

State Specific Training Module for Idaho

(updated 05/23/2023)

Purpose of this Module

This module will provide some general information that TSPs need to conduct conservation planning in Idaho. 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 Idaho.

Review of State Laws

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) Idaho State Laws

- Idaho requires that all nutrient management planners that work on large animal feed operations/concentrated animal feeding operations (AFO/CAFO) must be certified by the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA). This information can be found at the following website: <https://adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/current/02/020430.pdf>
- AFOs need to be evaluated for proximity to sensitive areas such as wetlands, ditches, and streams.

Note: AFO/CAFO operators in Idaho must have an NPDES permit from U.S. EPA as the State of Idaho does not yet have primacy for the program. (05/19/2023)

Review of State Laws (cont.)

Engineering in Idaho

- The design and implementation of many NRCS engineering practices within the state requires services of a Professional Engineer licensed to practice in the state. NRCS engineering practices are those listed in the National Handbook of Conservation Practices as having a Lead Discipline from the Conservation Engineering Division (CED).
- It is the responsibility of the TSP to determine whether the services contemplated are subject to state law that governs the practice of engineering. The Idaho Board of Licensure of Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors provides guidance regarding application of relevant state law.

Review of State Laws (cont.)

Pest Management

- Idaho requires anyone applying or recommending restricted use pesticides to be a licensed pesticide applicator.
- ISDA is the issuer of the licenses in Idaho (private and commercial applicator licenses).
- NRCS requires that Win-PST be used to evaluate the risks of the use of pesticides and to address the risk with mitigating practices. To learn more about Win-PST, contact the Idaho TSP Coordinator.

Review of State Laws (cont.)

Water Rights in Idaho

- Idaho, like most of the western United States, operates on the “First in Time, First in Right” rule for water rights, more formally known as the Prior Appropriation Doctrine.
- When addressing any resource issue involving water, one must inventory water rights. (Relevant policy is found in the NRCS General Manual, Title 450 Part 405 - Subpart A - Compliance with Laws and Regulations, and associated Idaho amendments thereto.)
- Practices that may affect water rights are items such as any irrigation related practices, conversion to dry land crops, wells, spring developments, and any water impoundments.
- [Idaho Dept. of Water Resources](#) is the regulatory authority for water rights in Idaho; this may vary on individual Tribal Lands.

Review of State Laws (cont.)

Cultural Resources

- Any ground disturbing or practice that may impact a historic structure must be evaluated by a cultural resource specialist or permitted archaeologist as required by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other Federal preservation laws, regulations and orders.
- Consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) or Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPO) is required for practices that have the potential to impact a cultural property. SHPO and/or THPO have 30 days to respond after the agency initiates consultation. The consultation may exceed 30 days if additional information is requested or if it is determined that the project will have an adverse effect. Consultation must be complete prior to project implementation.

Review of State Laws (contd.)

Cultural Resources (contd.)

- Consultation with Native American Tribes, local historical organizations, and other interested parties may also be required.
- It is misdemeanor under Idaho Statute 18-7027, “...to desecrate or molest in any way any portion of any grave, cemetery, headstone, grave marker, mausoleum, crypt, or other place of burial, whether of whole bodies or ashes, or other evidence of remains of a deceased human.”

Review of State FOTG Requirements

All Technical Service Providers should be familiar with and use the State of Idaho Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG). The FOTG has all of Idaho's Conservation Practice Standards and Specifications in Section IV. Copy the following link into your web browser to access Idaho's FOTG website:

[Idaho | Field Office Technical Guide | NRCS - USDA](#)

Review of Important Resource Issues Concerning Pollinators

- The Farm Bill has provisions for NRCS to consider pollinator conservation in all planning
- 35% of crops require a pollinator, equaling \$27 billion of crops in the US alone
- Honeybees and native bees are in decline due to a variety of reasons (disease, parasites, habitat loss, pesticides).
- There are about 400 species of native bees in Idaho
- Native bees provide high value services to many crops including free pollination and increased crop yield
- Keystone species for ecosystem services (wild plant reproduction, fruit /nut/seed production, food for other wildlife)

