

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROCESSING PAYMENTS IN PROTRACTS

1. Field Office (FO) certifies practice(s) and enters payment information in the contract ProTracts Certification and Payment module.

NOTES:

As practicable, practices certified on or about the same date will be batched on one NRCS-CPA-1245, Practice Approval and Payment Application form.

Upward adjustments in certified quantities resulting in payment increases of less than \$500 per contract item do not require a modification.

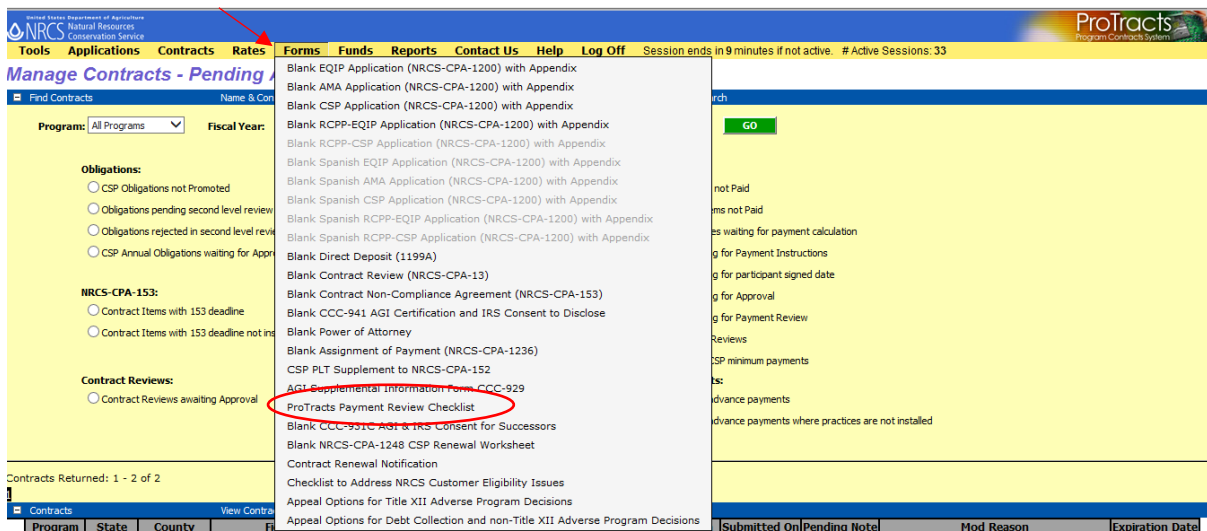
Per Title 440 - Conservation Programs Manual (CPM), Part 512.67, use of the partial payment feature in ProTracts is prohibited. Use of incremental practice installation payments is restricted to limited circumstances. Contract modification is required for incremental payment situations, and modification must be approved prior to processing the payment.

2. FO completes payment instructions to select payee(s), prints Form NRCS-CPA-1245, Practice Approval and Payment Application.
3. FO meets with participant and does the following:
 - 3a. For Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Program only, obtains Producer Self-Certification for AMS & RMA payments. Producer Self-Certification can be provided using the "self-certification template" in Title 440 - CPM, Part 521.112. A link to this template is on the [NRCS Electronic Directives System](#) website.
 - 3b. Verifies that payee (participant or assignee) address and direct deposit information is current and correct.
 - 3c. Obtains participant signature(s) on Form NRCS-CPA-1245.
4. FO enters participant signed date in the contract ProTracts Certification and Payment screen.

STOP- DO NOT APPROVE THE PAYMENT!

5. FO scans completed NRCS-CPA-1245 and all appropriate supporting documents, and uploads them to Document Management System (DMS).
6. FO sends an e-mail to their assigned Program Assistant (PA) to communicate that a payment is ready for 2nd level review. The subject line of the e-mail will include the contract number and the payment number that is shown on the NRCS-CPA-1245 in the Payment Application Number section. A line in the email will confirm that the payee's (including assignee's if applicable) address and direct deposit information is current and correct. The email will also contain notification to the PA if the payment is an advance payment or the balance payment of an advance payment.

- 6a. The current Program Assistants' contact information and Field Office Assignments for Payment Review is available on the [Maine NRCS SharePoint](#) (Shared Documents/State Office/Programs) site. To find the exact location of the document titled Program Assistants Obligation and Payment Review FO Assignments, search: "Program Assistants" on the Programs subdirectory.
 - 6b. The subject line of the e-mail will be:
"Payment for 2nd level review: Contract xxxxxxxxxxxx-Payment x"
(Example: Payment for 2nd level review: Contract #741218130SA-Payment 1)
 - 6c. The body of the email will contain confirmation that the FO has verified with the participant that the payee's address and direct deposit information in ProTracts is current and correct.
 - 6d. The body of the email will contain notification that the payment is an advance payment or the balance payment of an advance payment.
7. PA completes the FMMI Payment Review Checklist (to ensure all items are addressed and signs the form on the "Payment Review Completed by:" line. One FMMI checklist must be completed for **each** NRCS-CPA-1245 payment application form. Use the Protracts Payment Review Checklist from the ProTracts Forms menu.



8. PA will send an email to the FO Designated Conservationist and the FO employee who submitted the review request to indicate the review is complete.
The subject heading of the email will be:
"Action Payment: Contract xxxxxxxxxxxx-Payment x"
(Example: Action Payment: Contract #741218130SA-Payment 1).
The body of the email will indicate that the review was completed. The PA signed FMMI Payment Review Checklist will be attached to the email.
- 8a. If the payment can be approved, the email will direct the Designated Conservationist to proceed to step 9 and approve the payment.

8b. If a correction is required, the email will direct the FO employee who submitted the review request will make necessary corrections and repeat all proceeding steps of the ProTracts Payment process, beginning with step 1.

8c. If the payment is for an advance payment or the balance payment of an advance payment, the email will direct the Designated Conservationist to coordinate with the PA to schedule a time to approve the payment. Approval of advance related payments should only occur when the assigned PA is available.

9. Designated Conservationist will approve payment in the contract ProTracts Certification and Payment module **after** receipt of the email.
10. Designated Conservationist will electronically sign the FMMI Payment Review Checklist that was e-mailed by PA on the “NRCS Electronic Approval Signature:” line.
11. FO will upload electronic copies of both the Designated Conservationist’s electronically signed NRCS-CPA-1245 and the respective fully signed FMMI Payment Review Checklist to DMS, naming it “Approved Payment x” (Example: Approved Payment 1).
12. FO will print both the Designated Conservationist’s electronically signed NRCS-CPA-1245 and the respective fully signed FMMI Payment Review Checklist, and place these hard copies in the official contract case file with the participant signed version of the relevant 1245.

NOTE: Once a payment is Approved in ProTracts, the “Undo Approval” button will be available until 1:59 pm ET the following day should there be a need to make changes. If there is a need to undo the approval of a payment and make a change, the review process must be completed again.

Contact: Susan Arrants, ASTC for Programs, at (207) 990-9564, or via email susan.arrants@me.usda.gov for questions or concerns regarding these Instructions.