



August 22, 2016

GEORGIA INSTRUCTION 180-003 FIRST EDITION – CERTIFIED WETLAND DETERMINATION AND DELINEATION JOB APPROVAL AUTHORITY

GA180.0 PURPOSE

This instruction is to distribute the Certified Wetland Delineation Job Approval Authority requirements and spreadsheet.

GA180.1 SCOPE

These instructions will be followed by all NRCS and partner employees.

GA180.2 FILING INSTRUCTIONS

This Georgia Instruction will be posted, along with the official Certified Wetland Determination Job Approval Authority spreadsheet, in Section III of the Field Office Technical Guide and will be maintained by the State Resource Conservationist.

GA180.3 EXHIBITS

See attachment.


TERRANCE O. RUDOLPH
State Conservationist

- Enclosures: 1. Certified Wetland Determination Job Approval Authority Letter
2. Certified Wetland Determination Job Approval Authority Spreadsheet

(GA Instruction 180 - 003 First Edition – August 2016)

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Georgia State Office
355 East Hancock Avenue - Athens, GA - 30601-2775
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GEORGIA INSTRUCTION 180-003 FIRST EDITION—CERTIFIED WETLAND DETERMINATION AND DELINEATION JOB APPROVAL AUTHORITY

1. PURPOSE:

To distribute the Certified Wetland Delineation Job Approval Authority (JAA) requirements and spreadsheet.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1) Attached is the Certified Wetland Determination Job Approval Authority requirements and spreadsheet listing the job approval for all employees with wetland determination responsibilities in Georgia. It is both the employee's and the supervisor's responsibility to determine the appropriate level of competency required to meet the needs of their clients and field offices and to notify the assistant state conservationist for field operations when JAA status updates are necessary. Documentation (certifications, verifications, etc.) supporting each employee's JAA status will be maintained in the employee's case file.
- 2) The official Certified Wetland Determination Job Approval Authority spreadsheet will be maintained by the State Resource Conservationist and will be placed in Section III of the Field Office Technical Guide. As an employee gains expertise in different areas of wetland determinations, the spreadsheet will be updated by the State Conservationist upon the recommendation of the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations. To update an employee's JAA status on the Certified Wetland Determination Job Approval authority spreadsheet, the ASTC FO must submit a request to the State Resource Conservationist indicating which JAA criteria have been met.

3. EXPLANATION:

The National Food Security Act Manual (NFSAM) requires that:

Certified wetland determinations must be completed by a qualified NRCS employee, as determined by the State Conservationist. Qualified employees (i.e., agency experts) must meet all of the following criteria:

- Have completed all the required training, including update courses,
- Have the appropriate job-approval authority, and
- Have demonstrated proficiency in making certified wetland determinations.

Questions may be directed to Tina Jerome, State Resource Conservationist, at (706) 546-2009.

Approved By: /s/

Date: August 22, 2016

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State Conservationist

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Approval levels:	Level	Training Required
Required for all WCC tasks	1	Wetland Identification for Food Security Purposes – Phase 1: Basic Concepts NRCS-NEDC Course #000268 (online) -AND- Wetland Identification for Food Security Act Purposes – Phase 2: Application NRCS-NEDC Course #000254. Basic training to achieve Level 1 (wetland determination/delineation) may include the Aglearn Course NRCS-NEDC-000268 or previous completion of Regulatory IV - Identification and Delineation of Wetlands (COE/NRCS).
Has job approval to conduct preliminary data gathering and synthesis	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert in the application of COE 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual Preliminary Data Gathering and Synthesis, Section B
	3	Demonstrated proficiency with a minimum of two years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert in the application of COE 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual Preliminary Data Gathering and Synthesis, Section B
	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert in the application of COE 1987 Wetland Delineation Onsite-Unnecessary procedures
Has job approval to conduct off-site wetland determinations	3	Demonstrated proficiency with a minimum of Two years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert in the application of COE 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual Onsite-Unnecessary procedures
Has job approval to assign Labels	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on NFSAM Subpart B Section 514.0-515.0 including labels, label restrictions, and exemptions.
	3	Demonstrated proficiency with a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on NFSAM Subpart B Section 514.0-515.0 including labels, label restrictions, and exemptions.
	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert
Hydric Soils	3	Hydric Soils for Wetland Delineation NRCS-NEDC-00022, 32hrs. -or- Advanced Hydric Soils for Soil Scientists NRCS-NEDC-00024, 40 hrs -OR- demonstrated proficiency based on Field Experience, including a minimum of 2 years of hydric soils identification or equivalent and on the job training on significantly disturbed or naturally problematic sites.
	2	Wetland Plant Identification (CSP3107), 36 hrs. Classroom/Field - Provided by USFWS National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) -OR- other approved Wetland Plant ID Course -AND- On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on plant ID, wetland plant indicator status, Rapid test, dominance test (50/20 Rule), Prevalence Index.
Hydrophytic Vegetation		

Approval levels:

