

USING FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) COMPLIANCE SLIDES AS A METHOD TO EVALUATE HYDROLOGY

This method should be used when evidence of hydrology cannot be determined onsite with Primary or Secondary Indicators. The use of FSA normalized slides as an offsite indicator may be used, as described in Chapter 19 of the Engineering Field Handbook, Procedure 2.

1. **Review normal¹ USDA compliance slides using slides from a 20-year period ending with current year. The following signatures are indicators of potential hydrology:**
 - Hydrophytic vegetation
 - Surface water
 - Saturated conditions
 - Flooded or drowned-out crops
 - Stressed crops due to wetness
 - Differences in vegetation due to different planting dates
 - Inclusion of wet areas as set-aside or idled
 - Circular or irregular areas of unharvested crops within a harvested field
 - Isolated areas that are not farmed with the rest of the field
 - Areas of greener vegetation (especially during dry years)

2. **When wetland signatures are apparent, the matrix below will be used:**

USDA SLIDES

STATUS

≥50% of all “normal”¹ year slides show signature of potential hydrology

Hydrology verified

NOTE: Slides from 1986 and prior years should be reviewed to determine if any manipulation occurred prior to the National Food Security Act, to help assign the correct wetland determination label.

¹ Rainfall sheets provided for each field office identify “normal” years. This information was developed based upon techniques identified in Chapter 19 of the USDA Engineering Field Handbook, “Hydrology Tools for Wetland Determination.”