# Explanation Sheet

**RESOURCE CONCERNS & PLANNING CRITERIA FOR CONSERVATION PLANNING**

**10/1/2012**

| Resource Concern - Cause | Description of Concern | Land Use | Planning Criteria | | Measurement & Assessment Tools |
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| A resource concern (RC) is an expected degradation of the soil, water, air, plant, or animal resource base to an extent that the sustainability or intended use of the resource is impaired. Because NRCS quantifies or describes resource concerns as part of a comprehensive conservation planning process that includes client objectives, human and energy resources are considered components of the resource base.<br><br>The "Cause" is the specific reason or threat to the resource that results in the resource concern. | | * Required Assessment | A planning criterion is a quantitative or qualitative method to assess the existing condition of the natural resources on a site to determine whether additional treatment is needed to address a specific potential resource concern.<br>**Planning Consideration**<br>A planning consideration is a description of potential actions or activities that should be considered to help address an identified resource concern and/or to address unintended consequences of an action. Planning considerations are identified for resource concerns when it is not appropriate or technologically feasible to identify specific criteria or a threshold for treatment. | | Description of the technology or process for determining if assessment criteria are met. |
| | | | ***Screening Level***<br>Screening level criteria are defined, when appropriate, to identify sites with conditions that have little or no probability of needing additional treatment to address the specific resource concern. If the site meets the screening level criteria, then no other assessment is needed to document that planning criteria are met on this site.<br><br>States can delete or edit nationally identified screening criteria to address localized conditions. | ***Basic Assessment Level***<br>Basic assessment level criteria are used when a site does not meet screening level criteria, or when no screening level criteria are defined. Assessment levels are also used when formulating and evaluating alternatives.<br><br>National criteria establish the minimum for all sites.<br><br>States may add state-specific criteria to address local conditions. | |

# Air

**AIR**

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| **- 28 AIR QUALITY IMPACTS - Emissions of Particulate Matter - PM - and PM Precursors** | Direct emissions of particulate matter - dust and smoke -, as well as the formation of fine particulate matter in the atmosphere from other agricultural emissions - ammonia, NOx, and VOCs - cause multiple environmental impacts, such as:<br>- The unintended movement of particulate matter - typically dust or smoke - results in safety or nuisance visibility restriction<br>- The unintended movement of particulate matter and/or chemical droplets results in unwanted deposits on surfaces<br>- Increased atmospheric concentrations of particulate matter can impact human and animal health and degrade regional visibility | • Crop<br>• Pasture<br>• Range<br>• Forest<br>• Other Rural Land<br>• Associated Ag Land<br>• Designated Protected Areas<br>• Developed Land<br>• Farmsteads | Activities are not present that contribute to agricultural source PM or PM precursor emissions<br>PM Producing Activities:<br>• Prescribed Burn is conducted<br>• Travel ways are unpaved or untreated with binding agents<br>• Engines (combustion source)<br>• Tillage<br>• Pesticides are applied<br>• Fertilization (manure /commercial)<br>• CAFO/manure management)<br><br>**AND**<br><br>Episodes or complaints of emissions of PM (dust, smoke, exhaust, etc.), or chemical drift have not occurred | PM and PM Precursor emissions are managed to meet client objectives | Client input / planner observation |

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| **- 29**<br>**AIR QUALITY IMPACTS - Emissions of Greenhouse Gases - GHGs -** | Emissions increase atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases. | • All | Activities are not present that produce GHGs emissions<br>GHG Producing Activities:<br>• Fertilization (manure/commercial)<br>• CAFO/manure management<br>• Engines (combustion source)<br>• Tillage<br>**AND**<br>GHGs are not regulated in this planning area | Greenhouse gas emissions are managed to meet client objectives | Client input / planner observation |
| **- 30**<br>**AIR QUALITY IMPACTS - Emissions of Ozone Precursors** | Emissions of ozone precursors - NOx and VOCs - resulting in formation of ground-level ozone that cause negative impacts to plants and animals. | • All | Operations are not present that produce ozone or precursor emissions<br>Ozone Producing Activities:<br>• Engines (combustion source)<br>• Pesticide application<br>• Burning<br>• CAFO/manure management<br>• Fertilization (manure /commercial<br>) | Ozone precursor emissions are managed to meet client objectives | Client input / planner observation |
| **- 31**<br>**AIR QUALITY IMPACTS - Objectionable odors** | Emissions of odorous compounds - VOCs, ammonia and odorous sulfur compounds - cause nuisance conditions | • Crop<br>• Pasture<br>• Farmsteads<br>• Other Rural Land | Activities are not present that contribute to nuisance air quality conditions<br>Nuisance Producing Activities:<br>• Pesticide application<br>• CAFO / manure management<br>• Composting is conducted<br>**AND**<br>Odor sources are not regulated in this planning area<br>**AND**<br>Episodes or complaints of emissions of PM (dust, smoke, exhaust, etc.), or chemical drift have not occurred | Odors are managed to meet client objectives | Client input / planner observation |