



*NEPA*

# National Environmental Policy Act

The Environmental Evaluation (EA)  
utilized by NRCS to ensure compliance  
with NEPA is the CPA-52

# Environmental Evaluation in Planning

NPPH 180§ 600.11(g)

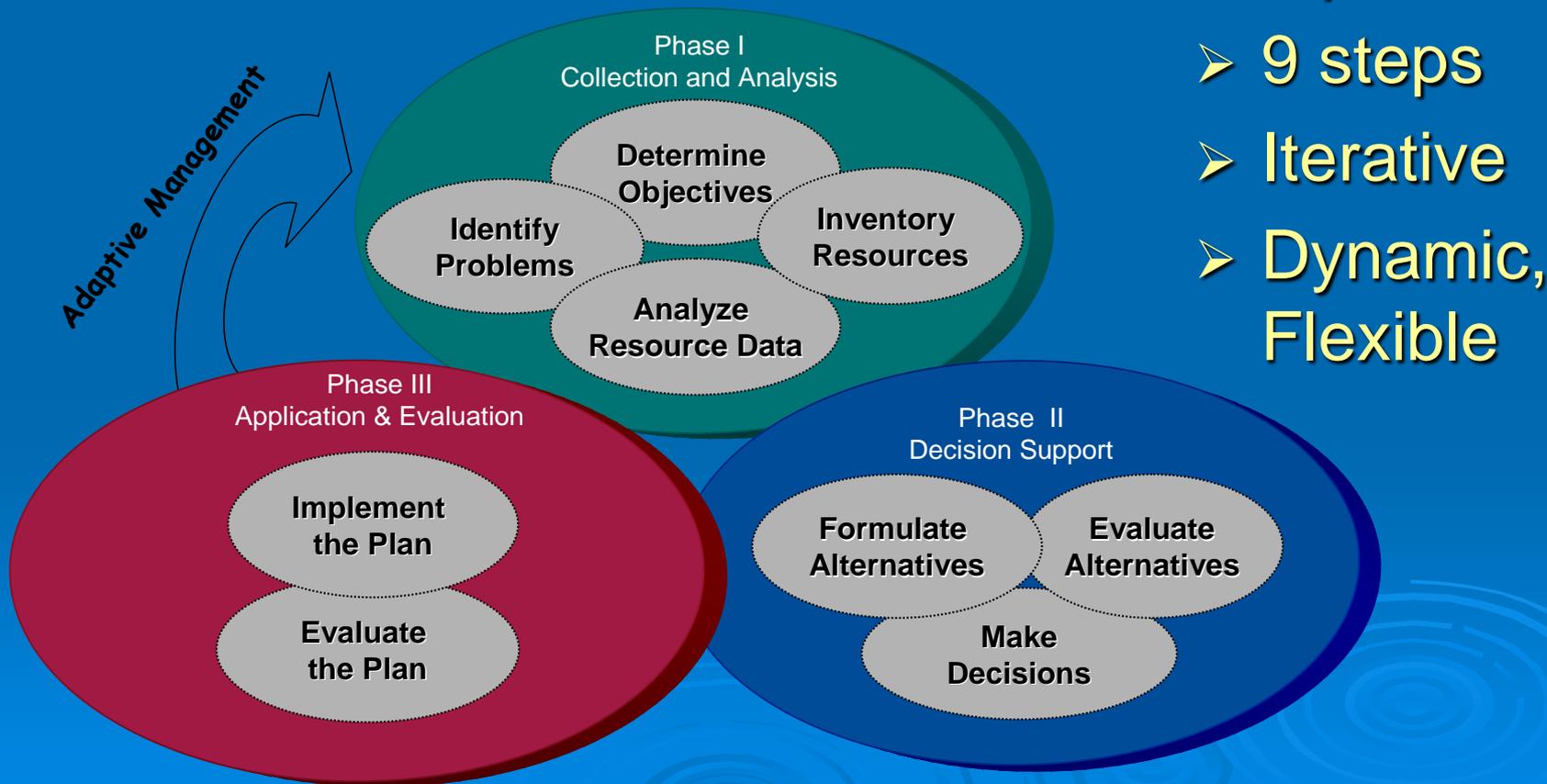
- All NRCS planning activities will be conducted in compliance with NEPA.
- NEPA will be incorporated into all steps and activities of the planning process and should not be considered as a separate process or requirement.

