

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
210 Walnut Street, Room 693
Des Moines, IA 50309-2180

March 17, 2008

GENERAL MANUAL (GM)
180 – CPA
AMENDMENT IA15

SUBJECT: CPA – CONSERVATION PLANNING POLICY

Purpose. To amend Part 409 (Conservation Planning Policy).

Effective Date. Upon receipt.

Conservation planning is one of the main missions of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Because of the importance of conservation planning, the quality of the conservation plans developed is not only important to NRCS but also to our clients and partners.

Toolkit is the NRCS's official conservation planning and application documentation business tool. It will be used to document all customer decisions and application practices. In an effort to achieve a consistent, quality product using the business tools available to NRCS, Iowa NRCS is implementing new statewide policy for use of Toolkit. This policy includes standard formats for the naming conventions for the customer folder, and conservation plan, and the .mxd project file in toolkit as well as standard symbology for all practices planned and applied in Iowa.

The Performance Results System (PRS) will not be used as the tool to record producer decisions or to document the application of practices.

As we look to the future of NRCS and anticipate that staff may serve in more than one office, it becomes imperative to have a common way of doing business within our state. The implementation of common naming conventions for Toolkit and common map symbols for ArcMap must occur for consistency, effectiveness and improved efficiency for Iowa NRCS. It is expected that every employee that works with Toolkit will fully adhere to this guidance.

Contact. If there are questions about this amendment, contact Paul Sweeney, Assistant State Conservationist for Operations, at 515/284-4769 or by email at paul.sweeney@ia.usda.gov.

Filing Instructions.

<u>Remove</u>	<u>File Immediately After</u>	<u>Dated</u>
180-GM, IA Amend. 12, April 2007	Title 180, Part 409.5	March 2008

/s/Al Garner
Acting State Conservationist

Attachment

GM

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IA409.5 Documentation of Conservation Planning Data

Customer Folders:

When entering a new or maintaining an existing company or business name, the folder name will use the last name of the company or business, an underscore; followed by the first name, an underscore; and the middle initial (if applicable). There must not be any spaces or punctuation in the folder name and should look like this

“Campbell_Roy_R.” When the identifier is entered, it should be entered as “t” and then the tract number as such “t3204”. The resulting customer folder name will be:

Campbell_Roy_R-----t3204

There is no need to place leading zeros in the tract number.

Corporations, trusts, and partnerships can be entered as corporation name, an underscore; and the corporation type. There must not be any spaces or punctuation in the folder name and should look like this “Mickey_Mouse_Irr_Tr.” When the identifier is entered, it should be entered as “t” and then the tract number as such “t505.” The resulting customer folder name will be:

Mickey_Mouse_Irr_Tr-----t505

When using abbreviations for trust, partnership, corporation, etc.; make sure everyone in the office uses the same abbreviation with underscores between any abbreviations. There is no need to place leading zeros in the tract number.

Land managed outside of the county:

If the land is managed or carried by another FSA county office outside the work unit area (county), the first letter of the county name may be added as follows (i.e. Polk County land managed by Story County) to assist in identifying the land location.

Customer folders
Conservation plan
MXD file

Campbell_Roy_R-----Pt32
Consplan-Pt32
Consplan-Pt32.mxd

Note: If necessary put the first 2 or 3 letters of the county name in to make it unique and clear which county common land unit the tract is in.

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Conservation Plan (Consplan) Layer:

There will be only one planned land unit per customer folder. When creating this layer (using the Hardees Star) the layer name will be “Consplan” followed by a dash “-” and “t” and then the tract number. The layer name should look like:

Consplan-t32

This Consplan will then be used to develop all program contracts.

Practice Layers (Points, Lines, Polygons):

The practice layers will contain all conservation planning decisions and practice application that is associated with the tract. Any existing layers developed for programs (HEL, EQIP, CRP, and WHIP) or other uses will be incorporated into these layers. All planned and applied practices denoted by points, lines, and polygons will now be in the appropriate data layer.

Management of .mxd Files:

Each “Customer Folder” has three .mxd files. One of these will be created and named by the Toolkit user. The naming convention for the .mxd file will be the same as for the consplan. When creating this layer, the layer name will be “Consplan” followed by a dash “-” and “t” and then the tract number. The .mxd layer name should look like this:

Consplan-t32.mxd

The other two .mxd files exist in the Toolkit system. These are the default files ToolkitGIS_Template.mxd, and the county specific template file ToolkitGIS_Template_countyname.mxd.

Each customer folder will always have the following .mxd files:

- Consplan-t32.mxd
- ToolkitGIS_Template.mxd (dated 9/19/2005 205KB file size)
- ToolkitGIS_Template_countyname.mxd

There will be only one .mxd file per tract. The .mxd file will contain all conservation plan map work for conservation planning and all programs such as EQIP, CRP, WHIP, WRP. As field office staff work on existing folders, the field offices are expected to “clean up” old .mxd files. This would be done to accomplish the above guidance of only one .mxd file per tract and name the file per the above naming convention.

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Cleanup of previously entered Customer Folders and Consplan layers:

Field offices will edit the Business names for folders by March 31 in order to match the naming convention above. If the current Business name includes characters such as * , ! & % / the file **will become** corrupt, the file will then be **unusable** and the data will **not** be able to be recovered.

Conservation Practice Map Symbology:

Along with the common naming conventions, a common set of map symbols has been developed in ArcMap. **The set of common map symbols must be used for all conservation planning and documentation of practice application.** There will be one conservation plan map per customer folder in Toolkit. It will be saved at a 660':inch scale using the practice symbols provided in Toolkit.

Previously Applied Practices:

Conservation practices applied prior to the date of the conservation planning activity that are still functioning and were certified as meeting NRCS standards and specifications should be added to the appropriate practice layer at the time the new conservation plan is developed. Any practice applied prior to 1975, must be shown as applied in 1975 due to limitations of the toolkit software. These practices can be labeled with the actual applied date if important (use the Notes in the attribute tool to do this).