

State Specific Training Module for Washington

2023

Purpose of this Module

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

Review of State Laws

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) Washington State Laws:

- Washington CNMPs must meet the requirements of the Washington State Department of Agriculture and Washington State Department of Ecology.
- AFOs need to be evaluated for proximity to sensitive areas such as wetlands, ditches, and streams.

Review of State Laws (contd.)

Engineering in Washington

- 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 Washington Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors provides guidance regarding application of relevant state law.

Review of State Laws (contd.)

Pest Management

- Washington requires anyone applying or recommending restricted use pesticides to be a licensed pesticide applicator.
- Washington Department of Agriculture (WDA) is the issuer of the licenses (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.

Review of State Laws (contd.)

Water Rights

- Water rights in Washington is governed like most of the western United States.
- When addressing any resource issue involving water, one must inventory water rights and compliance with state laws.
- The state regulatory agency is the Washington Department of Ecology; this may vary on Tribal Lands.

Review of State Laws (contd.)

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. Consultation includes an initial notice of the Area of Potential Effects (APE) followed by a report with results and management recommendations. SHPO and/or THPO have 30 days to respond after the agency provides consultation letters and a report with results of the investigation. 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.
- Washington State RCW 27.53 titled “Archaeological Sites and Resources” provides detailed information with definitions and penalties specific to archaeology or cultural resources.
- It is a class C felony under Washington State RCW 27.53.060, “...to knowingly remove, alter, dig into, or excavate by use of any mechanical, hydraulic, or other means, or to damage, deface, or destroy any historic or prehistoric archaeological resource or site ...” An archaeological resource is defined in RCW 27.53.040 as “All sites, objects, structures, artifacts, implements, and locations of prehistorical or archaeological interest, whether previously recorded or still unrecognized, including, but not limited to, those pertaining to prehistoric and historic American Indian or aboriginal burials, ...”

Review of State FOTG Requirements

All Technical Service Providers should be familiar with and use the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG).

Items of note are the:

- Reference Lists in Section 1
- Conservation Practice Standards and Specifications in Section 4

Copy the following link into your web browser to access Washington's FOTG website:

<https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/#/state/WA/documents>

Review of Important Resource Issues

There is a wide array of resource concerns in Washington. These include (but by no means are limited to) soil quality, soil erosion, water quality, water quantity, air quality, noxious weeds on rangeland, irrigation water delivery/use, fish habitat, sage grouse habitat, animal waste management, on-farm energy use, as well as environmental, social, and economic considerations.

Review of Major Land Uses or Agronomic Practices

This state is diverse in land use and crops. According to the 2017 Ag Census:

- Total Land in Farms: 14.7M acres
- Cropland: 4.5M acres
 - Irrigated Land: 1.7M acres
- Pastureland: 4.8M acres

Review of Major Land Ownership

- Of the 45.6M acres of land in Washington, approximately 18.81M acres of Washington are public lands and 14.7M acres is considered agricultural land. Conservation planning on private land may include a public component.
- Tribes in Washington retain about 6M acres.

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) at the local USDA Service Center.
- The SRC will conduct plan reviews for TSP planner designation 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

- [Field Office Technical Guide](#)
- [Training on CNMP Development](#)
- [Agronomy Technote 17: A Planner's Guide to Nutrient Management](#)

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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 *Washington 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