Review of Important Resource Issues Concerning Pollinators

1. Protection from pesticide
 - a) Reduce or eliminate use
 - b) Follow labels
 - c) Beware of drift
2. Providing or conserving nesting sites
 - a) 70% ground nesting, 30% wood cavity nesting
 - b) Manage existing sites or provide artificial nests
3. Providing or conserving floral resources
 - a) Season-long diverse bloom
 - b) Native plant species are best

Review of Cropland Issues in Idaho (Irrigated, water quantity)

- Inefficient irrigation water use needs to be addressed (water quantity)
- Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 442 - Sprinkler System
 - 441 - Micro Irrigation
 - 449 - Irrigation Water Management
 - 533 - Pumping Plant
 - 587 - Structure for Water Control
 - 443 - Surface Irrigation
 - 436 - Irrigation Reservoir

Review of Cropland Issues in Idaho for Irrigated Soil Health

- Soil Erosion induced primarily by flood irrigation
- Soil Compaction under irrigation caused by excessive tillage
- Poor Soil Organic content caused by excessive tillage
- Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 449 - Irrigation Water Management
 - 340 - Cover Crops
 - 329 - Reduced Tillage

Review of Cropland Issues in Idaho for Irrigated Plant Productivity

- Plans should be developed to control plant pests
- Resistance to pesticides needs to be evaluated
- Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 595 - Pest Management Conservation System (PMCS) (formerly IPM)
 - 315 - Herbaceous Weed Control (corner and waste areas)
 - 328 - Conservation Crop Rotation

Review of Cropland Issues in Idaho Irrigated Grazing systems

- Most cropland is in forage production.
- There is potential for highly productive pastures.
- Small Acreage farms are ideal for small scale livestock production
- Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 528 - Prescribed Grazing
 - 512 – Forage and Biomass Planting
 - 511 - Forage Harvest Management

Review of Cropland Issues in Idaho Irrigated Economics

- Special attention should be paid to economic returns on investments when expensive irrigation infrastructure is being considered as a conservation alternative.
- Analysis sheets and runs should be done

Review of Cropland Issues in Idaho

Dry Land Soil Health

- Soil erosion is a primary concern when dealing with Dry Land farming.
- Both wind and water induced erosion (know WEPS or RUSLE2)
- Declining fertility over time should be evaluated
- Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - Reduced Tillage – includes 329 Residue Tillage Management (no till) and 345 Residue Tillage Management (mulch till)
 - 328 - Conservation Crop Rotation

Review of Pasture/Rangeland Resource Issues in Idaho

Pasture/Rangeland Issues

- Soil Erosion – Tools used to determine erosion on pasture & rangeland: SVAP, Pasture Conditioning Score sheet, Rangeland Health Assessment, Rangeland Trend Worksheet.
- Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 528 – Prescribed Grazing
 - 550 – Range Planting
 - 512 – Pasture and Hay Planting

Review of Important Pasture/Rangeland Resource Issues in Idaho (contd.)

Pasture/Rangeland Issues – Continued

- Soil Quality Degradation - Tools used to determine erosion on pasture & rangeland: Pasture Conditioning Score sheet, RUSLE2 or WEPS.
- Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 528 – Prescribed Grazing
 - 511 – Forage Harvest Management
 - 548 – Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment

Review of Important Pasture/Rangeland Resource Issues in Idaho(contd.)

Pasture/Rangeland Issues – Continued

- Water Resources – Water Quality and Quantity – see irrigation concerns – usually related to pasture.

Review of Important Pasture/Rangeland Resource Issues in Idaho (contd.)

Pasture/Rangeland Issues (Cont.)

Plant Resource Concerns:

- Degraded plant condition – tools to use to determine plant condition: Pasture Conditioning Score sheet, Tech Note 19 (range sheet), Rangeland Health Assessment, Rangeland Trend worksheet, Similarity Index.
- Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 528 – Prescribed Grazing
 - 382 – Fencing
 - 512 – Forage and Biomass Planting
 - 550 – Range Planting

Review of Important Pasture/Rangeland Resource Issues in Idaho (contd.)

Pasture/Rangeland Issues (Cont.)