# Environmental Evaluation – CPA 52

- Identifies environmental concerns that may be affected
- Provides data for use in establishing objectives commensurate with scope and complexity of the proposed action
- Assist in the development of alternative courses of action
- To assist in the development of detailed plans for implementation, operation or maintenance

# Conservation Planning Process

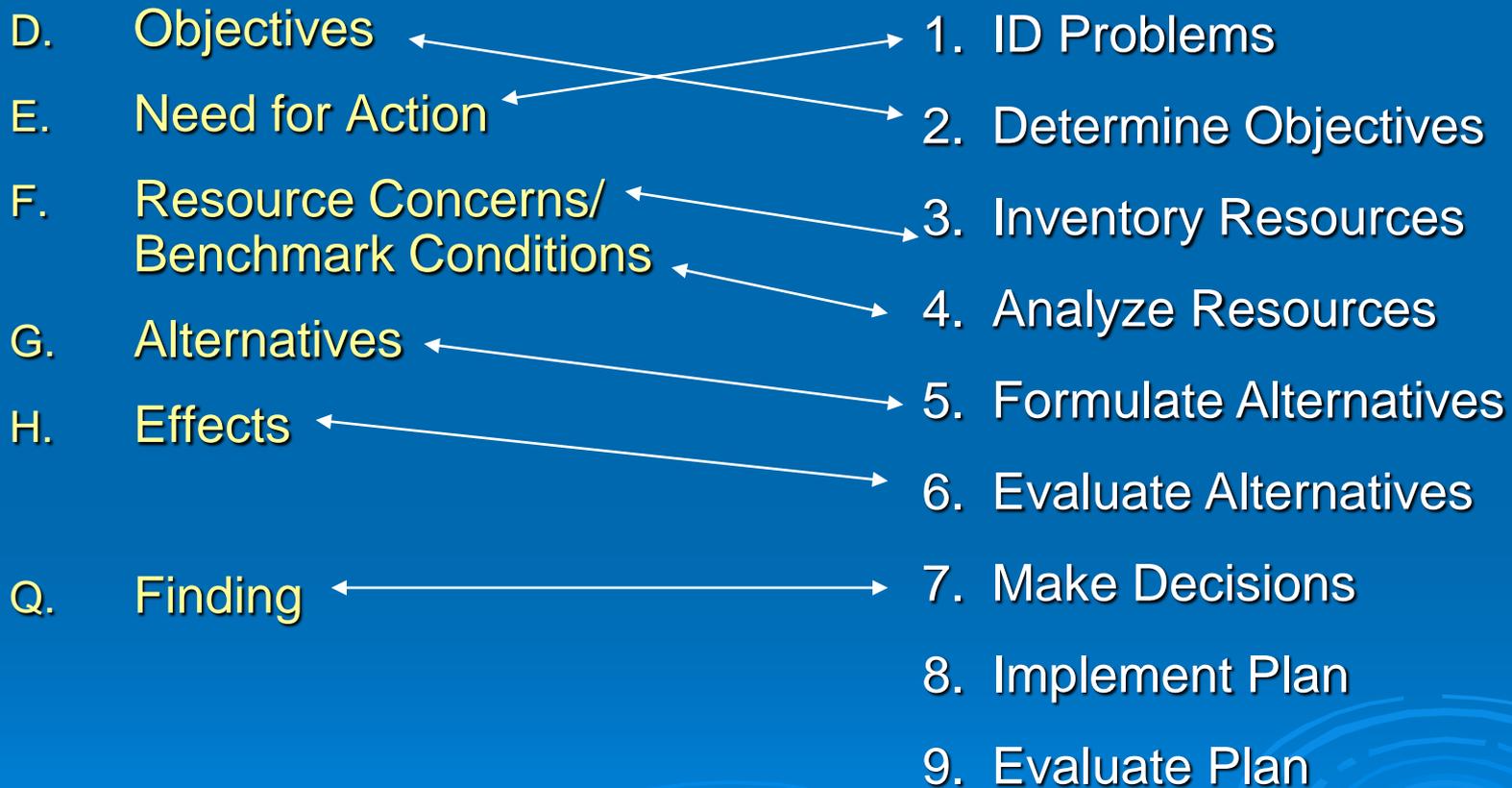
## NRCS Planning Process



- 3 phases
- 9 steps
- Iterative
- Dynamic, Flexible

# CPA-52 Content

# Planning process



# How do you determine which resource concerns are relevant?

- Planning step 3 – inventory resources
- Planning step 4 – analyzing resource data
- Field Inventory guide sheet

**RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS (Optional)****Field Inventory Guide Sheet**

Client/Plan Information:

Identify the resource concern(s) that need to be addressed and the assessment tool(s) used for the evaluation.

