

# State Specific Training Module for Connecticut

## Purpose of this Module

This module will provide some general information that TSPs need to conduct conservation planning in Connecticut. This information is general in nature so the TSP may need to follow up with additional reading or training to make sure they have the knowledge, skill, licenses and certifications to conduct conservation planning in Connecticut.

# What this module is NOT

- Remember, NRCS Planning Criteria and assessment tools remain the standard to determine treatment of a resource concern.
- NRCS Policies and Federal Laws & Regulations are not covered in this module.
- Additional study and training will be needed to adequately service the local conservation needs of the diverse range of private lands decision-makers involved in agricultural and forestry activities in Connecticut.

# Conservation Planning Overview

Conservation plans are the basis for all assistance NRCS provides to clients and the basic tool for clients to manage their natural resources. Client participation in all steps of the planning process is encouraged to bring the most value to the process.

The objective in conservation planning is to help each client attain sustainable use and sound management of soil, water, air, plant, animal, and energy resources, based on related human considerations. The purpose is to prevent the degradation of resources and to ensure their sustained use and productivity, while considering the client's economic and social needs. Conservation planning assistance is based on ecological, economic, and social considerations relative to the resources.

# Conservation Planning Policy

National Planning Procedures Handbook (NPPH) Amendment 9: The purpose of the handbook is to provide guidance on the planning process for developing, implementing, and evaluating individual conservation plans.

- Document can be found in eDirectives Weblink: <https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/default.aspx>
- eDirectives > Handbooks > Title 180 – Conservation Planning and Application

National Conservation Planning Policy: NRCS policy for providing conservation planning assistance to clients.

- Document can be found in eDirectives Weblink: <https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/default.aspx>
- eDirectives > General Manual > Title 180 – Conservation Planning and Application > Part 409 – Conservation Planning Policy

National Resource Concern List and Planning Criteria: Official list of NRCS resource concerns and planning criteria that is used to determine resource treatment levels using the conservation planning process.

- Document can be found in eDirectives Weblink: <https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/default.aspx>
- eDirectives > National Instructions > Title 450 – Technology > NI 450-309 Resource Concerns and Planning Criteria

# Review of Connecticut State Laws – Nutrient Management

For Nutrient Management Planning, all large and medium Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) require a General Permit for Concentrated Feeding Operations. [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/Permits\\_and\\_Licenses/Water\\_Discharge\\_General\\_Permits/CAFOgp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/Permits_and_Licenses/Water_Discharge_General_Permits/CAFOgp.pdf)

Individuals certified as Connecticut NRCS Technical Service Providers, Certified Crop Advisors or Land Grant University professionals are able to assist producers with Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans for this permit.

## Review of Connecticut State Laws - Forestry

For Forest Management Planning, all Technical Service Providers must be certified by the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. The Forest Practices Act requires that anyone who advertises, solicits, contracts or engages in commercial forest practices within Connecticut at any time must have the appropriate certificate issued in accordance with the law. The Division of Forestry administers the certification program. A person desiring certification should contact DEEP at (860) 424 -3630 for information and directions on submitting an application. Most applicants are required to pass an examination in order to receive certification

<https://www.depdata.ct.gov/forestry/ForestPractitioner/directry.pdf>


## Review of Connecticut State Laws – Invasive Plants


- Connecticut has several laws pertaining to the planting and transport of invasive species and noxious weeds.
- The Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group has a current list of the invasive plants and potential control measures.
- <https://cipwg.uconn.edu/about/>





# Review of Connecticut State Laws – Invasive Plants


## Connecticut General Statutes (CGS)


[Sec. 22a-381.](#)  Invasive Plants Council: Membership; meetings.



[Sec. 22a-381a.](#)  Duties and recommendations of the Invasive Plants Council.


[Sec. 22a-381b.](#)  Listing of invasive and potentially invasive plants by council. Criteria for listing. Approval by majority of council's membership.

[Sec. 22a-381c.](#)  Prohibition on purchase of invasive or potentially invasive plants by state agencies.

