

STATE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
July 10, 2008

In attendance:

State Technical Committee Official Members

AGENCY/GROUP	REPRESENTED BY
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service	Niles Glasgow
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service	Erica Westbrook
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service	Angela Yarborough
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service	Craig Ellis
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service	Stephen Henry
USDA-Farm Service Agency	Steve Slice
USDA-Farm Service Agency	Linda Floyd
USDA-Rural Development	
Cattleman's Association	
Clemson University	
Corps of Engineers	
FSA State Committee	
FSA State Committee	
National Wild Turkey Federation	
SC Association of Conservation Districts	
Grazing Land Coalition	
SC Department of Agriculture	
SC DHEC	Meredith Murphy
SC DHEC	Marc Cribb
SC DHEC	
SC Forestry Commission	Gene Kodama
SC Forestry Commission	Russell Hubright
SC Forestry Commission	Scott Phillips
SC Grasslands Coalition	James Riley Hill
SCDNR	Breck Carmichael
SCDNR	
South Carolina Farm Bureau	
South Carolina Soybean Board	
South Carolina State University	
South Carolina Wildlife Federation	
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency	
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service	
U. S. Geological Survey	
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	
SCACD	William Henderson
SCRWA	Jill Miller
Others:	
Forest Landowner Tree Farm	Bob Scott
CWCES –Lexington County	Dr. Powell Smith

The minutes and handouts were distributed and reviewed.

The meeting was called to order by Niles Glasgow as he welcomed the committee members and participants. Everyone introduced themselves. Mr. Glasgow updates everyone on the purpose of the State Technical Committee. The State Technical Committee was setup to advise the State Conservationist on how to implement the Farm Bill for the greater good of the state.

You can request to be on the State Technical Committee agenda, along with getting participants input on changes and updates of policies procedures and standards. There can be at least 3-4 meetings held per year. Everyone was requested to limit their discussion topics to 15 minutes. Mr. Glasgow informs everyone that their input is valued and needed.

Agenda items were discussed as follows:

1. *Wetland Reserves Program*.....*Craig Ellis*

- The Farm Bill has changed the process of how a property is assessed.
- The valuation process has changed and land is valued as a whole with an easement along with a rate cap.
- A geographical area rate cap was created by Dick Holstein and has been adopted by the Farm Bill.
- There are three payment rates and they are: \$2,500.00 per acre, \$1,500.00 per acre and \$500.00 per acre.
- An appraisal will be done once a year.
- The appraisal and rate is established per the product.
- Timber values fluctuate and so will the value.
- Congress passes the Farm Bill and NRCS writes the programmatic rules for the Farm Bill.

Question:

- Is there something that include threatened and endangered species: Yes
- What about the site index? Value is done now
- What about a 4-5 year plantation? Easement value will probably be low.
- Ranking for Empowerment properties? Information located on the website.
- Are the caps statewide? Yes
- Who handles the Forestry section? Forestry is in Title VIII, but NRCS handles Title II.

2. *CNMP's For New Operations**Craig Ellis*

- The issue came from NHQ and will be handled by each state.
- Developing CNMP for new design for livestock operations.
- Earlier NRCS developed an animal waste management plan.
- 1996 a hog bill in the legislature was developed.
- Second set of regulations was developed in 2002.
- NRCS no longer developed.

- About 4 years ago there was a considerable back log of performance
- No cost to producers.
- Backlog of more than 100 plans.
- Former State Conservationist, Walt Douglas, had stated in a previously meeting that we would no longer write plans to assist producers in starting animal production. Also, there were workload issues so the plans were no longer needed.
- The EQIP program calls that we costshare with producers and a TSP must be used.
- Until recently, we were providing by what Walt Douglas had established no new plans for permits. Exception on a plan per plan basis.
- We are looking at revisiting that policy, so what do you think? If there are no farms there are no resource concerns to be address.
- A new operation is not eligible to receive funds.
- It is based on state average rate that is setup and must be under the EQIP program. Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans
- CNMPs a professional engineering license is needed and they are bonded per there license.
- Producers are to follow Regulation 39.
- There is a process to decertify a person if they are not doing the job correctly. Glasgow
- A comprehensive plan is done under NEPA.
- 20-30 plans have been done this year. Everyone is expanding.
- TSPs have a certain format that is reviewed by NRCS.
- If a producer does something without NRCS input then we will not review it.
- Environmentally when the producer to go through NRCS there is some advantageous.
- There have been plans that have been completed but never used.
- Farm Service Agency (FSA), have financed over 90% of poultry houses.

Questions:

What is required to make a loan with the Farm? A permit can be received from DHEC but it does not include the building. Getting consultants to write a broker plan, and then apply to the EQIP program.

What type of money does it take to get a plan? \$3,000-\$5,000.

Who enforces the CNMP? We are Farm Bill program driven. Funding and goals are established by the Farm Bill.

Are Technical Service Providers (TSP's) certified? Yes, they are.

What is the difference between a CNMP and a technical service provider? CNMP looks at planning for land resource and crops that will be grown. The farmer may or may not plant the same crop in a 3-4 yr plan.

