



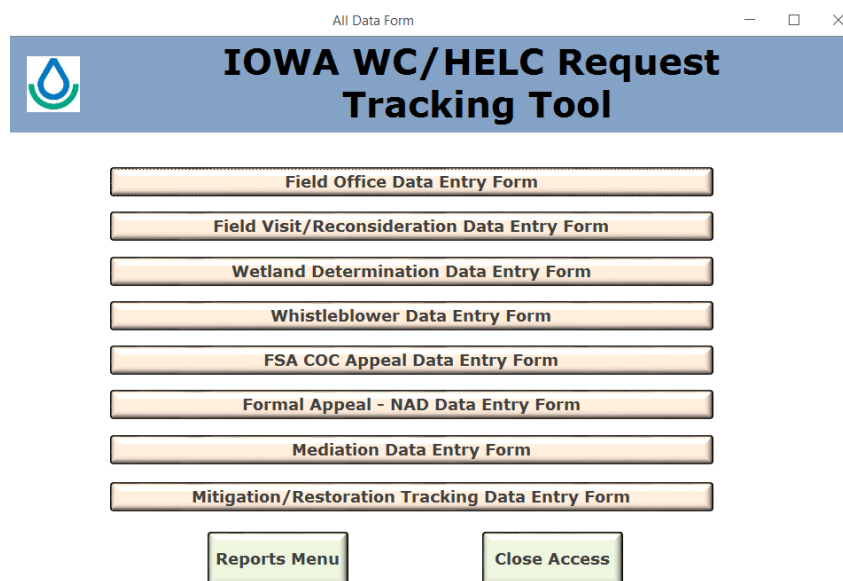
Iowa User Guide:: 450-18-1 February 8, 2018
Subject: TCH – Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) Wetland Tracking Tool

Purpose. This user guide provides documentation for use of the HELC Wetland Tracking Tool. Iowa NRCS field office employees and partner employees are responsible to track requests for HEL and Wetland determinations.

Effective Date. Effective upon receipt.

Background. Congress, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and others continue to ask NRCS for current data regarding the number of HEL and Wetland determinations requested, number of determinations completed, and the number of determinations not completed that are more than 1 year old. Recording and tracking HEL and Wetland determination requests received from USDA participants, is an important effort within Iowa. The number of HEL and Wetland determination requests is a factor the National Headquarters considers in determining our annual budget. It is also information that is used when evaluating NRCS workload and staffing.

Upon receipt of this guide, all Iowa NRCS employees and partners will use the HELC Wetland Tracking Tool, located on the Iowa SharePoint Site/Documents/Iowa HELC Wetland Tracking Tool/Field Office Data Entry Form, to record all requests for HEL and Wetland determinations.



Special Instructions. Small Area Exemptions (SAE)

If you receive an HEL determination request Form AD-1026, "Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification," that results in NRCS granting a Small Area Exemption, the request will be logged in the HELC Wetland Tracking Tool. It is important to make sure that you complete data entry for:

1. Date PTD with informal appeal rights sent to participant.
2. Date Prelim Tech Det became final and formal appeal rights provided including the Form NRCS –CPA-026E, map, letter.

DIST: E

Who completed and signed the Prel Tech Det (PTD) on (026E,map,letter)

Number of CPA 026s Issued

Date PTD with informal appeal rights sent to participant

Did participant ask to waive informal appeal rights in writing?

If 'yes", date of letter requesting to waive informal appeal rights received:

Did producer request site visit field reconsideration? [If Yes, left CLICK to go to Field Visit Form](#)

Did participant request Mediation? [If Yes, left CLICK to go to Mediation Form](#)

Date Prelim Tech Det became final and formal appeal rights provided including the CPA026E, map, letter)

Data entry in these two fields ensures that the work that NRCS has done shows up as being completed.

Data entry for these two fields should be numeric (for example 2/25/2016) and in most cases will be the same date. The HELC Wetland Tracking Tool data entry screen notes that a Form NRCS-CPA-026, "Highly Erodible and Wetland Conservation Determination," and appeal rights will be provided with the preliminary and final technical decision. For Small Area Exemptions, these items are not required. The letter noted below will be sufficient notification of a non-adverse action.

When a Small Area Exemption is granted, NRCS will send the participant a copy of:

- the Form AD-1026 signed by the participant,
- a copy of the map provided by the Farm Service Agency,
- letter notifying the participant that NRCS granted the Small Area Exemption.

A template letter for notification of the granting of a Small Area Exemption has been posted in the Iowa SharePoint Site. The template letter will be used for notification of the landowner and operator. The letter is in the Wetland Conservation Document Library/HEL Determination letters/Small Area Exemption letter.

Distribution. This user guide will be distributed through the eDirectives System.

Contact. If you have questions about this process or the need to record all HEL and Wetland determinations, contact State Resource Conservationist, at (515) 284-4262.

/s/
KURT SIMON
State Conservationist