

Natural Resource: HUMAN CONSIDERATIONS

Basic Resource Concern: HUMAN CONSIDERATIONS

Specific Resource Considerations	Description of Specific Considerations	NQC	SQC	Assessment Tool for Evaluation
<u>LAND</u>	Land is the basic unit of production. It is where crops are grown, livestock grazed and wildlife produced. Land is measured in acres (or hectares). Productivity on the land is measured as units of production (pounds, bushels, etc.). Farm machinery and structures are also included with land.			All changes in land use, land taken out of production or land brought into production should be identified.
<u>CAPITAL</u>	Capital represents the landowners "ability to pay" for farm or ranch improvements. Capital is a measure of the landowner's monetary assets (dollars), physical assets (land & machinery) their ability to borrow money (credit), obtain financial assistance (cost-share) or barter "goods and services".			All additional expenses and income resulting from conservation activities should be identified.
<u>LABOR</u>	Labor represents the landowner's "ability to work" or hire "workers". Labor is measured in units of time (hours, years). Labor includes the landowner, family, hired help or other trained workers.			Changes to the labor requirements from managing/implementing conservation practices should be identified.
<u>MANAGEMENT LEVEL</u>	Management level measures the land user's "knowledge, skills and ability" to operate the farm or ranch.			The management level is measured in qualitative units of skill level
<u>RISK</u>	Risk is the exposure to monetary loss, injury or damage to resources. Risk is measured in qualitative units. Risk affects crop and livestock/wildlife yields, flexibility, timing, cash flow and other resources. The risk resulting from the conservation plan affects the landowner, those living or working on the farm, the local community and people traveling near the planning area.			Inform decision maker of changes in risk associated with implementation the conservation plan.
<u>PROFITABILITY</u>	Profitability describes the relative benefits and costs of the farm or ranch operation, and is often measured in dollars. An activity is profitable if the benefits are greater than the costs.			Where possible, provide benefit and cost information to the decision maker.

<p><u>CULTURAL RESOURCES</u></p>	<p>NRCS recognizes that cultural resources are an integral part of our national heritage and recognizes its responsibilities for historic preservation, particularly as they are listed in the National Historic Preservation Act. NRCS will ensure that cultural resources are considered in all NRCS actions and programs.</p> <p>NRCS will identify and protect cultural resources <u>early</u> in the planning and environmental evaluation process for all assistance activities classified as an undertaking (i.e. any action that results in physical ground disturbance). NRCS will protect cultural resources in their original location to the fullest extent practicable by avoiding adverse impacts</p>			<p>Cultural resources are the traces of all the past activities and accomplishments of people. They include tangible traces such as historic districts, sites, buildings, structures; traces of less tangible objects such as dance forms, aspects of folk life, cultural or religious practices; historical documents; and some landscapes, vistas, and cemeteries.</p> <p>Collection of cultural resource material is prohibited without authorization. Laws established to protect cultural resources include: the Antiquities Act of 1906, the Historic Sites Act of 1935, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990. The National Register of Historic Places provides certain requirements for the protection of historic sites and funding for their maintenance.</p>
<p><u>CIVIL RIGHTS IMPACTS</u></p>	<p>(Departmental Regulation 4300-4) The purpose of the civil rights (CR) impact analysis is to examine CR's implications of proposed agency actions related to employment, management, program development, program implementation, or decision-making. Performance of the analysis is directed by DR 4300-4, which requires agencies to identify, evaluate and address the CR implications of policy actions to <i>prevent any adverse impact</i> on employees, as well as <i>on program beneficiaries from socially and economically disadvantaged groups, minorities, women, and person with disabilities.</i></p>			<p>The analysis should be properly documented to clearly show that agency actions, which if implemented, will not result in denial or reduced program benefits, or any form of discrimination against any clientele group. <i>Documentation identifying and addressing civil rights impacts is to be included in background material of all policy, and/or program actions used in the decision making process.</i></p>

<p><u>ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE</u> (Departmental Regulation 5600-2; in compliance with Executive Order 12898 NRCS Civil Rights Action Plan Rules and National Environmental Policy Act Procedures for Environmental Justice).</p>	<p>All existing and future NRCS programs and activities are subject to Environmental Justice DR 5600-2. This includes all environmental evaluation and assessments of programs, projects or technical assistance actions. Environmental Justice (EJ) occurs when <u>all people, including minority and low income individuals</u> are provided the opportunity to comment <i>before</i> decisions are made; are allowed to share in the benefits of the decisions; and are not affected in a disproportionately high and adverse manner. EJ principles should be used to take preventive rather than corrective actions. However, EJ regulations can be used to correct previous adverse actions or environmental injustices caused by NRCS activities. The impact of Environmental Justice DR 5600-2 is: EJ principles must be taken into account in all NRCS activities -- including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) technical assistance b) financial assistance c) program delivery d) educational assistance 			<p>EJ principles must be incorporated into all Determination of whether a particular program or activity raises an environmental justice issue depends on an evaluation of all circumstance. NRCS should consider whether the adverse effect is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that would be suffered by the non-minority population and/or non-low-income population.</p>
<p><u>SOCIAL ASSESSMENT</u></p>	<p>A social assessment is an analytical method to identify human and social concerns in a conservation project or program area. A social assessment provides the conservation planner with an awareness of the concerns, issues, and needs of local farmers, ranchers and other landowners. With this information, the planner can not only develop a plan that complies with USDA CR and NEPA's EJ policies but, also meets the needs of both the natural environment and the community. A conservation plan that meets everyone's needs can usually be implemented without unnecessary conflicts, delays, obstacles and frustration.</p>			<p>Additionally, a social analysis provides the planner with knowledge about individual landowners and community concerns, issues, and needs. With this information, the planner can develop a plan that complies with USDA CR and EJ policies <u>and</u> meets the needs of both the natural resources base and the local landowners and residents. A conservation plan that meets everyone's needs can usually be implemented without unnecessary delays and obstacles</p>

<p><u>FOOD SAFETY</u></p>	<p>Food safety is a consideration for all agricultural products, including livestock and fresh fruits and vegetables. In particular, those products that are sold to consumers in an unprocessed or minimally processed (raw) form are vulnerable to microbiological hazards at various points along the farm-to-table food chain. The major source of microbial contamination is associated with human or animal feces.</p> <p>With a focus on agricultural production and processing, good agricultural practices are highly encouraged on the farm and in packing facilities to minimize the risk for potential microbial contamination. These practices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of clean agricultural water for irrigation and crop protection sprays • limiting access of wild and domestic animals to crop fields • a suitable production environment (use of properly composted manure for fertilizer, appropriate previous land use, compatible adjacent land use) • ensuring worker health and hygiene • post-harvest water quality to wash or cool produce • sanitation of food processing facilities and equipment 			<p>Planners should assess irrigation water source and quality, livestock exclusion from fields and water sources, the proximity of wildlife and wildlife trails through the area, the timing and use of applications of unincorporated and incorporated manure and composted manure, possible cropping and grazing limitations post-harvest, and to the extent possible, post-harvest handling of products.</p>
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