



ACTIVE AREAS OF TECHNICAL SERVICE

Technical Service Provider

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The Technical Service Provider (TSP) program is designed to allow certified technical service providers an opportunity to offer services to agricultural producers such as farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners participating in Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs. TSPs help these producers plan, design, and implement conservation practices or develop conservation activities to improve agricultural operations.

TSPs expand the number and availability of conservation technical experts capable of offering customized, one-on-one conservation advice to agricultural producers.

The conservation activities herein explain the criteria required of a TSPs to become certified. There are at least 1 to 3 certification options to qualify under for each conservation activity. These include Certification, Education and Experience, and Experience alone. A TSP only needs to qualify under one certification option to become certified. TSPs should review criteria within each certification option and select the one that best fits their qualifications.

Other items to consider include which practices and activities require sample plans/samples of work, licensing or certification, additional training, and if there are additional state law requirements.

Once a TSP has decided to apply for certification consideration, the following are important to remember:

- 1) Only need to qualify under one (1) certification option but must meet all the criteria within that option.**
- 2) Complete training: AgLearn, S & T Library, classroom or through partner organizations.
- 3) Upload documentation of requirements met including licenses, training certificates, samples of work.
- 4) Be informed and ability to comply additional requirements due to state, local or tribal law or regulation during the duration of TSP certification.

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Certified Conservation Planner (Level III)

Discipline	Type		
Planning	ATS		

Option: Certification

Professional Certification - Conservation Planning Certification-Level I as defined in eDirectives (<https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/>) in General Manual Title 180 Part 409, 409.15 Exhibit 3 - Core Competencies and Course Requirements for Level I, II, III and IV Conservation Planner Designations.

Technical Training - Certify completion of the following NRCS Courses: Conservation Planning Certification-Level III as defined in eDirectives (<https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/>) in General Manual Title 180 Part 409, 409.15 Exhibit 3 - Core Competencies and Course Requirements for Level III Conservation Planner Designations.

Sample of Work - TSP Level III conservation planner candidates must complete one field-reviewed RMS plan for a conservation management unit with a minimum of two land uses (e.g., cropland and farmstead). TSPs seeking planning designation in multiple states are not required to submit additional plans for review to each state. The candidate must be accompanied to the field by a NRCS certified Level III or IV conservation planner to meet with the plan decision maker. The candidate is expected to demonstrate competency in the planning process, to include the appropriate resource assessment tools and plan development. The field reviewed conservation plan will be submitted to the State Conservationist for the State where the plan was developed with a letter from the reviewer acknowledging the field review and recommendation for certification. The plan review process will follow the policy outlined in 440-CPM-C-504-C-504.24E(2), for plan review submission, review, and recommendation. If the State conservationist concurs with the recommendation, the letter will be forwarded to the national TSP program manager documenting the State conservationist's concurrence. Upon renewal for Conservation Planning Certification-Level III, the candidate must document renewal requirements as defined in General Manual Title 180 Part 409, 409.9 E 10.

State Law – Submit documentation for any additional licensing, certification, registration, permits, training, or other requirement needed for this practice if required by federal, state, local or tribal law or regulation. Each state you have selected in your application for this practice must have an entry for this criterion. You must either enter and/or select the license or certification that is required by federal, state, local or tribal law or regulation, or add the state name to the list in the “*States were licenses are not required*” box.

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan-Plan Approval

Discipline	Type		
Planning	ATS		

Option: Certification

Professional Certification - Conservation Planning Certification-Level I as defined in eDirectives (<https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=40336>) in General Manual Title 180 Part 409, 409.15 Exhibit 3 - Core Competencies and Course Requirements for Level I, II, III and IV Conservation Planner Designations.

Technical Training - Certify completion of the following NRCS Courses: Level II Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planner as defined in eDirectives (<https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=40336>) in General Manual Title 180 Part 409, 409.15 Exhibit 3 - Core Competencies and Course Requirements for Level I, II, III and IV Conservation Planner Designations.

Sample of Work - CNMP planner designation candidates must provide two completed CNMPs for review and approval that will meet all criteria in 190-GM-405, "Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans." Upon renewal for Level II-Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan, the candidate must document renewal requirements as defined in General Manual Title 180 Part 409, 409.10 A.

State Law – Submit documentation for any additional licensing, certification, registration, permits, training, or other requirement needed for this practice if required by federal, state, local or tribal law or regulation. Each state you have selected in your application for this practice must have an entry for this criterion. You must either enter and/or select the license or certification that is required by federal, state, local or tribal law or regulation, or add the state name to the list in the “*States were licenses are not required*” box.

Conservation Reserve Program, CRP, Conservation Plan

Discipline	Type		
Planning	ATS		

Option: Certification

Professional Certification - Conservation Planning Certification-Level I as defined in eDirectives (<https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/>) in General Manual Title 180 Part 409, 409.15 Exhibit 3 - Core Competencies and Course Requirements for Level I, II, III and IV Conservation Planner Designations.

Technical Training - Certify completion of the following NRCS Courses: 1) Conservation Planning Course, Part 2, Modules 6-8 (AgLearn Course NRCS-NHQ-LOCAL-000003); 2) Environmental Evaluation Webinar Series No. 3-11 (AgLearn Course NRCS-NHQ-000013); 3) Cultural Resources Training Series, Part 2 (AgLearn Course NRCS-NHQ-LOCAL-000001); 4) Fundamentals of Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Provisions (AgLearn Course NRCS-NEDC-000409); and 5) TSP CRP Refresher Course 2021 (AgLearn Course-TBD).

State Law – Submit documentation for any additional licensing, certification, registration, permits, training, or other requirement needed for this practice if required by federal, state, local or tribal law or regulation. Each state you have selected in your application for this practice must have an entry for this criterion. You must either enter and/or select the license or certification that is required by federal, state, local or tribal law or regulation, or add the state name to the list in the “*States were licenses are not required*” box.

ACTIVE AREAS OF TECHNICAL SERVICE

Cultural Resources Compliance Studies

Discipline	Type		
Planning	ATS		

Option: Education and Experience

Education - Meet the Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualification Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Architectural History found at http://www.cr.nps.gov/local-law/arch_stnds_9.htm for the relevant areas of expertise being requested.

Experience - Demonstrate at least 2 years' experience in writing cultural resources reports within the geographic region or state in which the service is to be performed.

Sample of Work - Submit 1 sample report for review and approval. Sample reports must have been acceptance by SHPO, THPO or a federal agency. Documentation of acceptance must be provided.

Technical Training - Certify completion of the following NRCS Courses: 1) TSP Orientation and Conservation Planning (AgLearn Course NRCS-NEDC-000191); 2) Introduction to the Field Office Technical Guide (AgLearn Course NRCS-NEDC-000149); 3) Cultural Resources Training Series, Part 1 (Modules 1-6-Online) (AgLearn Course NRCS-NEDC-000141); and 4) Cultural Resources Training Series, Part 2 (Modules 7-8-State Led) (NRCS-NHQ-LOCAL-000001). Provisions for completion of Cultural Resources Modules 7-8 are to be made through the NRCS State Office(s) of the state(s) in which the service is to be provided. Equivalencies may be approved by the State Conservationist(s).

State Law – Submit documentation for any additional licensing, certification, registration, permits, training, or other requirement needed for this practice if required by federal, state, local or tribal law or regulation. Each state you have selected in your application for this practice must have an entry for this criterion. You must either enter and/or select the license or certification that is required by federal, state, local or tribal law or regulation, or add the state name to the list in the “*States were licenses are not required*” box.