<b>SOIL</b>	<b>Erosion</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Classic Gully	<input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation Induced	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sheet and Rill <input type="checkbox"/> Wind <input type="checkbox"/> Ephemeral Gully	<input type="checkbox"/> Streambank <input type="checkbox"/> Shoreline	<input type="checkbox"/> Mass Movement <input type="checkbox"/> Road, Road Sides & Construction Sites	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<b>SOIL</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Subsidence		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organic Matter Depletion <input type="checkbox"/> Rangeland Site Stability <input type="checkbox"/> Compaction	<input type="checkbox"/> Contaminants-Salts & Other Chemicals <input type="checkbox"/> Contaminants-Animal Waste & Other Organics <input type="checkbox"/> Contaminants-Commercial Fertilizer	<input type="checkbox"/> Contaminants-Residual Pesticides <input type="checkbox"/> Damage from Soil Deposition	
Assessment tools, Problems & Notes: _____				
<b>WATER</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Quality</b>		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Seepage <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Runoff, Flooding, or Ponding <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Subsurface Water <input type="checkbox"/> Drifted Snow <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Outlets <input type="checkbox"/> Inefficient Water Use on Irrigated Land <input type="checkbox"/> Inefficient Water Use on Non-irrigated Land <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced Capacity of Conveyances by Sediment Deposition <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced Storage of Water Bodies by Sediment Accumulation <input type="checkbox"/> Aquifer Overdraft <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient Flows in Water Courses <input type="checkbox"/> Rangeland Hydrologic Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Groundwater <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Groundwater <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Salinity in Groundwater <input type="checkbox"/> Harmful Levels of Heavy Metals in Groundwater <input type="checkbox"/> Harmful Levels of Pathogens in Groundwater <input type="checkbox"/> Harmful Levels of Petroleum in Groundwater <input type="checkbox"/> Harmful Levels of Pesticides in Surface Water <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Surface Water <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Suspended Sediment & Turbidity in Surface Water <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Salinity in Surface Water <input type="checkbox"/> Harmful Levels of Heavy Metals in Surface Water <input type="checkbox"/> Harmful Temperatures of Surface Water <input type="checkbox"/> Harmful Levels of Pathogens in Surface Water <input type="checkbox"/> Harmful Levels of Petroleum in Surface Water		
Assessment tools, Problems & Notes: _____				
<b>AIR</b>	<b>Quality</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ammonia (NH <sub>3</sub> )		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter <input type="checkbox"/> Particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Ozone <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO <sub>2</sub> <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Greenhouse Gas - N <sub>2</sub> O <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH <sub>4</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> Chemical Drift <input type="checkbox"/> Objectionable Odors <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced Visibility <input type="checkbox"/> Undesirable Air Movement <input type="checkbox"/> Adverse Air Temperature	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
Assessment tools, Problems & Notes: _____				
<b>PLANTS</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Declining Species, Species of Concern		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Plants are not adapted or suited <input type="checkbox"/> Impaired Forage Quality and Palatability <input type="checkbox"/> Threatened or Endangered Species	<input type="checkbox"/> Productivity, Health and Vigor <input type="checkbox"/> Noxious and Invasive Plants	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire Hazard <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
Assessment tools, Problems & Notes: _____				
<b>ANIMALS</b>	<b>Fish and Wildlife</b>	<b>Domestic Animals</b>		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Food <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Cover/Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Space <input type="checkbox"/> Plant Community Fragmentation <input type="checkbox"/> Imbalance Among and Within Populations <input type="checkbox"/> Threatened and Endangered Species <input type="checkbox"/> Declining Species, Species of Concern	<input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Water	<input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Quantities and Quality of Feed & Forage <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate Stock Water <input type="checkbox"/> Stress and Mortality	
Assessment tools, Problems & Notes: _____				