Animal Resource Concerns:

- Inadequate Habitat for Fish & Wildlife, Livestock Production Limitation, Inadequate livestock water. Tools to determine: SVAP2, TN19, TN32, Habitat Suitability Index, Feed/Forage Balance worksheet,
- Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
 - 528 – Prescribed Grazing
 - 614 – Watering Facility
 - 649 – Structures for Wildlife
 - 382 - Fence
 - 550 – Range Planting
 - 512 – Forage and Biomass Planting

Review of Important Wildlife Resource Issues

Threatened & Endangered species Issues:

- Habitat Degradation
- Imbalances among populations
- Habitat fragmentation
- Human disturbances
- Livestock impacts
- Human encroachment
- [Idaho's list of threatened and endangered species](#)

Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern include:

- 645 - Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
- 314 - Brush Management
- 550 - Range Planting
- 512 – Forage and Biomass Planting
- 612 - Tree and Shrub Establishment.

Review of Forestland Issues in Idaho

Forestland Issues

Soil Erosion Concerns

- Sheet and Rill and Wind erosion – tools to use to determine erosion are visual survey, WEPS and in some cases RUSLE2.
- Typical Conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 666 - Forest Stand Improvement
 - 484 - Mulching
 - 384 - Woody Residue Treatment
 - 342 - Critical Area Planting
- Concentrated Flow – tools to use to determine concentrated flow are visual surveys.
- Typical Conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 472 - Access Control
 - 410 - Grade Stabilization Structure

Review of Forestland Issues in Idaho

Soil Erosion Issues (Cont.)

Excessive Bank Erosion – tools to use to determine excessive bank erosion are SVAP2, PFC or visual observation.

- Typical Conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 472 - Access Control
 - 391 - Riparian Forest Buffer
 - 612 - Tree and Shrub Establishment
- Soil Quality Degradation – Compaction – tools to use to determine soil compaction are soil probes.
- Typical Conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 472 - Access Control
 - 655 - Forest Trails and Landing
 - 384 - Woody Residue Treatment

Review of Forestland Issues in Idaho

Soil Erosion Issues (Cont.)

- Soil Quality Degradation – Organic Matter Depletion – tools to use to determine organic matter depletion are soil tests.
- Typical Conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 384 - Woody Residue Treatment
- Typical Conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 655 - Forest Trails and Landings

Review of Forestland Issues in Idaho

Water Quality Issues

- **Water Quality Degradation** - Petroleum, Heavy metals, or other pollutants are transported to receiving waters. Tools to use to determine water quality degradation are observation in that pollution transport is not occurring in active treatment areas where refueling, maintenance service areas and landings exist.
- **Water Quality Degradation** - Excessive sediment in surface water - Tools to use to determine excessive sediment in surface water are observation that there are no untreated sources of erosion AND streams or shoreline are not on or adjacent to site. Upslope treatment and buffer practices address concentrated flows to water bodies AND Heavy use areas are stable AND SVAP2 - bank condition ≥ 5 OR PFC functional rating = Proper Functioning.
- Typical Conservation Practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 484 – Mulching
 - 560 - Access Road
 - 384 - Woody Residue Treatment
 - 390 - Riparian Herbaceous Buffer
 - 372 - Access Control
 - 472 - Critical Area Planting
 - 391 - Riparian Forest Buffer

Review of Forestland Issues in Idaho

Water Quality Issues – Continued

- Water Quality Degradation - Elevated water temperature – Tools to use to determine elevated water temperature are SVAP2 - riparian area quality element score ≥ 5 AND SVAP2 - canopy cover element score ≥ 6 OR PFC rating = Proper Functioning.
- Typical conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 391 - Riparian Forest Buffer
 - 612 - Seedling and Tree Establishment

Plant Condition Issues

- Degraded Plant Condition - Plant productivity and health – Tools to use to determine plant productivity and health are completing inventory plots and completing transects. This includes addressing pollinators and beneficial insects.
- Typical conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 666 - Forest Stand Improvement
 - 612 - Seedling and Tree Establishment

Review of Forestland Issues in Idaho

Plant Condition Issues (cont.)

