

August 1, 2011

NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT MANUAL (NFSAM)
Fifth Edition
180-V-NFSAM, Amendment WI 30

Subject: Update policy regarding the implementation of the Wisconsin NRCS Scope and Effect Job Approval Authority.

Purpose: To provide a state supplement to the NFSAM to all Wisconsin NRCS offices.

Effective Date. Upon receipt.

Background: The Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, requires NRCS to delineate, determine, and certify wetlands located on land on a farm or ranch subject to wetland conservation (WC) provisions in order to establish a producer's eligibility for certain USDA program benefits (16 U.S.C. Sec. 3822; [7 CFR Section 12.30](#)). This amendment presents the Wisconsin supplement to the NFSAM on the Scope and Effect Job Approval Authority, established according to the requirements specified in NFSAM Subpart A, Part 514.1 Certification, authorizing qualified employees to perform scope and effect evaluations as part of the wetland certification process.

The Scope and Effect Job Approval Authority (S&E JAA) was developed to ensure that qualified employees with specialized training and experience, appropriate job approval authority, and demonstrated proficiency are authorized to perform scope and effect evaluations. The job approval authority consists of three job classes defining progressive performance levels of scope and effect evaluations. The job class that is delegated by a designated engineering staff member to an employee is dependent on the person's training, experience and demonstrated competence. The State Conservation Engineer shall delegate the appropriate S&E JAA to each Area Engineer. The Area Engineer will use discretion when delegating S&E JAA within their areas.

This amendment supersedes that part of NFSAM, Third Edition, Amendment 5, 180-V-NFSAM, Amendment WI 25, dated March 26, 2004, pertaining to only the now outdated scope and effect job approval authorities listed on the March 2004 chart. Other parts of Amendment WI 25 still remain in effect until further notice.

Filing Instructions: File Amendment 30 in the NFSAM after Part 514.1.B Requirements for Job Approval Authority.

PATRICIA S. LEAVENWORTH
State Conservationist

Attachment

**Scope and Effect Job Approval Authority
for Wetland Evaluations**
August 1, 2011

Purpose

The purpose of this policy supplement is to implement the Wisconsin NRCS Scope and Effect Job Approval Authority (S&E JAA). NRCS Scope and Effect job approval authority is required to perform scope and effect evaluations.

Authority

NRCS is required by the Food Security Act of 1985 to delineate, determine, and certify wetlands according to the wetland conservation provision of the National Food Security Act Manual (NFSAM), 5th Ed., January, 2010. The S&E JAA was established to meet policy in NFSAM Subpart A, Part 514.1 Certification, where it states that a certified wetland determination must be completed by qualified NRCS employees. Qualifications include training, appropriate job approval authority, and demonstrated proficiency in performing the work.

The NRCS State Conservationist will be responsible for maintaining a roster of qualified employees, by training and experience, who have demonstrated knowledge and skills to conduct wetland determinations and delineations, functional assessments, minimal effects evaluations, mitigation planning, mitigation easements, and scope and effect evaluations. The roster of qualified employees will be filed in Section III of the Field Office Technical Guide, “Legislated Programs, Job Approval Authority”.

Introduction

Scope and effect refers to the documentation of: 1) wetland hydrologic conditions and manipulation that occurred before December 23, 1985, 2) planned maintenance on these previously manipulated wetlands, or 3) unauthorized manipulation of wetlands subject to wetland conservation provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended. Hydrologic manipulations are alterations that remove water, divert water, or otherwise affect hydrology on wetlands. Manipulation may include ditches, subsurface drains (tile), dams, dikes, diversions, pumps, terraces, fill, excavation or deep ripping of a restrictive layer, and similar practices.

Unlike the typical engineering job approval authority assigned to NRCS personnel, the scope and effect evaluations are not specific to a conservation practice standard, but relate directly to conditions affecting hydrology. Therefore the S&E JAA is the same, whether associated with a ditch, tile, or any other type of hydrologic manipulation found on the site.

Application

The scope and effect job approval authority (S&E JAA) consists of three job classes as described in Table 1.

Table 1. Scope and Effect Job Approval Authority (S&E JAA) for Wetland Evaluations

Job Class		
1	2	3
Employee has demonstrated that they can recognize when a scope and effect evaluation is needed for a site.	Employee has demonstrated that they can use the approved lateral effect charts or graphs within the limitations listed, to perform a scope and effect evaluation.	Employee has demonstrated that they can appropriately apply lateral effect equations on complex sites.

Job Class 1 does not include the analysis of the lateral effect distance of a drain or drains by any method (charts, graphs, equations or programs).

Job Class 2 includes the analysis of the lateral effect distance using only approved charts/graphs within the limitations listed on the charts or graphs. The lateral effect charts or graphs are developed under the direction of the State Conservation Engineer, and are found on the Wisconsin Share Point site under “Shared Documents/Engineering/ Later Effect Tables.”

Job Class 3 includes the analysis of the lateral effect for complex drainage systems and site conditions, and may require the use of the van Schilfgaarde, Hooghoudt, Kirkham, or Darcy Equations. Certain complex site conditions may also require a water budget analysis. For more complex situations individuals may also request technical assistance of the State Hydraulic Engineer.

The State Conservation Engineer (SCE) or “SCE designate” shall delegate the Scope and Effect Job Approval Authority to each Area Engineer. The Area Engineer will use discretion when delegating the Scope and Effect Job Approval Authority within their areas.

The job class that is delegated to an employee is dependent on the person’s training, experience and demonstrated competence in performing scope and effect evaluations. Class 3 is established primarily for Area Engineers, and may also be delegated to other engineering staff. On Class 3 jobs it is expected that engineers with S&E JAA will work with the local Soil Scientist to determine the appropriate soils data to use in the lateral effect computations.

The training required for Ag Land Level 1 wetland determinations, or equivalent field experience, is a prerequisite for field office staff receiving scope and effect job approval authority to allow them to independently make wetland determinations.