State Specific Training
Module for Oklahoma
Purpose of this Module

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

State TSP Coordinator:

Joe Buford
224 N Ochard
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405-742-1282
Expected TSP Workflow

• The State Resource Conservationist (SRC) 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 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.
Oklahoma NRCS Field Office Locations

Legend
- ★ Field Office Locations

ZONE
1
2
3
4
Review of Oklahoma Laws

Engineering in Oklahoma

- Certain engineering practices require that the TSP be a certified Professional Engineer (PE). An PE license can be required by the State of Oklahoma. For questions regarding which practices require a PE please call the State Conservation Engineer.

- NRCS State Conservation Engineer
  Chris Stoner
  224 N. Orchard
  Stillwater, OK 74074
  chris.stoner@ok.usda.gov
  405-742-1260
State FOTG Requirements

• Technical Service Providers should be familiar with and the use of the Oklahoma Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG). Section IV of the FOTG has all of Oklahoma’s Conservation Practice Standards (CPS) and Specification information. There are 5 sections in the FOTG.

• To access the Oklahoma FOTG link click here: http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/
What is FOTG?

• Technical guides are the primary scientific references for NRCS. They contain technical information about the conservation of soil, water, air, and related plant and animal resources.

• Technical guides used in each field office are localized so that they apply specifically to the geographic area for which they are prepared. These documents are referred to as Field Office Technical Guides (FOTGs).

• Appropriate parts of the Field Office Technical Guides are automated as data bases, computer programs, and other electronic-based materials such as those included in these web based pages.
Section I: General References

• In this section you will find general state maps, descriptions of Major Land Resource Areas, watershed information, and links to NRCS reference manuals and handbooks. Section I contains links to researchers, universities, and agencies we work. Section I also contains conservation practice costs, agricultural laws and regulations, cultural resources, and information about protected plant and animal species.
Section II: Soil and Site Information

• In this section you will find detailed information about soil, water, air, plant, and animal resources. NRCS Soil Surveys, Hydric Soils Interpretations, Ecological Site Descriptions, Forage Suitability Groups, Cropland Production Tables, Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guides, Water Quality Guides, and other related information can be found here as it becomes available.
Section III: Conservation Management Systems

- In this section you will find information on NRCS Quality Criteria, which establish standards for resource conditions that help provide sustained use.
Section IV: Practice Standards and Specifications

• In this section you will find the NRCS Conservation Practices. Practice Standards define the practice and where it applies. Practice specifications are detailed requirements for installing the practice in the state.
Section V: Conservation Effects

- In this section you will find background information on how Conservation Practices affect each identified resource concerns in the state.
Oklahoma FOTG Navigation: Section IV

- The FOTG County Locator will appear upon first entering the site. Although, there are 77 counties selectable all CPS and Specification are the same in all counties.
Select the Section IV Tab
National Environmental Policy Act Review

- Technical Service Providers who are certified conservation planners will provide NRCS with the information necessary to assess:
  - Identified natural resource concerns along with treatment alternatives, and
  - Special environmental concerns: Environmental Laws, Executive Orders, and policies.

- This information will be documented according to NRCS State-specific procedures (i.e., Environmental Evaluation Worksheet, NRCS-CPA-52).

- TSPs will sign the NRCS-CPA-52 and NRCS will verify and sign that the information provided is accurate.
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

• Enacted in 1970 – Result of the first “Green Movement.”

• One of the most significant environmental legislation ever passed.

• Requires all federal agencies and TSP’s to evaluate impacts of their actions on the environment.
NEPA –Types of Environmental Analysis

- **Environmental Evaluation (EE)**
  - Used in most NRCS Conservation Planning (CPA-52 Form)

- **Environmental Assessment (EA)**
  - Developed when results of EE show potential adverse impacts
  - Results in FONSI or development of EIS

- **Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI)**
  - Developed when EA does not show significant impacts
  - Proceed with plan or action

- **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**
  - Developed when EA does shows significant impacts
  - Results will determine if federal plan or action can be implemented
ENVIROMENTAL EVALUATION CPA-52

- Environmental Evaluations required by NEPA (1970)

- CPA-52 form is used in all NRCS/TSP conservation planning activities including:
  - Technical Assistance Plans (no cost-share involved)
  - Financial Assistance Plans (cost-share programs like CRP, EQIP, WHIP, and WRP)
WHAT IS EVALUATED ON CPA-52 FORM?