- Degraded Plant Condition - Inadequate structure and composition – Tools to use to determine inadequate structure and composition are using Ecological Site / Range Site Descriptions AND completing inventory plots and transect analyses to determine if plant communities contain adequate diversity, structure and composition to support desired ecological functions.
- Typical conservation practices that can be used to address this concern:
 - 666 - Forest Stand Improvement
 - 391 - Riparian Forest Buffer
 - 612 - Seedling and Tree Establishment
- **Degraded Plant Condition** - Excessive plant pest pressure – Tools to use to determine are insect surveys of the area (including trapping) and visual observation.
- Typical conservation practices that can be used to address this concern:
 - 666 - Forest Stand Improvement
 - 595 - Integrated Pest Management
 - 384 - Woody Residue Treatment

Review of Forestland Issues in Idaho

Plant Condition Issues (cont.)

- Degraded Plant Condition - Wildfire hazard, excessive biomass accumulation – Tools to use to determine if there is a wildfire hazard, excessive biomass accumulation Measure fuel loads and complete transects to determine plant biomass.
- Typical conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 666 - Forest Stand Improvement
 - 383 - Fuel Break
 - 394 - Fire Break
 - 314 - Brush Management
 - 338 - Prescribed Burning

Review of Forestland Issues in Idaho

Fish and Wildlife Issues

- Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife - Habitat Degradation – Tools to use to determine habitat degradation include doing SVAP2 and PFC on streams, completing TN-19 for wildlife habitat and visual observations.
- Typical conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 666 - Forest Stand Improvement
 - 391 - Riparian Forest Buffer
 - 390 - Riparian Herbaceous Buffer
 - 645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
 - 643 – Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitats
 - 649 – Structures for Wildlife

Review of Forestland Issues in Idaho

Livestock Production Issues

- Livestock Production Limitation - Inadequate feed and forage – Tools to use to determine if there is inadequate feed and forage for livestock in a forested system are feed/forage balance worksheets, similarity index, rangeland trend and rangeland health assessments.
- Typical conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 666 - Forest Stand Improvement
 - 314 - Brush Management
 - 338 - Prescribed Burning
 - 528 – Prescribed Grazing
 - 512 – Forage and Biomass Planting
 - 382 - Fence

Review of Forestland Issues in Idaho

Air Quality Issues

- Air Quality Impacts - Emissions of particulate matter, PM and PM precursors – Tools to use to determine if emissions of particulate matter include visual observations of dust and smoke as well as the formation of fine particulate matter in the atmosphere, contacting state and federal EPA offices for determinations of pollutant levels.
- Typical conservation practices that can be used to address this resource concern:
 - 666 - Forest Stand Improvement
 - 314 - Brush Management
 - 338 - Prescribed Burning

Riparian Concerns

- Stream bank stability, water quality, erosion control, temperature, turbidity, species composition along stream bank. Clean Water Act Sect. 303d impaired waters list is on the [Idaho DEQ website](#). Tools to use to determine condition: SVAP2.

Typical conservation practices that can be used to address this concern:

- 580 – Stream bank & shoreline protection
- 395 - Stream habitat improvement management
- 528 - Prescribed grazing
- 472 – Access control (use exclusion)
- 612 - Tree and shrub establishment

Wetland concerns – Any sort of hydrologic or vegetative modification (see below) which will affect the proper functioning condition of the wetland.

- Wetland guidance comes from the 1985 Food Security Act. Producers will comply with this act so that they are eligible for farm subsidies. Producers work with FSA and file form AD1026 if they plan to modify any land, such as draining, land leveling, filling, dredging, land clearing or excavation that has not been evaluated for the presence of wetlands by NRCS. A list of certified wetland delineators can be found on EFOTG, Section III, Legislated Programs and Job Approval Authority.

Wetlands – continued:

- Additional Resource concerns: water quality, wildlife habitat and water quantity.

