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
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. 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. **Planning Consideration** 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 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. States can delete or edit nationally identified screening criteria to address localized conditions.	***Basic Assessment Level*** 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. National criteria establish the minimum for all sites. States may add state-specific criteria to address local conditions.	

Energy

ENERGY

- 26 - INEFFICIENT ENERGY USE – Equipment and facilities	Inefficient use of energy in the Farm Operation increases dependence on non-renewable energy sources that can be addressed through improved energy efficiency and the use of on-farm renewable energy sources. As an example, this concern addresses inefficient energy use in pumping plants, on-farm processing, drying and storage.	• All	Client is not interested in improving equipment and facilities energy efficiency	A USDA approved energy audit been implemented that address equipment and facilities to meet client objectives **OR** On-farm renewable energy and/or energy conserving practices have been implemented to meet client objectives	Client input / planner observation USDA approved Energy Audit NRCS Energy Estimator
- 27 - INEFFICIENT ENERGY USE – Farming/ranching practices and field operations	Inefficient use of energy in field operations increases dependence on non-renewable energy sources that can be addressed through improved efficiency and the use of on-farm renewable energy sources.	• K - All	Client is not interested in improving energy use in farm and ranch field operations	A USDA approved energy audit been implemented that address field operations to meet client objectives **OR** On-farm renewable energy and/or energy conserving practices have been implemented to meet client objectives	Client input / planner observation USDA approved Energy Audit NRCS Energy Estimator Conservation on the Farm Checklist