

## **Committee Membership General Information**

The National Civil Rights Committee (Committee) is seeking employees interested in serving as members. This information outlines the general structure, operations, expectations and benefits of Committee membership.

### **Committee Membership**

The National Civil Rights Committee Member (Committee Member) is uniquely qualified to provide sound advice to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief and National Leadership. The advisory skills of the Committee Member are complemented by technical familiarity with environmental and social problems as well as NRCS program administration. Committee Members with these attributes will provide the Chief with valuable insight and advice to achieve Civil Rights goals and communicating a clear understanding of the agency expectations.

### **Member Eligibility**

A Committee Member shall be a permanent NRCS employee, and shall be willing to serve on the Committee. The membership of the Committee shall consist of a Regional Conservationist, State Conservationist, Directors of Centers Caribbean Area, Pacific Basin Area or a National Headquarters Division as Chair: a male and female of each group (White, Black, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, and People with a Disability). Advisor members shall include; a representative from the Strategic Planning, Human Resources, Advocacy and Outreach, and Civil Rights Divisions of NRCS. To the extent possible, the Committee shall be representative of the various groups, grade levels, classification series, and geographic regions.

### **Key Attributes of Committee Members**

- Concerned with the social and economic environment of USDA NRCS employees and customers.
- Have a genuine desire to play an active role in meeting the objectives of the NCRC.
- Specific experience and/or knowledge in the following elements would be beneficial to the Committee, human resources, program development; project evaluation; public relations or communications; natural resources, and tribal government.
- Experiences in Civil Rights positions, assignments, and/or committees.
- Recognized for leadership contributions to Civil Rights initiatives, projects, activities and/or accomplishments.
- Civil Rights involvements or advocacies outside NRCS.
- Participates in recruitment, selection and development of NRCS employees.
- Demonstrated experience evaluating and reviewing NRCS operations as they relate to Civil Rights and program delivery standards of performance.
- Demonstrated experience working with local citizens, agencies and organizations to identify critical Civil Rights barriers, developing a plan to alleviate the problems and implementing such a plan to help improve the delivery and quality of NRCS services and programs.

## **Benefits of Membership**

The benefits to membership are many:

- Contributing to the process of policy formulation and the development of standards for responsible policy advocacy.
- Sharing expertise to inform and raise the level of understanding and quality of decisions made.
- Assurance that your voice is heard in reshaping agency policy and procedure.
- Working collaboratively in a multi-stakeholder environment to find solutions.
- Access to training and technical experts that will broaden operational and technical experiences and understanding.
- Accessing first-hand information on program, employment, training and technologies.
- Networking opportunities with state, regional and national conservation leaders and technical experts.
- State, regional and national opportunities to forge mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships with NRCS partners and stakeholders.

## **Committee Roles and Responsibilities**

The NCRC's responsibility is to provide advice to national leadership that will support efforts to ensure Civil Rights compliance in the delivery of NRCS program services and employment opportunities. This advice is characterized by NCRC annual assessment of NRCS capacity to achieve Civil Rights policy expectations and the propensity for sustained improvement. The Committee is expected to brief the Chief and National Leadership and identify challenges, submit recommendations for improvement and recognition for outstanding performance.

## **Role of the Committee**

The NRCS civil rights program encompasses all equal employment opportunity and program delivery-related matters. The NCRC is designed to provide management officials and employees with a sound advise that enhance and fulfill equal employment opportunity and program delivery expectation and responsibilities. Members of the NCRC will carry out their responsibilities consistent with USDA policies, procedures, and practices regarding employment and program delivery. The role of the Committee is as follows:

- (1) Assess and advise top management on the effectiveness of the NRCS civil rights program.
- (2) Establish and maintain contact with NRCS employees in order to receive and address concerns.
- (3) Identify civil rights issues, develop solutions, and make recommendations to NRCS management for appropriate courses of action.
- (4) Interact with NRCS employee organizations and other Federal agency representatives.

## **Governance / Operating Structure**

The governance / structure of the Committee are comprised of the following:

- NRCS Chief
- NRCS National Leadership

- National Civil Right Committee Chair
- Sub/Ad Hoc Committee Team Leader

### **Committee Chair Secretary**

- The Committee Chair Secretary is the principal administrative support for committee member's activities and events.

### **Committee Meetings**

The Committee meetings provide the forum to assess and develop recommendations for the enhancement and recognition of regional and national civil rights issues. The deliberations of the committee membership also provide an opportunity for multi-stakeholder participation in formulating recommendations to national leadership.

### **Meeting Frequency - Time**

The Committee will have site specific meetings three times per year. These meetings are generally three full days. Attending the meetings are Committee members and advisors. Leadership and subject matter experts are often in attendance as well.

The Committee's site specific meetings and activities are held at various venues throughout the States and Caribbean and Pacific Basin Area on invitation as well as in conjunction with scheduled National leadership and organizational meetings. Committee teleconferences are quarterly or as needed in conjunction with subcommittee activities.

### **Site Specific Meetings**

Meeting with the Chief and Associate Chief in Washington DC (Fall / Winter)

- (1) Meeting in conjunction with first NLT scheduled in the new calendar (Winter/Spring)
- (2) Invitational meeting from States and Caribbean and Pacific Basin Area ( Spring /Summer)

### **Teleconferences**

- (1) Committee teleconferences are quarterly
- (2) Teleconferences and meeting associated with subcommittees and Ad Hoc committees are as needed

### **Annual Meeting Topics and Activities**

The schedule of annual meeting topics and activities:

- (1) Orientation/Vacancy (Membership Committee)
- (2) Publicity/Accomplishment/Annual Report (Communications Subcommittee)
- (3) CR Issues, Concerns, Recommendations (Advisory Subcommittee)
- (4) CR Awards/Award Recommendations for Chief (CR Awards & Recognition Subcommittee)
- (5) Meeting logistics/Agenda Coordination
- (6) Executive subcommittee/Business Plan/Budget Plan (Executive Subcommittee)

- (7) Local Civil Rights Committee open discussion and tour
- (8) Capacity-building events and training are scheduled in response to membership needs and changes to Civil Rights Laws and policies