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRC3-CPA-52  
4/2013

**ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION WORKSHEET**

**D. Client's Objective(s) (purpose):**  
**Step 2 Determine Objectives**

**A. Client Name:**

**B. Conservation Plan ID # (as applicable):**  
**Program Authority (optional):**

**C. Identification # (farm, tract, field #, etc as required):**

**E. Need for Action:**  
**Step 1 Identify Problems**

**H. Alternatives**

No Action	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
√ if RMS <input type="checkbox"/>	√ if RMS <input type="checkbox"/>	√ if RMS <input type="checkbox"/>

**Step 5 Formulate Alternatives**

**Resource Concerns**

In Section "F" below, analyze, record, and address concerns identified through the Resources Inventory process.  
(See FOTG Section III - Resource Planning Criteria for guidance).

**F. Resource Concerns and Existing/ Benchmark Conditions**  
(Analyze and record the existing/benchmark conditions for each identified concern)

**G. Effects of Alternatives**

Amount, Status, Description <i>(Document both short and long term impacts)</i>	No Action		Alternative 1		Alternative 2	
		√ if does NOT meet PC		√ if does NOT meet PC		√ if does NOT meet PC
<b>SOIL: EROSION</b>						
	<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC		<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC		<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>SOIL: SOIL QUALITY DEGRADATION</b>						
	<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC		<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC		<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>WATER: EXCESS / INSUFFICIENT WATER</b>						
	<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC		<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>WATER: WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION</b>						
	<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC		<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC		<input type="checkbox"/>	NOT meet PC	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Step 6 Evaluate Alternatives**

**Step 3 Inventory Resources**

**Step 4 Analyze Resource Data**

Wetlands <a href="#">Guide Sheet</a> <a href="#">Fact Sheet</a>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wild and Scenic Rivers <a href="#">Guide Sheet</a> <a href="#">Fact Sheet</a>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>K. Other Agencies and Broad Public Concerns</b>		<i>No Action</i>	<i>Alternative 1</i>	<i>Alternative 2</i>
Easements, Permissions, Public Review, or Permits Required and Agencies Consulted.				
Cumulative Effects Narrative (Describe the cumulative impacts considered, including past, present and known future actions regardless of who performed the actions)		<b>Step 6 Evaluate Alternatives</b>		
<b>L. Mitigation</b> (Record actions to avoid, minimize, and compensate)				
<b>M. Preferred Alternative</b>	Preferred alternative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Supporting reason	<b>Step 7 Make Decisions</b>		
<b>N. Context</b> (Record context of alternatives analysis)				
The significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality.				
<b>O. Determination of Significance or Extraordinary Circumstances</b>				
Intensity: Refers to the severity of impact. Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.				
If you answer ANY of the below questions "yes" then contact the State Environmental Liaison as there may be extraordinary circumstances and significance issues to consider and a site specific NEPA analysis may be required.				
Yes   No				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Is the preferred alternative expected to cause significant effects on public health or safety?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Is the preferred alternative expected to significantly affect unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Are the effects of the preferred alternative on the quality of the human environment likely to be highly controversial?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Does the preferred alternative have highly uncertain effects or involve unique or unknown risks on the human environment?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Does the preferred alternative establish a precedent for future actions with significant impacts or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Is the preferred alternative known or reasonably expected to have potentially significant environment impacts to the quality of the human environment either individually or cumulatively over time?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Will the preferred alternative likely have a significant adverse effect on ANY of the special environmental concerns? Use the Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheets to assist in this determination. This includes, but is not limited to, concerns such as cultural or historical resources, endangered and threatened species, environmental justice, wetlands, floodplains, coastal zones, coral reefs, essential fish habitat, wild and scenic rivers, clean air, riparian areas, natural areas, and invasive species.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Will the preferred alternative threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements for the protection of the environment?		
<b>P. To the best of my knowledge, the data shown on this form is accurate and complete:</b>				
In the case where a non-NRCS person (e.g. a TSP) assists with planning the project, the non-NRCS person is to sign the first signature block and then NRCS is to sign the second block to verify the information's accuracy.				
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Signature (TSP if applicable)		Title	Date	
<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Signature (NRCS)		Title	Date	
If preferred alternative is not a federal action where NRCS has control or responsibility and this NRCS-CPA-52 is shared with someone other than the client then indicate to whom this is being provided.				