[Sec. 22a-381d.](#)  Prohibited actions concerning certain invasive plants. Municipal ordinances re invasive plants.

[Sec. 15-180.](#)  Transporting vessel or trailer without inspecting for and properly removing and disposing of vegetation

[Public Act 12-167.](#)   An act requiring the inspection of vessels and trailers for invasive aquatic species. (PDF)

[Public Act 10-20.](#)  To authorize conservation officers to enforce certain prohibitions concerning invasive plants.

## Review of Connecticut State Laws – Pest Management

For Pest Management Planning, all Technical Service Providers should be trained and certified by the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. The application for certification can be found at

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Pesticides/Pesticide-Management-Program>

## Review of Connecticut State Laws – Threatened and Endangered Species

Federal projects are required to review the impact of the project on threatened and endangered species. The list of Connecticut Species is found with the Connecticut Natural Diversity Database.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/NDDDB/Natural-Diversity-Data-Base-and-Environmental-Reviews>

The website has a general area map of the locations of state-listed species. Should the project intersect one of these areas, further review is needed.

## Review of Connecticut State Laws – Threatened and Endangered Species

Should the project need further review, the on-line request for Environmental Review should be used.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/NDDDB/Requests-for-NDDDB-Environmental-Reviews>

This will return a list of the species in the area with recommendations for avoiding impacts to the species.

## Review of Connecticut State Laws – Inland Wetlands and Watercourses

The 1972 Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act requires that projects that affect wetlands be reviewed and permitted by the local municipality. Each town has an inland wetlands agency with its own rules.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Water/Inland-Wetlands/Inland-Wetlands-and-Watercourses>

## Review of Connecticut State Laws – Inland Wetlands and Watercourses

A brochure with information on Agriculture and Forestry practices and compliance with the Inland Wetlands and watercourses Act can be found here:

[https://portal.ct.gov/-  
/media/DEEP/water/wetlands/AgbrochureFINAL2016Webpdf.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/water/wetlands/AgbrochureFINAL2016Webpdf.pdf)

The brochure discusses activities that are permitted as of right and those that require permits.

## Review of Connecticut State Laws – Water Diversion Permit

A permit is required to withdraw surface or groundwater in quantities greater than 50,000 gallons during any 24-hour period. This can affect larger irrigation projects.

A permit is also required for any relocation, alteration or work in a stream.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Permits-and-Licenses/Factsheets-Inland-Water/Water-Diversion-Fact-Sheet>

## Review of Connecticut State Laws – Coastal Permitting

Work in the coastal zone of Long Island Sound may require a permit. Wetland Restoration work, Wildlife habitat work and some Stormwater management practices are some of the practices that will need to be reviewed if located in the Coastal zone.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Coastal-Resources/Coastal-Permitting/Overview-of-the-Connecticut-Coastal-Permit-Program>



## Review of Connecticut State Laws – Farmland Easements

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture has numerous easements on farmland across the state – both with NRCS assistance and without. Check on the easement status of the land. The rules for easements have changed over the years so be sure to check with the local NRCS staff and the CT Department of Agriculture during the planning process. Many easements have a restriction on the impervious surface area.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DOAG/ADaRC/Programs/Farmland-Preservation-Overview>

## Review of Connecticut State Laws – Local Regulations

- Connecticut is a Home Rule state. This means that each of our 169 individual incorporated municipalities have legislative authority granted and can pass laws to govern themselves (as long as it complies with or makes more strict than another federal or state law).
- Some of these municipal rules (ordinances) impact activities on agricultural or forest land. For example, many municipalities have adopted Planning, Zoning, Conservation and/or tree cutting ordinances.
- It is important that landowners/operators be aware of the local regulations in their community and conservation planners need to be clear in their plans that it is the landowner/operator's responsibility to comply with all federal, state, or local laws.

