

**Steps for Using EQIP – FA incentive to fund Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) development using producer-hired Technical Service Providers (TSPs)**

**December 1, 2009**

1. **(Field Office)** - A producer is interested in EQIP-FA initiative to fund CNMP CAP development using producer-hired TSP, and completes application for program participation (CCC-1200).
  - a. NRCS field staff completes all program eligibility determinations<sup>1</sup>. If client is eligible for program participation then proceed to the following steps:
    - 1) Determine payment rate for Animal Units (AUs) and Acres that will be covered by the CNMP.
    - 2) Review with producer the CNMP initiative payment rate and the TSP hiring process that she/he must use to hire a TSP certified in "TechReg" for a CAP-CNMP Plan Approval.
  - b. If the producer wishes to proceed, Field Office (FO) will:
    - 1) Develop EQIP CAP-CNMP Plan Approval contract for producer.
    - 2) Provide Producer copy of the CAP – CNMP Plan Criteria which lists required deliverables.
    - 3) Notify client to hire TSP certified in CAP-CNMP Plan Approval from TechReg at:  
<http://techreg.usda.gov/CustLocateTSP.aspx>
    - 4) Client may grant farm information to TSP directly, or may grant permission for release of information to TSP by NRCS. If client agrees to release information, assist client to fill out and sign "Authorization and Release of Information " (see [ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ME/GMAmendments/GM120\\_ME-11\\_408\\_C.pdf](ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/ME/GMAmendments/GM120_ME-11_408_C.pdf)) . On the form, print TSP name and their TechReg ID Number TSP-X-XX-XXX. Place original signed copy in file and provide two copies to client and one for TSP.
    - 5) Provide client and/or TSP with signed permission copies Common Land Units (CLU) and "At-Risk" Wildlife maps covering CLUs.
2. **(Client, TSP and Field Office)** Client contacts TSP and considers using the Assignment of Payment.
  - a. Client and TSP agreed on terms. It is suggested that client have a contract with the TSP that refer to the "CNMP Criteria CAP Plan Code (102)" which details the deliverables.

- b. If client agrees to the Assignment of Payment:
  - 1) NRCS completes blocks 10, 11 and 12 on the "Assignment of Payment" CCC-36 form. The sum of the payment due for contracted CAP is entered in block 12.
  - 2) The client completes items 1, 3, 4, 13A, and 13B.
  - 3) TSP completes items 5, 6, 14A, and 14B. TSP must also provide the SF-1199 Form - Direct Deposit Information.
  - 4) NRCS files completed original CCC-36 in case file and loads into Protracts. Copies also are provided for the client's six part folder and to the assignee.
- 3. **(TSP)** – TSP will visit property.
  - a. TSP will make "farm" visit, and get contract signed, and a copy of the "Authorization and Release of Information" from step 1(b) (4).
  - b. TSP completes necessary walk-over of land/buildings and gathers other information to complete the CAP.
- 4. **(TSP)** – TSP completes the CAP.
- 5. **(TSP/Client)** – TSP certification statement on cover sheet of CAP
  - a. TSP, per deliverables, produces two hard copies of CAP and reviews it with the client. TSP obtains client's signature on cover page of both copies and leaves both copies with the client.
  - b. TSP, per deliverables, also produces two digital copies of CAP and leaves both copies with producer.
  - c. Provides invoice to client for CAP.
- 6. **(Client)** – Delivers to FO:
  - a. One hard and one electronic copy of CAP.
- 7. **(Client and Field Office)** – Payment request
  - a. The client completes their portion of CPA-1245 Form, Request for Payment.
  - b. NRCS employee reviews deliverables. If acceptable, signs acceptance line on cover of CAP.
  - c. FO staff prepares NRCS-CPA-1245 and processes payment.
- 8. **(Field Office)** – CAP processing
  - a. One hard copy of the signed CAP is placed in NRCS/SWCD official files.
  - b. The Toolkit customer folder is checked out from the NCP Database and the CNMP digital file is placed into C:/Customer Files Toolkit/customer file/CAP-CNMP.
  - c. District Conservationist informs ASTC-Operations that CNMP CAP has been delivered and may need a Quality Assurance check.
- 9. **(State Office)** – Performs Quality Assurance on reported CAP per policy.

**Footnotes:**

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<sup>1</sup> Producer must have current manure test(s) and/or other appropriate nutrient analysis for each non-commercial nutrient source (compost and/or other residuals) to be utilized. Producer must also have current soil tests<sup>2</sup> that include crop-specific nutrient application recommendations (for MDAFRR recognized “realistic or typical” yields). It is strongly recommended that the producer updates their tracts with FSA (1026) at this time so that all are accounted for. The fields that need soils tests are determined based on the following criteria:

**A** – If farm has 50 AUs or greater: Soil tests and recommendations are needed for all pastures, and for all fields on which commercial fertilizers, manure, composts, and/or residuals will be applied.

**OR**

**B** – If farm has less than 50 AUs: Soil tests and recommendations are needed for all pastures, and for all fields on which manure, composts, and/or residuals will be applied.

<sup>2</sup> Soils test should be as current as possible – preferably less than two years old. When soil tests are five years old, the plan must be revised. A fertilizer recommendation is needed for each crop that is planned to be grown in a field’s rotation during the five year that the CNMP covers. For fields in a crop rotation, the producer should request multiple recommendations at the time of submitting the soil sample to the lab. (Example: Tract 15, field 9, is in a 2-year rotation of potatoes and silage corn. Producer will request a recommendation for potatoes AND one for silage corn on field 9’s soil test results.) Please note that we have experienced difficulties where private consultants have done the testing, and provided recommendations for only one crop. Producers need to be informed that this is not acceptable and that they are responsible for providing recommendations for all crops in the rotation.