**The following sections are to be completed by the Responsible Federal Official (RFO)**

NRCS is the RFO if the action is subject to NRCS control and responsibility (e.g., actions financed, funded, assisted, conducted, regulated, or approved by NRCS). These actions do not include situations in which NRCS is only providing technical assistance because NRCS cannot control what the client ultimately does with that assistance and situations where NRCS is making a technical determination (such as Farm Bill HEL or wetland determinations) not associated with the planning process.

**Q. NEPA Compliance Finding (check one)**

The preferred alternative:		Action required
<input type="checkbox"/>	1) is not a federal action where the agency has control or responsibility.	Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required
<input type="checkbox"/>	2) is a federal action ALL of which is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis AND there are no extraordinary circumstances as identified in Section "O".	Document in "R.2" below. No additional analysis is required
<input type="checkbox"/>	3) is a federal action that has been sufficiently analyzed in an existing Agency state, regional, or national NEPA document and there are no predicted significant adverse environmental effects or extraordinary circumstances.	Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4) is a federal action that has been sufficiently analyzed in another Federal agency's NEPA document (EA or EIS) that addresses the proposed NRCS action and its' effects and has been formally adopted by NRCS. NRCS is required to prepare and publish its own Finding of No Significant Impact for an EA or Record of Decision for an EIS when adopting another agency's EA or EIS document. (Note: This box is not applicable to FSA)	Contact the State Environmental Liaison for list of NEPA documents formally adopted and available for tiering. Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required
<input type="checkbox"/>	5) is a federal action that has NOT been sufficiently analyzed or may involve predicted significant adverse environmental effects or extraordinary circumstances and may require an EA or EIS.	Contact the State Environmental Liaison. Further NEPA analysis required.

**R. Rationale Supporting the Finding**

<b>R.1</b> Findings Documentation	
<b>R.2</b> Applicable Categorical Exclusion(s) (more than one may apply)	
7 CFR Part 650 Compliance With NEPA, subpart 650.6 Categorical Exclusions states prior to determining that a proposed action is categorically excluded under paragraph (d) of this section, the proposed action must meet six sideboard criteria. See NECH 610.116.	

**Step 7 Make Decisions**

*I have considered the effects of the alternatives on the Resource Concerns, Economic and Social Considerations, Special Environmental Concerns, and Extraordinary Circumstances as defined by Agency regulation and policy and based on that made the finding indicated above.*

**S. Signature of Responsible Federal Official:**

Signature	Title	Date

**Additional notes**

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation  
NRCs-CPA-52  
4/2013

**ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION WORKSHEET**

A. Client Name:

B. Conservation Plan ID # (as applicable);  
Program Authority (optional):

C. Identification # (farm, tract, field #, etc. as required):

D. Client's Objective(s) (purpose):  
Develop a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) to inventory and evaluate resource concerns. Provide a plan of action for implementing additional practices to address those concerns.

E. Need for Action:  
No current plan exists.

H. Alternatives

No Action	if RMS	Alternative 1	if RMS	Alternative 2	if RMS
Continue operation without a CNMP.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a CNMP.	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

**Resource Concerns**

In Section "F" below, analyze, record, and address concerns identified through the Resources Inventory process. (See FOTG Section III - Resource Planning Criteria for guidance).

F. Resource Concerns and Existing/ Benchmark Conditions (Analyze and record the existing/benchmark conditions for each identified concern)	G. Effects of Alternatives					
	No Action		Alternative 1		Alternative 2	
	Amount, Status, Description	if does NOT meet PC	Amount, Status, Description	if does NOT meet PC	Amount, Status, Description	if does NOT meet PC
	<i>(Document both short and long term impacts)</i>		<i>(Document both short and long term impacts)</i>		<i>(Document both short and long term impacts)</i>	
<b>SOIL: EROSION</b> No resource concern identified		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC
		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC
<b>SOIL: SOIL QUALITY DEGRADATION</b> No resource concern identified		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC
		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC
<b>WATER: EXCESS / INSUFFICIENT WATER</b> No resource concern identified		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC
<b>WATER: WATER QUALITY DEGRADATION</b> Excess nutrients in surface and ground waters Operation applies manure and commercial nutrients with no current plan in place.	Potential increase in nutrients in surface or groundwater from lack of planning and identification of resource concerns.	NOT meet PC	Moderate to significant improvement in water quality due to improved knowledge of actions needed to address existing resource concerns.	NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC

Placing your cursor over the red triangle will open a text box that provides more information on how to fill-out each section.

