field experience on the front lines of management. Harry had a reputation with staffers as being very arrogant, and an "old timer", and was often seen as intimidating. He was sometimes referred to by co-workers as the Abominable "No" Man. After a recent heart attack Harry has been trying to make decision that would not have been made otherwise. These decisions would also affect decision that he made among the staff that he supervised at work. The book reviews several scenarios that Harry has to deal with during a discretionary period.

Using Harry's story, the authors illustrate five principles:

1. **Please don't make me wrong, even if you disagree.**
2. **Hear and understand me.**
3. **Tell me the truth with compassion.**
4. **Remember to look for my loving intentions.**
5. **Acknowledge the greatness within me.**

Please don't make me wrong, even if you disagree.

No one likes to have his or her worth as a person questioned. People almost always resent it, and if they don't get mad, they get even. Talk about your feelings and your concerns, but let your actions and words dictate your character relative to how you handle the situation.

Hear and understand me

It is crucially important for people to feel fully listened to and understood. When they feel heard and understood, then they are ready to hear what you have to say. By hearing and understanding individuals we can help to make them feel good about themselves. People need to know that they are an important part of what goes on in the work environment, and your listening and understanding helps to make them feel connected to the mission.

Tell me the truth with compassion

This principle deals with constructive confrontation. There are times that we need to confront people and this principle tells us not to avoid the confrontation, but to do it with firmness and caring. That means talking to people rather than about them, and doing it in a respectful and caring manner rather than a disdainful or condescending way.

Remember to look for my loving intentions.

This means that when someone proposes an idea or a plan, no matter what you think of the plan itself, you explicitly acknowledge that the person has a positive reason for reasons, such as wanting to help the company or business. We want to keep in mind that his principle doesn't say you must find loving intentions all the time, BUT you should look for them. Our challenge is to remember to look for the, not to just presume they don't exist.

Acknowledge the greatness within me

Everyone has the potential to grow and people will tend to respond positively to anyone who addresses their potential greatness...even if no current evidence of it has yet surfaced.

Managing from the heart gave me a new outlook on how to address individuals and circumstances. Hopefully you all can pick up on these five principles and give them a try. Using these principles can effect both the productivity and morale of employees.

Managing from the heart can be some pretty powerful stuff. These 5 principles can actually change a person's life. Let's try and remember these principles as often as we can. One way to do it is to use the five letters of the principles: H.E.A.R.T.

Hear and understand me

Even if you disagree, please don't make me wrong

Acknowledge the greatness within me

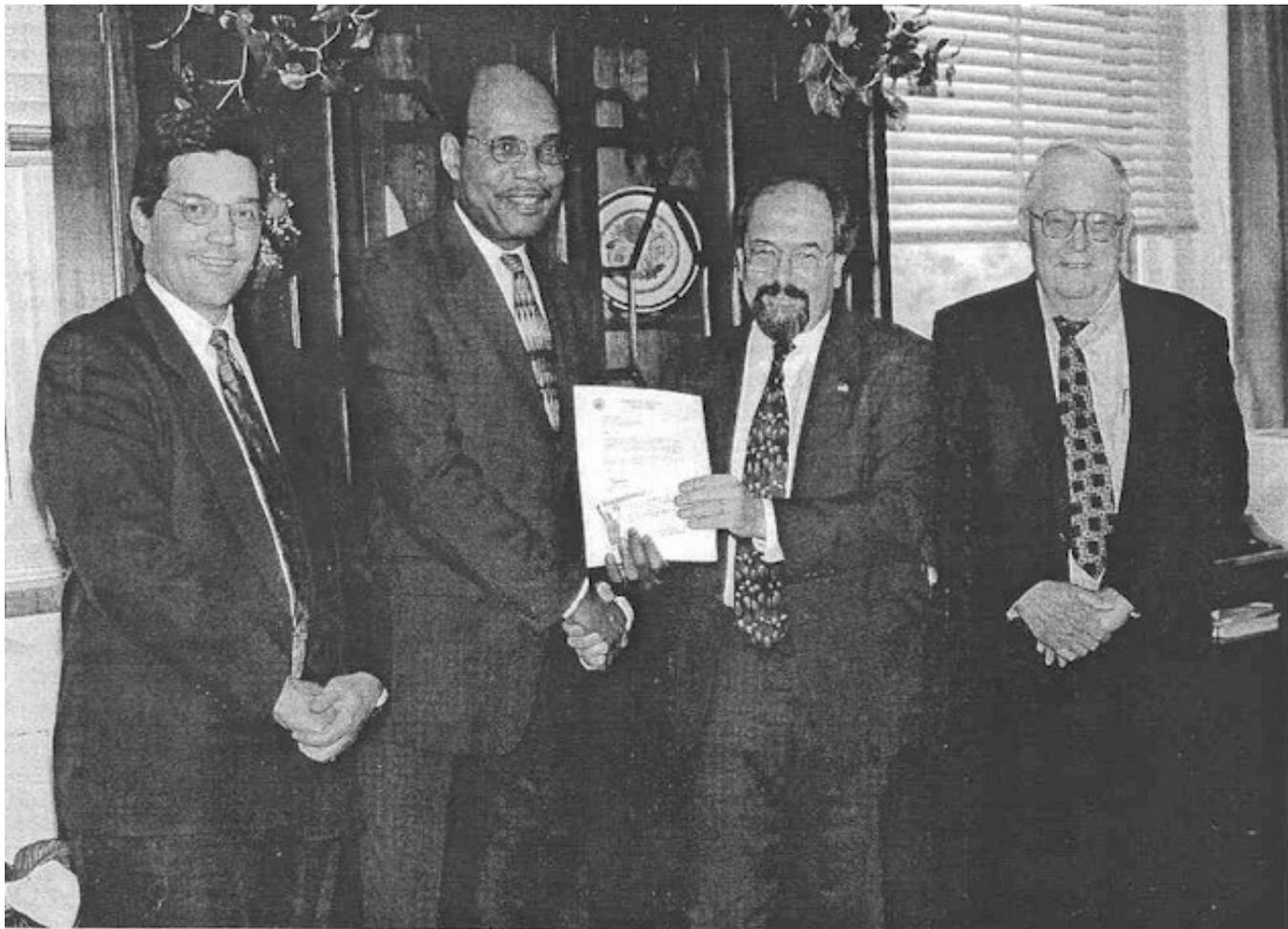
Remember to look for my loving intentions

Tell me the truth with compassion

Presidential Rank Award

Reprinted in part from a Tech News article

Our own Lawrence Clark, NRCS Deputy Chief for Science and Technology, received the Presidential Rank Award. The award recognizes federal senior executives for strong results-oriented leadership; exceptional professional, scientific long-term accomplishments; consistent demonstrations of strength, integrity and industry, and relentless commitment to excellence in public service. Deputy Chief Clark and an elect group of senior career executives were honored with the award in a ceremony in Washington, D.C.



(l - r) NRCS Chief Bruce Knight, Larry Clark, Mark Rey, Mack Grey Photo by Larry Holmes, NRCS Maryland

On behalf of the American people, President George W. Bush expressed to them appreciation for their dedication, and he commended them for exceptional performance saying, "It is an incredible honor for me to be the leader of such a strong team..."

Congratulations Larry. Keep up the great work!



Visit our web site:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/organ>

Membership application for The National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees



**The National Organization of Professional Black NRCS
Employees**
(The Organization)
2003 Membership Application

The Link is produced by The Organization's Newsletter Committee
Renna Owens, Editor
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