

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, D.C. 20013

September 13, 2010

NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT MANUAL (NFSAM)
180 - CPA
Circular No. 7, Part 527

SUBJECT: CPA – Form NRCS-CPA-52, Environmental Evaluation Worksheet

Purpose. To inform State Conservationists (STCs) and Directors of the Caribbean and Pacific Island Areas that effective immediately Form NRCS-CPA-52, Environmental Evaluation Worksheet, must be signed by a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employee and may no longer be signed by third-party technical service providers (TSPs).

Effective Date. This Circular is effective upon receipt.

Background. The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) authorizes Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) financial assistance funds to be used to develop conservation activity plans (CAPs). NRCS has established 11 CAPs plus a conservation nutrient management plan (CNMPs) that STCs and Directors of the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas may select for use in their State or Territory.

Policy. According to NRCS regulation 7 CFR Part 650 on implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental evaluation (EE) is required for all technical and financial assistance, even when the assistance is only for development of a plan. As such, development of a CAP or CNMP requires that Form NRCS-CPA-52, Environmental Evaluation Worksheet, be prepared to document the EE. According to NRCS environmental policy and guidance, a responsible Federal official (RFO) must review and sign each Form NRCS-CPA-52.

Effective immediately, a Form NRCS-CPA-52 developed for a customer of NRCS programs—whether the plan is developed by NRCS, a partner agency, or a TSP—may only be completed and signed by an NRCS employee.

Contact. Questions should be directed to the National Environmental Coordinator at (202) 720-4925 or by e-mail at matt.harrington@wdc.usda.gov or the TSP Team Leader at (202) 720-6731 or by e-mail at angel.figueroa@wdc.usda.gov.

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