## White-tailed Deer

Due to Connecticut's fragmented landscape, White-tailed deer populations are extremely high in many areas of the state. This high population of deer can prove to be a significant hurdle in the establishment of vegetative practices. Deer pressure is at its highest when working on land where the owner may not allow hunting or when in close proximity to urban/suburban areas with limited hunting access. In most areas of the state the selection of deer resistant vegetation or the inclusion of deer protection (tree shelters, fencing etc.) should be considered during the planning process.

## Invasive Species

High deer density, a fragmented landscape, being a center of global commerce and having a long history of human disturbance are some of the major reasons Connecticut has a serious invasive species problem. Control of invasive species should be considered while planning the establishment of vegetative practices. Typically planning for control of invasive plant species both pre and post establishment is critical for the success of the conservation practice. When in a forested landscape thought should be given to how invasive plant species may respond to planned forestry activities and if control is needed prior to undertaking the activity. Further information can be found on the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group website:

<https://cipwg.uconn.edu/about/>

## Important Resource Issues

Connecticut has numerous water quality impairments. Those most closely linked to agricultural activities include bacteria, phosphorus, sediment, and temperature. The full list of impaired waterbodies can be found at:

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/water/water\\_quality\\_management/305b/2020/2020IWQRAppendixB1.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/water/water_quality_management/305b/2020/2020IWQRAppendixB1.pdf)

## Field Office Technical Guide

The Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) is the primary scientific reference for NRCS. It contains technical information about the conservation of soil, water, air, and related plant and animal resources. Section 4 contains the current Practice Standards, Job Sheets and Statements of Work for the relevant practices in the state. <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/CT/documents>

Technical Criteria for the Conservation Activity Plans and Design and Implementation Activities can be found linked in FOTG Section 3 and on the TSP website.

## Review of State FOTG Requirements

### Vegetative Practices

- Follow the planting dates carefully for the chosen practice. The planting dates can be found in the Practice Standards and should be documented in the Implementation requirements.
- Note tree cutting restrictions for migratory birds and endangered/threatened bats.

## Review of Major Land Ownership

Approximately 54% of Connecticut is forested. Approximately 12% is in agricultural land. The green industry has a strong presence as does shellfish aquaculture. Urban farms are growing in number and complexity.

The majority of the agricultural land in the state provides for dairy farms and dairy support. Much of the land is rented by the current farms. Other crops include orchards, vineyards, vegetables.



## Review of Major Land Uses

Connecticut is approximately 12% cropland.

The major crops are silage corn, hay, vegetables and Christmas trees.

The major livestock inventory is cattle, chickens, horses and sheep.

23% of the farms sell direct to consumer.

[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online\\_Resources/County\\_Profiles/Connecticut/cp99009.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Connecticut/cp99009.pdf)

[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Connecticut/Publications/connecticut-profile2021.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Connecticut/Publications/connecticut-profile2021.pdf)

## Expected TSP Workflow

- The State Resource Conservationist (SRC) will be responsible for reviewing TSP conservation planning for the National Planner Designation.
- Subsequent conservation plans will be reviewed by the District Conservationist (DC) or the State Specialist at the USDA Service Center.
- The SRC will conduct plan reviews for TSP planner designation renewals.
- TSPs will work with the local District Conservationist or state specialist to make sure the proper environmental evaluations (NRCS-CPA-52) are completed.

## Additional References or Training

- State Field Office Technical Guide at <https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/CT/documents>
- Biosecurity on animal operations – National Handbook on Biosecurity Procedures for visits to Farms and Ranches <https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=46798>

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## Certificate of Completion

After viewing the State Specific Training module, please print and sign the completion certificate on the following slide.

The certificate is your acknowledgement that based on the information provided in this module, you have the proper knowledge, skills and ability to conduct planning in this State.

Within your NRCS Registry profile, enter the training and upload the signed certificate to verify completion.

## STATE SPECIFIC TRAINING MODULE COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby verify I have viewed and understand the content of *Connecticut State*  
TSP Name  
Specific Training Module and affirm I have the knowledge, skills, and ability to conduct conservation planning  
services in this state.

\_\_\_\_\_  
TSP Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date