Purpose becomes the decision factor for selecting the action alternative.

The resource concern is the basis for the EE. All resource concerns must be addressed on the CPA-52. Check quality criteria in Section III of FOTG.

Each resource concern must have a benchmark and at least one alternative

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**P. To the best of my knowledge, the data shown on this form is accurate and complete:**  
 In the case where a non-NRCS person (e.g. a TSP) assists with planning they are to sign the first signature block and then NRCS is to sign the second block to verify the information's accuracy.

Signature (TSP if applicable)	Title	Date
Signature (NRCS)	Title	Date

**If preferred alternative is not a federal action where NRCS has control or responsibility and this NRCS-CPA-52 is shared with someone other than the client then indicate to whom this is being provided.**

**The following sections are to be completed by the Responsible Federal Official (RFO)**

NRCS is the RFO if the action is subject to NRCS control and responsibility (e.g., actions financed, funded, assisted, conducted, regulated, or approved by NRCS). These actions do not include situations in which NRCS is only providing technical assistance because NRCS cannot control what the client ultimately does with that assistance and situations where NRCS is making a technical determination (such as Farm Bill HEL or wetland determinations) not associated with the planning process.

**Q. NEPA Compliance Finding (check one)**

The preferred alternative:	Action required
<input type="checkbox"/> 1) is <b>not a federal action</b> where the agency has control or responsibility.	Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2) is a federal action <b>ALL</b> of which is <b>categorically excluded</b> from further environmental analysis <b>AND</b> there are <b>no extraordinary circumstances as identified in Section "O"</b> .	Document in "R.2" below. No additional analysis is required.
<input type="checkbox"/> 3) is a federal action that has been <b>sufficiently analyzed</b> in an existing Agency state, regional, or national NEPA document <b>and</b> there are no predicted <b>significant adverse environmental effects or extraordinary circumstances</b> .	Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required.
<input type="checkbox"/> 4) is a federal action that has been sufficiently analyzed in another Federal agency's NEPA document (EA or EIS) that addresses the proposed NRCS action and its' effects <b>and has been formally adopted by NRCS</b> . NRCS is required to prepare and publish its own Finding of No Significant Impact for an EA or Record of Decision for an EIS when adopting another agency's EA or EIS document. <b>(Note: This box is not applicable to FSA)</b>	Contact the State Environmental Liaison for list of NEPA documents formally adopted and available for tiering. Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required.
<input type="checkbox"/> 5) is a federal action that has <b>NOT</b> been sufficiently analyzed or may involve predicted significant adverse environmental effects or extraordinary circumstances and may require an EA or EIS.	Contact the State Environmental Liaison. Further NEPA analysis required.

**R. Rationale Supporting the**

**R.1**  
Findings Documentation

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**R.2**  
Applicable Categorical Exclusion(s) **(more than one may apply)**

7 CFR Part 650 *Compliance with NEPA*, subpart 650.6 *Categorical Exclusions* states prior to determining that a proposed action is categorically excluded under paragraph (d) of this section, the proposed action must meet six sideboard criteria. See NECH 610.116.

(3) Inventories, research activities, and studies, such as resource inventories and routine data collection when such actions are clearly limited in context and intensity;

*I have considered the effects of the alternatives on the Resource Concerns, Economic and Social Considerations, Special Environmental Concerns, and Extraordinary Circumstances as defined by Agency regulation and policy and based on that made the finding indicated above.*

**S. Signature of Responsible Federal Official:**

*The District Conservationist*

Signature	Title	Date
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Section P may only be signed by a certified conservation planner or TSP

Always use a CATX if it applies

In lieu of a CATX use 3) for EQIP, CSP, WRE or CRP

Contact Steve Bertjens if you feel 5 applies.

The DC is always signs as the RFO with exception of CRP which is the CED