



February 19, 2020

CONNECTICUT INSTRUCTION 180-397 – JOB APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR CERTIFIED WETLAND DETERMINATIONS

CT 397.0 PURPOSE

To provide guidance on Job Approval Authority for completing Wetland Determinations and Delineations.

CT 397.1 SCOPE

The National Food Security Act Manual requires that certified wetland determinations and delineations be completed by qualified USDA-NRCS employees, as determined by the state conservationist. The *USDA-NRCS Connecticut - Roster of Agency Experts with Job Approval Authority for completing Certified Wetland Determinations* is Connecticut's means of tracking individuals who are qualified to complete certified wetland determinations. The *USDA-NRCS Connecticut - Certified Wetland Determination Job Approval Authority - Rating Criteria* lists the training and experience required for staff to meet different levels of proficiency in completing Certified Wetland Determinations and related Wetland Compliance tasks.

CT 397.2 FILING INSTRUCTIONS

This Connecticut instruction will be posted on the [Connecticut NRCS website](#), the Connecticut NRCS SharePoint site, and the Job Approval Authority Spreadsheet will be located in Section III under Legislative Programs in the Field Office Technical Guide.

CT397.3 EXHIBITS

See attachments.

Questions should be addressed to State Soil Scientist [Debbie Surabian](#) at (860) 871-4042.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. Morgart", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Thomas L. Morgart
State Conservationist

Attachments

DIST: E

CONNECTICUT INSTRUCTION 180-397 – JOB APPROVAL AUTHORITY FOR CERTIFIED WETLAND DETERMINATIONS

Under the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, NRCS has the sole responsibility to make wetland determinations for USDA program participants. This responsibility is accomplished through development of offsite and onsite wetland identification procedures (7 CFR Section 12.30(a)(4)). Per Title 180, National Food Security Act Manual (NFSAM), Part 527, Food Security Act Wetland Identification Procedures (as distributed through Circular 6, December 2010), NRCS adopted the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' *Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Methods* (Corps manual), Part IV, with certain variances. The Corps manual provides that wetlands may be identified using offsite methods only (level-1 determination), onsite methods only (level-2 determination), or a combination of onsite and offsite methods (level-3 determination).

For level-2 determinations, CT NRCS staff will refer to the following documents:

- USDA-NRCS Connecticut - Roster of Agency Experts with Job Approval Authority for completing Certified Wetland Determinations (Attachment 1)
- USDA-NRCS Connecticut – Certified Wetland Determination Job Approval Authority – Rating Criteria National Food Security Act Manual 180 Part 514.1(B) (Attachment 2)

This reference will be updated as subsequent editions of the above materials are released. Refer to Attachment 2 for a list of CT NRCS staff certified to conduct Wetland Conservation Compliance technical determinations for NFSAM.

USDA-NRCS Connecticut - Roster of Agency Experts with Job Approval Authority for completing Certified Wetland Determinations

NAME	SOILS-DETERM/DELIN	VEG-DETERM/DELIN	HYD-DETERM/DELIN	WC Lables	SCOPE & EFFECT	Functional Assessment	MITIGATION EASEMENT
Barrett, Nels	1	3	2	2		1	1
Cadman, Abbie	1	2	2	2		1	
Isleib, Jacob	3	2	2	3		2	1
Parizek, Donald	3	2	3	3	1	1	1
Smith, Ben	1	1	1		1		
Surabian, Debbie	3	2	3	3	1	1	1
(blank)	May or may not have exposure to the task or principles. Lacks training and experience to conduct the task independently.						
Level 1	Has successfully completed basic training but lacks experience to conduct the task independently.						
Level 2	Has successfully completed all suggested training, can apply the principles in normal wetland situations, and identifies difficult wetland situations requiring Level 3 staff.						
Level 3	Has consistently demonstrated proficiency in applying the principles, can serve as expert in difficult wetland situations, and can train other staff.						
<p>I certify that those staff members provided the highest job approval authority (Levels 2 and 3) have <u>successfully completed all appropriate training, including updated courses, or equivalent experience</u> (as approved by wetland team leadership) related to the skills needed to accomplish the specific task listed and have repeatedly <u>demonstrated the proficiency</u> needed to make an adverse technical decision as defined in the NRCS Appeals Procedures (7 CFR 614).</p>							
<p>State Conservationist _____</p>							

USDA-NRCS Connecticut - Certified Wetland Determination Job Approval Authority - Rating Criteria

National Food Security Act Manual 180 Part 514.1(B)

Note: Course requirements are intended to approximate knowledge requirements and provide a clear pathway for individual career development. OJT or other experience may adequately substitute for certain course requirements. The *Individual Ratings Worksheet* (CT Wetland JAA Roster Appendix) serves to document training and/or in-lieu experience.

