

Indiana FIELD OFFICE TECHNICAL GUIDE

Section III - Resource Management Systems and Quality Criteria

Quality Criteria - Explanation

Quality Criteria is a quantitative or qualitative statement of treatment level required to achieve a Resource Management System (RMS) for an identified resource considerations for a particular land area. It is established in accordance with local, state, and federal programs and regulations in consideration of ecological, economic, and social effects.

Quality Criteria establishes the minimum treatment level necessary to adequately address the natural resource concerns and human considerations that are identified during the planning process for the development of a Resource Management System (RMS). The RMS criteria are met when treatment has been planned that, when applied, will resolve all of the identified resource problems according to the Quality Criteria. The RMS will be considered applied when all of the conservation practices that make up the system have been installed, implemented or applied according to Practice Standards and Specifications in FOTG Section IV.

The planning process is progressive when a client is ready, willing, and able to make and implement some, but not all, of the decisions necessary to achieve an RMS level of management. When this occurs, and the client shows interest, planning and implementation should continue on a progressive basis following the planning process. Future assistance will be directed toward planning at an RMS level on the entire planning unit. The rate of progress depends on the client's objectives and ability to make and implement conservation decisions, based on the resource, economic, social, and policy issues the client is dealing with.

In some instances, individual decisionmaker action cannot solve an existing conservation problem in accordance with these criteria. In these instances, an opportunity exists for group planning, project measures or multi-program activities to meet the respective quality criteria. In cases where the decisionmaker cannot solve the problem as an individual, the criteria will be met when the land under the control of the decision maker does not adversely contribute to the problem.

The use and implementation of these criteria will be consistent with federal, tribal, state and local laws and regulations.

In instances where management of water is restricted because of policy and laws, such as those pertaining to wetlands, the criteria will be met if policy and laws are followed.

Quality criteria have been developed for most of the resource problems encountered during resource investigations.