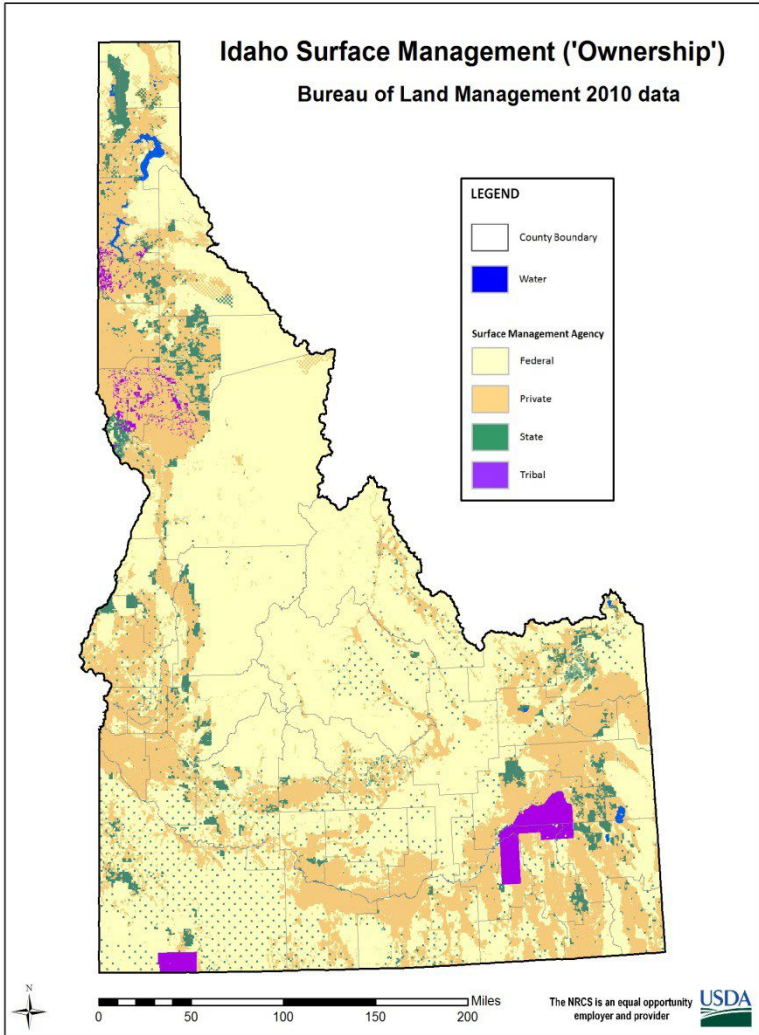
Typical conservation practices that can be used to address this concern:

- 657 - Wetland Restoration
- 659 - Wetland Enhancement
- 646 - Shallow Water Development
- 644 - Wetland Wildlife Management

Review of Major Land Uses or Agronomic Practices

- The south and southeast farmland regions of the state are irrigated by sprinklers or flood irrigation. The northern panhandle region and areas that receive higher precipitation levels are dry land farmed.
- Forested land occurs throughout Idaho. Major uses are for the production of timber products and for wildlife habitat, grazing and recreation.
- Small farm organic producers are becoming more prevalent in Idaho.
- The native rangeland in this state is mainly sagebrush steppe. The primary grazers are cattle, sheep and native wildlife such as elk, whitetail deer, mule deer, bighorn sheep, etc.

Major Land Ownership - Idaho



Idaho NRCS Field Office Locations

(as of 11/21/2022)



Expected TSP Workflow

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

Additional References or Training

- [Idaho State Field Office Technical Guide](#)
- State Training on CNMP Development (in-person, by invitation only)
- [Idaho Nutrient Management Handbook](#)
- The State of Idaho requires and engineering license for certain practices.
For more information: <http://www.ipels.idaho.gov>
- [Stream Alterations Permit in Idaho: Joint Application for Permit \(USACE/IDWR/IDL\)](#)

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 acknowledgment 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 *Idaho 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

Non-Discrimination Statement

Non-Discrimination Policy

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

To File an Employment Complaint

If you wish to file an employment complaint, you must contact your agency's EEO Counselor within 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory act, event, or in the case of a personnel action. Additional information can be found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_file.html

To File a Program Complaint

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9419, by fax at (202) 690-7442, or email at program.intake@usda.gov

Persons with Disabilities

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and you wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

Persons with disabilities, who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.), please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at (800) 221-5689, which is also in Spanish, or call the State Information/Hotline Numbers.

All Other Inquires

For any other information not pertaining to civil rights, please refer to the listing of the USDA Agencies and Offices.