Part 505 – Non-NRCS Engineering Services

Subpart E – Exhibits

TN505.44  Landowner Use of a Consultant – Tennessee’s Sample Letter

TN505.45  Technical Assistance Flow Chart
TN505.44 Landowner Use of a Consultant – Tennessee’s Sample Letter

Current Date

Name of Landowner
Address
City, State  Zip Code

Dear (add Mr. or Mrs. or Ms. Landowner’s Last Name):

You have requested cost sharing for conservation practice standard, (add practice standard numbers and titles). You have indicated that your project will be designed by a private consultant. NRCS welcomes the involvement of your consultant. You need to be aware, however, that our policies require that the consultant’s design meet NRCS standards and specifications for acceptance of their work. The NRCS statement of work (SOW) for each individual practice provides the minimum documentation requirement. Enclosed is/are the applicable conservation practice standards SOW/SOWs to support NRCS certification for cost shared practices. Additional information on NRCS conservation practices standards and associated documents can be accessed at http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov//efotg_locator.aspx.

If you or your consultant have difficulty accessing these documents, please give me a call at (add telephone number).

Pre-Design Support: NRCS will provide appropriate pre-design assistance to your consultant if you request it.

Quality Assurance: NRCS has a quality assurance process to ensure that the project meets NRCS standards and specifications and qualifies for the cost share. This process is outline below. We hope the process outlined in this letter will provide a clear understanding for all parties involved.

Prior to Construction:

(1) You need to submit to NRCS a copy of the following items as prepared by the consultant: site specific design documentation, construction plans, and specifications as identified in the SOW for each conservation practice. The consultant will add the following statement and accompanying signature on the cover sheet of the drawings.
To the best of my professional knowledge, judgment, and belief, the design, construction drawings, and specifications meet applicable Tennessee NRCS standards and specifications. Furthermore, to the best of my knowledge, judgment, and belief, the proposed work complies with all local, State, and Federal laws, rules, and regulations.

Signature of Consultant     Date

Note: Include professional engineer’s license number and seal.

(2) NRCS will perform a functional review of all submittals to ensure that the design:

(a) Achieves the objectives of the plan and programs.
(b) Meets the criteria in the applicable conservation practice standards.
(c) Complies with applicable local, State, and Federal programs and regulations.
(d) Includes a cost estimate.
(e) Includes a quality assurance plan (QAP).
(f) Includes an operation and maintenance (O&M) plan.

(3) NRCS will provide in writing the review comments that must be addressed satisfactorily by the consultant in writing prior to NRCS acceptance of the design. NRCS’s acceptance must occur prior to the start of construction.

Construction:

(1) You are responsible for hiring the contractor and ensuring that the QAP is carried out and that the structure/conservation practice is completed according to the approval plans and specifications. You are responsible for all installation deliverables as shown in the SOW for each conservation practice standard included in the project.

(2) A preconstruction meeting is required. Contact me seven (7) days in advance of this meeting to coordinate NRCS involvement. Your consultant or their representative is required to be present at the preconstruction conference with you and your contractor.

(3) The consultant approves the changes during construction and notes on the “as-built” drawings. NRCS reviews and accepts the changes for compliance with NRCS standards, specifications, and policy.
After Construction:

(1) Upon completion of the project, you must submit the following to NRCS:

(a) A copy of the “as-built” drawings.

(b) A certification statement must be included on the as-build drawings. The certification statement shall read as follows:

To the best of my professional knowledge, judgment, and belief, the installed practices meet the engineering plans and specifications and applicable NRCS standards.

_________________________  __________________
Signature of Consultant      Date

Note: Include professional engineer’s license number and seal.

(2) NRCS will make a field visit to the site to verify construction and/or installation and will certify completion based on submittal of appropriate documentation and the consultant’s certification statement.

Operation and Maintenance: You will need to follow the O&M Plan for the life of the system.

I hope this letter explains NRCS’s expectations. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

District Conservationist’s Signature

District Conservationist

Enc.

cc.: Consultant’s Name
During the planning process, the DC with TA from the AE as needed, will determine the engineering job class. For jobs above the AE’s EJAA, the CU is encouraged to use non-NRCS engineering resources (TSP or CON). DC explains to the CU the pros and cons of the various TA processes available.

CU selects NRCS.

Job is > Job Class V

FO has qualified staff to perform the job.

AO has qualified staff to perform the job.

AC contacts other AO’s. Other AO has qualified staff to perform the job.

CU must select another option to perform job.

AC sends letter to STC requesting TA. SO has qualified staff and time to perform the job.

CU sends letter to STC and SCE describing the extent of TA needed to design the job. STC and SCE determines that TA assistance can be provided by NRCS.

SCG develops schedules for NRCS to complete work.

CU selects TSP cost shared by NRCS.

TSP completes job and submits SOW required deliverables to DC.

DC reviews deliverables for conformance with SOW. Deliverables meet requirements of SOW.

DC certifies deliverables.

DC informs CU and TSP of deficiencies and to resubmit deliverables.

TSP submits corrected deliverables to DC.

On hold until TSP submits corrected deliverables to DC. If corrections are not submitted in a reasonable time period, the DC will contact the Tennessee TSP Coordinator for appropriate actions to take.

Abbreviations
AC = Area Conservationist
AE = Area Engineer
AO = Area Office
CON = Consultant
CU = Customer
DC = District Conservationist
EJAA = Engineering Job Approval Authority
FO = Field Office
NEM = National Engineering Manual
PE = Professional Engineer
SO = State Office
SOW = Statement of Work
STC = State Conservationist
TSP = Technical Service Provider
TA = Technical Assistance

References
• Title 180, General Manual (GM), Part 411, “TSP Assistance Policy.”
• Title 440, Programs Manual (CPM), Part 504, Subpart A, “Overview of TSP Assistance.”
• Title 210, National Engineering Manual (NEM), Part 505, “Non-NRCS Engineering Services.”

Color Key
• NRCS = Green
• TSP = Blue
• CON = Pink

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