Are all other plans free or can it be paid at 100%? The decision of what percentage will be paid was decided by the cost list.

Is there a place to put the waste or is most people putting it just anywhere? The CNMP was to establish what is done with the manure.

Are you making a loan on a part of a turn key job or does it include all issues? Most of the loans on farm houses are guaranteed loans.

3. Conservation Reserves Programs for New Operations..... Linda Floyd

- PVC post can be used to replace the iron and metal post, which producers must replace. \$5,200 is the line share.

Question:

What size post is needed? It does not matter.

4. Practice Standards..... Erica Westbrook

- Several standards were distributed and the standard for fencing was included and it is more detailed than in previous standards.
- The standards are being updated to receive funding for NRCS.
- The Bedding standards are usually used for cropland.
- The Fencing standards are in draft, so we are looking for comments. Comments will be accepted for 30 days. You can check under the NRCS website, under electronic field office tech guides.
- You can find information concerning the State Technical Committee on the webpage: sc.nrcs.usda.gov

Questions:

In looking for a system to help prevent tree loss would this system apply to an orchard? It is used to improve drainage to elevate the areas where the crops are planted so it should apply to any cropland.

5. Indian Creek Breck Carmichael

- In 2005 a public and private partnership was established to restore an early succession of species of birds.
- There are practices that are cost shared and one is warm season grasses.
- We have a partnership with the Forest Service concerning land clearing for private and/or public land. It is a good partnership.
- The goal is to get another partnership started in the coastal plains.
- The Forestry Commission hosted a teachers tour and Indian creek was a part of that tour. The teachers were very impressed and everyone feels as if the project has been a worthy one.

6. *Water Conservation* *William Henderson/Dr. Powell Smith*

- Water conservation is a practice used by strawberry producers.
- It includes a matted row system.
- A new system is the annual hill culture, planted in the fall, yield close to 20,000 lbs. and bloom earlier.
- (1) Fumigation rate.
 - Average size is less than, \$20 thousand per acre.
 - Fumigation will help with yield.
 - Methobromite is the herbicide.
- (2) Volumes of water will help to prevent frost.
 - Water conservation will be more severe because of water

- 50% of fields are covered by plastic which are permeable.
- Erosion and water quality issues are important.
- Farms practice contour farming.
- Peach farmers receive cost sharing which brings about certain issues.
- Frost protection can be washed off, so legitimate research is a concern.
- NC has established a cost share.
- Rye grass is not protected and that can be problematic.
- Neil Ogg at Clemson helped to craft the legislation.
- Methobromide has been established and allocated by a few developers as a critical need item.
- The state of Florida is using it and there will be more fresh fruit produced.
- Some type of protocol needs to be developed.
- Major strawberry producers in South Carolina are Lexington, Charleston, and the Spartanburg counties, but there are other counties spread throughout the state.
- SC strawberry gross revenue is 15,000-16,000 per acre and over a \$1 per pound.
- A meeting will be held after the Farm Bill has been completed to discuss this matter.
- There is a process and procedure in Washington to used get input or feedback on issues.
- There is a group that has been developed and those people have been assigned to work on these issues. Two leaders are in charge and they request assistance of different people.
- A formula is developed in considering how much money will be used on different disciplines and it is based on crops, wetlands etc., along with twenty different resources, these issues are plugged into a computer and that will establish what funding each state will receive. After the decision has been made the state must establish how the funds are used for each program. Funds can be reissued later in the year for different reasons. If we receive extra funding within the year it will be distributed. You can also have more requests than funds, but SC is usually close to its goals more than other states. If there is money that can be moved to other programs it will be done, but that can only be done with new and beginning farmers or minority farmers. Funds must be used that year, if it not used it will go back to National budget.

- We cannot shift funding between programs, there is a separate pot of money for each.
Example: EQIP- receives 7.8mill for animal waste and limited resource producers and etc (others). The application cut of is September 30, anything after that will be used for the next year. Funds must be obligated by the deadline. If the money is not obligated then NHQ can take it back, but some times we are able to receive that extra money.
- South Carolina is targeted to receive \$1.9million. NRCS has had a huge sign up this year and we funded more than 70% last year. The applications spiked this year and we were only able to fund a little more than 50%. WRP has received \$5-6million per year. Per our applications is how the programs are funded. 60% has to be livestock related. You must have owned it for several years before you can receive funds. EQIP has to be under conservation not a production issue.
- The definition for Farmland and Forestland is little different. Farmland is non-industrial private forestland.

7. Other Items.....

Cost sharing assistance is needed for forage, hay and pasturelands that are in a drought status.

How do we increase watering issues?

We need to know how to coordinate and combine in reference to 319. Amy Andrews has written an article concerning this matter.

Linda Fogle states “We are please and appreciate how we have been able to coordinate with NRCS when it comes to different issues”.

Meeting adjourned.

The next meeting date will be delivered by email one month prior to the meeting. The meeting place will continue to be at the following address: Farm Bureau Federation, 724 Knox Abbott Drive, Cayce, South Carolina 29033, unless otherwise informed.

NILES GLASGOW
State Conservationist