Level

Training Required

	3	Advanced Plant ID: Grasses, Sedges, Rushes and Composites (GSP3130), 36 hrs. Classroom/Field Provided by USFWS National Conservation Training center (NCTC) -OR- Demonstrated proficiency based on field experience including a minimum of 2 years of hydrophytic vegetation identification or equivalent -AND- 2 years of on the job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Disturbed or Problematic Vegetation and the use of Vegetation Reference Sites
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	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert. Training must include determination of typical or atypical climatic/hydrologic conditions, oxidized rhizospheres, and use of off-site methods to establish hydrology primary and secondary indicators
Wetland Hydrology	3	Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert. Training must include determination of typical or atypical climatic / hydrologic conditions, oxidized rhizospheres, and use of off-site methods to establish hydrology primary and secondary indicators

Has job approval to conduct functional assessments for Depressional Wetlands to determine mitigation requirements and to determine if ME applies using the model's decision matrix	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Depressional Functional Assessment Model; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)
	3	Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Depressional Functional Assessment Model; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)

Has job approval to conduct functional assessments for Riverine Wetlands to determine mitigation requirements and to determine if ME applies using the model's decision matrix	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Riverine Functional Assessment model and Riverine Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)
	3	Demonstrated proficiency with a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Riverine Functional Assessment model and Riverine Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)

Has job approval to conduct functional assessment for Slope Wetlands to determine mitigation requirements and to determine if ME applies using the model's decision matrix	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Slope Wetland Functional Assessment model and Slope Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)
	3	Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Slope Wetland Functional Assessment model and Slope Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)

Approval levels:	Level	Training Required
<p>Has job approval to conduct functional assessment for Mineral Soil Flats Wetlands to determine mitigation requirements and to determine if ME applies using the model's decision matrix</p>	2	<p>On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Mineral Soil Flats Wetland Functional Assessment model and Mineral Soil Flats Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)</p>
	3	<p>Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Mineral Soil Flats Wetland Functional Assessment model and Mineral Soil Flats Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)</p>
	2	<p>On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Organic Soil Flats Wetland Functional Assessment model and Organic Soil Flats Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)</p>
<p>Has job approval to conduct functional assessment for Organic Soil Flats Wetlands to determine mitigation requirements and to determine if ME applies using the model's decision matrix</p>	2	<p>On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Estuarine Fringe Wetland Functional Assessment model and Estuarine Fringe Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)</p>
	3	<p>Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Estuarine Fringe Wetland Functional Assessment model and Organic Soil Flats Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)</p>
	2	<p>On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Estuarine Fringe Wetland Functional Assessment model and Estuarine Fringe Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)</p>
<p>Has job approval to conduct functional assessment for Estuarine Fringe Wetlands to determine mitigation requirements and to determine if ME applies using the model's decision matrix</p>	3	<p>Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Estuarine Fringe Wetland Functional Assessment model and Estuarine Fringe Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)</p>
	2	<p>On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Lacustrine Fringe Wetland Functional Assessment model and Lacustrine Fringe Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)</p>
	3	<p>Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on Lacustrine Fringe Wetland Functional Assessment model and Lacustrine Fringe Wetland Decision Worksheets; NFSAM 515 – Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption)</p>
<p>Has job approval to perform Scope and Effect analysis for wetland determinations.</p>	2	<p>On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert to complete a scope and effect including NFSAM 516 (Wetland Functional Assessment Scope and Effect Determinations); Chapter 14 EFH Water Management (Drainage) and Chapter 19 EFH Hydrology Tools for Wetland Determination. Optional - Hydrology Tools for Wetland Determination NRCS-NEDC Course #000025</p>

Approval Levels:	Level	Training Required
Has job approval to develop and approve Minimal Effect Agreements without conditions if Functional Assessment Model determines action to be minimal	3	Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert to complete a scope and effect including NFSAM 516 (Wetland Functional Assessment Scope and Effect Determinations); Chapter 14 EFH Water Management (Drainage) and Chapter 19 EFH Hydrology Tools for Wetland Determination. Optional - Hydrology Tools for Wetland Determination NRCS-NEDC Course #000025
	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on NFSAM Part 515 - Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption); Appropriate FA model(s) and Worksheet(s); training on developing and writing ME agreements led by designated SO personnel
	3	Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on NFSAM Part 515 - Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption); Appropriate FA model(s) and Worksheet(s); training on developing and writing ME agreements led by designated SO personnel
Has job approval to approve Minimal Effect Agreements with Conditions	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on NFSAM Part 515 - Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption); and 7 CFR Part 512
	3	Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on NFSAM Part 515 - Part A (Minimal Effects Exemption); and 7 CFR Part 512
	2	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on NFSAM Part 515 - Part B (Mitigation Exemption); training on developing mitigation alternatives and writing Mitigation Agreements led by designated SO personnel
Has job approval to develop Mitigation Plans and Mitigation agreements.	2	Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on NFSAM Part 515 - Part B (Mitigation Exemption); training on developing mitigation alternatives and writing Mitigation Agreements led by designated SO personnel
	3	On-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on NFSAM Part 515 - Part B (Mitigation Exemption); 7 CFR Part 512; appropriate FA models
	2	Demonstrated proficiency including a minimum of 2 years of on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on NFSAM Part 515 - Part B (Mitigation Exemption); 7 CFR Part 512; appropriate FA models
Violation/Appeals		on-the-job training with a Level 3 Agency Expert on basic knowledge of policy and procedure and identification of potential violations for the purpose of reviewing adverse technical determinations prior to issuance of the Final Technical determination and to assist in the preparation of administrative case files prior to appeal

Approval levels:	Level	Training Required
	3	Duties associated with FSA COC and NAD Appeal completed by the State Biologist or as identified by the State Conservationist