Has successfully completed basic training but lacks experience to conduct the task independently.			
Level 1	Requirements	Soils Determination	Wetland Identification for Food Security Act Purposes - Phase I and II ¹ + familiarity with NFSAM (Parts 510 and 514) and the <i>Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Northcentral and Northeast Region</i>
		Vegetation Determination	
		Hydrology Determination	
		WC Labels	Wetland Identification for Food Security Act Purposes - Phase I and II ¹ + familiarity with NFSAM (Parts 510 and 514) and Food Security Act Wetland Identification Procedures (aka Circular 6)
		Scope & Effect	Wetland Identification for Food Security Act Purposes - Phase I + basic understanding of hydrology, hydraulics, and drainage systems, + familiarity with NFSAM (Part 516(B)), and Engineering Field Handbook, Part 650- Ch. 19 Hydrology Tools for Wetland ID and Analysis
		Functional Assessment	Wetland Identification for Food Security Act Purposes - Phase I and II ¹ , + familiarity with NFSAM (Parts 510, 514, 515, 516(A)) and USACE New England District Highway Methodology Workbook
		Mitigation Plan	Wetland Identification for Food Security Act Purposes - Phase I and II ¹ , + familiarity with NFSAM (Parts 510, 514 and 515 (B)) + Engineering Field Handbook, Part 650- Ch. 13 Wetland Restoration, Enhancement, or Creation
Has successfully completed all suggested training, can apply the principles in normal wetland situations, and identifies difficult wetland situations requiring Level 3 staff.			
Level 2	Requirements	Soils Determination	Level 1 requirements + <i>Hydric Soils for Wetland Determinations OR Advanced Hydric Soils for Soil Scientists</i> + experience/training sufficient to accurately describe and interpret soil morphology (per State Soil Scientist) + experience applying <i>Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Northcentral and Northeast Region</i>
		Vegetation Determination	Level 1 requirements + additional vegetation course(s) ² and/or field id and keying experience + experience applying <i>Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Northcentral and Northeast Region</i>
		Hydrology Determination	Level 1 Requirements + <i>Hydrology Tools for Wetland Restoration and Determination</i> + experience applying <i>Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Northcentral and Northeast Region</i> + <i>Wetland Identification for Food Security Act Purposes - Advanced Course (Phase III)</i>
		WC Labels	Level 1 requirements + <i>Wetland Identification for Food Security Act Purposes - Advanced Course (Phase III)</i>
		Scope & Effect	Level 1 requirements + <i>Hydrology Tools for Wetland Restoration and Determination</i>
		Functional Assessment	Level 1 requirements + proficiency in completing <i>USACE New England District Highway Methodology Workbook Supplement</i> assessments
		Mitigation Plan	Level 1 requirements + <i>Wetland Restoration and Enhancement</i> or approved equivalent course + experience applying mitigation policy in NFSAM
Has consistently demonstrated proficiency in applying the principles, can serve as expert in difficult wetland situations, and can train other staff.			
Level 3	Requirements	Soils Determination	Level 2 requirements + consistently demonstrated proficiency in applying the principles.
		Vegetation Determination	
		Hydrology Determination	
		WC Labels	
		Scope & Effect	Level 2 requirements + additional training courses in use of hydrology software (SPAW, DRAINMOD, etc.) + demonstrated ability to use the hydrology tools.
		Functional Assessment	Level 2 requirements + consistently demonstrated proficiency in applying the principles.
		Mitigation Plan	

¹ ACOE Reg IV training may substitute for Wetland Identification for Food Security Act Purposes - Phase II.

² Examples of currently available vegetation courses: CNTSC Hydrophytic Vegetation Course (NRCS), Wetland Plant Identification (USFWS), Advanced Plant ID: Grasses, Sedges, Rushes, and Composites (USFWS)