January 12, 2015

TECHNICAL GUIDE NOTICE NUMBER 220

Purpose. This notice transmits release of the revised Conservation Practice Standards, Practice Supporting Guidance, and Conservation Planning Guidance for Wildlife. New or updated materials have been released to folders in Section IV of the Pennsylvania NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) for Conservation Cover (327), Tree and Shrub Establishment (612), Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645), Structure for Wildlife (649), Tree and Shrub Pruning (660). Updated Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Worksheets have been released to the new Wildlife Guidance folder in Section III of the FOTG.

Effective Date. This notice is effective upon receipt. However, these practices will not be included in the Payment Schedule until 2017.

Explanation of Changes. Changes specific to these Pennsylvania Conservation Practice Standards and or supporting documents are described below. Supporting guidance includes the Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Worksheets, Implementation Requirements/Job Check-Out Worksheets, Practice Overviews, and Statements of Work.

Conservation Practice Standards

Conservation Cover (327): The purpose of managing pests was deleted. A new purpose to enhance beneficial organism habitat was added. One new reference was added: National Agronomy Technical Note 9, Preventing or Mitigating Potential Negative Impacts of Pesticides on Pollinators Using IPM and Other Conservation Practices.

Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645): Only minor wording and the date of the standard were changed.

Structure for Wildlife (649): This new conservation practice standard has a Five year lifespan. Use this standard to install new or retrofit existing structures as needed to improve fish and wildlife habitats. The practice references Fish and Wildlife Habitat Management Leaflet # 20 describing Artificial Nesting Structures.

Tree/Shrub Pruning (660): Two new purposes were added and minor clarifications made.

Practice Supporting Guidance

Practice Overviews: New fact sheets were developed to describe basic information about Conservation Cover (327), Structures for Wildlife (645), and Tree/Shrub Pruning (660).

Implementation Requirements/Job Check Out: Implementation Requirements/Job Sheets were developed for Conservation Cover (327) and Tree and Shrub Establishment (612). The national template for communicating implementation requirements to the farmer was modified to include a statement to certify when the practice is complete.

Statements of Work: Statements of work were developed for Conservation Cover (327), Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645), Structures for Wildlife (649), and Tree/Shrub Pruning (660).

Wildlife Guidance (Planning and Environmental Compliance Folder of Section III)

Wildlife Habitat Evaluation for Cropland, Wildlife Habitat Evaluation for Pasture and Hayland – General Wildlife, Wildlife Habitat Evaluation for Pasture and Hayland – Grassland Birds No changes were made to these worksheet other than making them into fillable forms for easier completion and documentation.

Access Instructions

The entire Pennsylvania Field Office Technical Guide can be accessed at the following website: http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/

You may also access Section IV Table of Contents directly at the following web address: http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/toc.aspx?CatID=12487

You may also access Section III Table of Contents directly at the following web address: http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/toc.aspx?CatID=12477

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