

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Guidance documents identify typical Conservation Management Systems (CMS) (groups of conservation practices) that address typical resource concerns that are associated with a specific land use in a given resource setting. Benchmark conditions represent existing conditions. A minimum of two CMS options will be developed for each benchmark condition. Guidance documents will be shared with all adjacent NRD's.

Major items used for developing guidance documents are:

- soil characteristics
- landuse
- resource concerns, problems, and opportunities

Guidance documents can be developed for programs such as conservation compliance, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), etc., but must include documentation required for the program, i.e., erosion documentation for compliance. Guidance documents developed that are either Resource Management Systems (RMS) or Acceptable Management Systems (AMS) must meet established quality criteria in Section III of the Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG). If a system is developed based on local quality criteria and doesn't meet the requirements for a RMS, this is considered an AMS and must be approved by the State Conservationist.

After completion, the guidance document and associated information will be filed by landuse in Section III, an electronic copy shall be sent to the State Resource Conservationist as well. BCS and ACS guidance documents will be filed behind the tab for Legislated Programs in the Guidance Document Section, Section III of the FOTG. Guidance documents will be used to relay information to clients and conservation planners that encounter similar situations.

Site specific practice effects worksheets, appropriate job sheets/worksheets to document resource protection or other information should be attached in order to provide background information and document environmental effects.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS THAT DETAIL BENCHMARK CONDITIONS AND PLANNED TREATMENT MEASURES/PRACTICES

The base document needed to develop a guidance document will be the Conservation Management System-Guidance Document worksheet. A template of this document is filed directly behind this document. Example Guidance Documents are filed by landuse (Seven examples — one rangeland example and six cropland examples). Guidance documents developed locally will be filed in Section III by landuse.

Directions for completion Conservation Management System-Guidance Document worksheet:

Location (MLRA and NRD): List the MLRA(s) and NRD(s) that are pertinent, field offices and HUA's or other appropriate location information can also be shown.

Resource Setting: Describe the most pertinent information about the resource setting, including but not limited to: landuse, climate information, and pertinent soil, water, air, plant, animal, and human settings.

Management System: Describe the management system that is planned (for CMS options). This will include all pertinent management information and other conservation practices.

Benchmark Resource Problems/Concerns: Describe existing benchmark problems/concerns (use appropriate resource concerns in Section III, Table 1 "Quality Criteria" as a starting point). Include human concerns and objectives including cultural, social, economic, and resource opportunities.

Management Actions/Results of Management Actions: Describe actions (management) and the result of the action (be specific). Include positive and negative results from the action. Job sheets or other documentation may need to be attached to document results (effects) i.e., erosion calculations, Animal Unit Month (AUM) balances, etc.

Planned Practices: List practices that will typically be planned/applied for the setting

Quality Criteria Documentation: List resource concerns from Table 1 "Quality Criteria in Section III of the FOTG and/or Exhibit 1 "Checklist of Resource Problems" that will typically be planned/applied

DEFINITION OF RATINGS USED ON SITE SPECIFIC PRACTICE PHYSICAL EFFECTS WORKSHEET

A blank Practice Effects worksheet (template) is filed behind this document. The following guidance will be utilized when utilizing this worksheet. (Refer to Section V, Conservation Practice Physical Effects (CPPE) for more information on practice effects for soil, water, air, plant, and animal resource concerns)

FACILITATING (Fac): Practice facilitates planned system

NEGLIGIBLE (Negl): The effect of the practice on the problem of concern is insignificant.

SLIGHT (+ OR -): The practice has a slight measurable* effect (positive or negative) on the resource concern, but not enough effect to influence the selection of the practice.

MODERATE (++ OR--): The practice has a measurable* effect (positive or negative) on the resource concern, which would have an influence on selection of the practice.

SIGNIFICANT (+++ OR ---): The practice has a significant measurable* effect (positive or negative) on the resource concern and would have a major influence on the selection of the practice.

- * Measurable can mean:
- 1) Measured on site
 - 2) Model, Index or other tool(Example - RUSLE)
 - 3) When effects can not be measured or modeled but the effect is visual or is obvious.

Refer to quality criteria in Section III of the FOTG for more information on tools that can be utilized to measure practice effects.

