



Helping People Help the Land

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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**TECHNICAL GUIDE
NOTICE #205 (electronic)**

Purpose: To transmit information regarding the electronic NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG).

Effective Date: This notice is effective upon receipt.

Notice of Changes:

SECTION I: Laws

Regulations with Potential Impact on Agriculture

A web link to regulations with potential impact on agriculture has been established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The web link has been included in the eFOTG in the law folder.

Technical questions pertaining to the above should be directed to Vicki Anderson, State Resource Conservationist, at (517) 324-5158.

SECTION II: Natural Resources Information

Michigan Native Plant Producers

A list of Michigan Native Plant Producers has been included in the eFOTG.

Prohibited and Restricted Weeds

A web link to the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) list of prohibited and restricted weeds has been established in the eFOTG.

Technical questions pertaining to the above should be directed to Jerry Grigar, State Agronomist, at (517) 324-5250.

DIST: All Holders of the Field Office Technical Guide

SECTION IV: Technical Tools

Field Assessment Tools

A model to determine the Phosphorus Index has been included in the Nutrient Management technical tools.

Overview

The Michigan Phosphorus Index (PI) is a field assessment tool. The software includes a one page Excel spreadsheet. The PI includes a numeric evaluation of five transport and four source components. Planners will assign numeric values for each component based upon a site visit and landowner inventory. The numeric sum is listed when the PI is completed; the lower the score the less likely the environmental risk of phosphorus transport to surface water. Planners will assess baseline conditions, and then work with the landowner by discussing conservation practices and/or management practices that will lower the PI score. For Version 1.0, a numeric score of 17 or below is acceptable. Scores of 18 or greater are unacceptable but can be mitigated by the landowner.

Purpose

The Michigan PI provides landowners with a baseline evaluation of the environmental risk of phosphorus transport into surface water. The adoption of additional conservation practices with a change in management by the landowner so this risk is reduced is the objective of this assessment tool.

Training

Training has been listed in the Michigan NRCS Course Catalog for FY08. The Course Coordinator is Dr. Michael Gangwer, Nutrient Management Specialist. The training course is 4 hours: 2 hours of classroom and 2 hours of field exercise. The target audience is: Conservation Planners, including NMP and CNMP.

Expected Outcomes

Course participants will know the basis for each of the PI components, how to evaluate them on a field basis, and have the skills to provide the landowner the options necessary to reduce the PI score. For example, why the installation of a conservation buffer adjacent to surface water (ditch, creek, drain), or the shift in manure application to just prior to incorporation from a fall application and thus surface exposure for the winter period can reduce the PI score. Course participants will have a greater understanding of the systems or holistic approach at field based planning, as the integration of dissimilar components are used in one model.

Technical questions pertaining to the above should be directed to Michael Gangwer, Nutrient Management Specialist, at (517) 324-5167.

Questions regarding eFOTG content management should be directed to Gary Rinkenberger, Resource Conservationist, at (517) 324-5266.



GARRY LEE
State Conservationist