- Natural Resources (SWAPA)
  - Soil
  - Water
  - Air
  - Plants
  - Animals

- Human Resources (SWAPA + H)
  - Social
  - Economic
  - Cultural

- Special Resources (protected by law)
  - T & E Species
  - Wetlands
  - Scenic Rivers
  - Cultural Resources
  - Natural Areas
  - Prime Farmland, etc

Consider positive and negative impacts of planned practices on all resources
T & E Species Documentation

DOCUMENTATION FOR T&E SPECIES IN CONSERVATION PLANNING

   - NRCS activities will not jeopardize the existence of listed T&E species or negatively impact habitats.

2. Use Form (CPA–52) Environmental Effects for Conservation Plans and Areawide Conservation Plans. (T&E species are listed under Special Environmental Concerns).
   - Information will be based on results of Planning Steps (i.e. Step 1 - Identify Problems and Opportunities; Step 3 - Inventory Resources; Step 5 – Formulate Alternatives; and Step 6 – Evaluate Alternatives).

3. Refer to T&E Species information in Section 2 of FOTG.
   - See “Oklahoma T&E List by County” (Continue if species are listed).
   - See “Species Account” in “Endangered Species List for Oklahoma” (This publication describes habitat requirements, life history, major threats, etc. and shows distribution within counties and state).
   - See Oklahoma supplemental “Species Account” (This NRCS supplement describes land use changes and conservation practices that could adversely affect each listed species. May also provide specific instructions).

4. If no T&E species present and/or no indication that planned practices will adversely effect T&E species or habitats.
   - Proceed with planned practices and complete Form CPA-52

5. If T&E species are present or planned practices could have adverse impact on T&E species or habitat.
   - Eliminate the planned practice (or)
   - Contact Resource Specialist/State Biologist for informal consultation with FWS and alternative plan development.

6. After final plan/practices are developed. Complete Form CPA- 52 with documentation.

7. Only provide technical or financial assistance where T&E species and/or habitat will not be adversely affected by selected plan/practices.
Documentation for T&E Species

• Use CPA-52 Form to document findings

• Refer to T&E Species information found in Section II of FOTG
Threatened and Endangered Species Information
T&E Species Information Cont.
T& E Species -FOTG

• **Species List**
• **County Maps**
• USFWS Website
Example:
Black Capped Vireo
Threatened and Endangered Species

• If no T&E Species present and no indication that planned practices will adversely impact species or habitats:
  – Proceed with plan and complete CPA -52

• If T&E Species present and practices could adversely impact species or habitats:
  – Modify or eliminate the practice (or)
  – Work with NRCS State Biologist to develop alternative plan in consultation with FWS
  – Proceed with plan and complete CPA-52
Threatened and Endangered Species

• Review species accounts and supplements for habitat requirements of T & E species.
• Technical Service Providers will provide NRCS with the information necessary to assess whether Federal, State, or Tribal permits or consultation/conferencing with the Services is necessary.
• TSPs do not represent NRCS and may not conduct required consultations, conferences, or other communication with entities outside of NRCS.
• Contact NRCS State Biologist:
  Michael Sams  
  224 N Orchard  
  Stillwater, OK 74074  
  Michael.Sams@ok.usda.gov  
  405-742-1239
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.

Send the signed certificate to the State TSP Coordinator. Copy the below link to your browser for a list of State TSP Coordinators.

https://techreg.sc.egov.usda.gov/RptStateContact4Admin.aspx
STATE SPECIFIC TRAINING MODULE COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

I, ________________________, hereby verify I have viewed and understand the content of the Oklahoma State Specific Training Module and affirm I have the knowledge, skills and ability to conduct conservation planning services in that 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.