

### **SECTION III – New Hampshire’s Quality Criteria for Resource Management Systems (RMS) and Human Considerations**

This section of the NHFOTG provides guidance materials for use in the planning process as a conservation planner helps land use managers make conservation decisions.

Quality Criteria (QC) establishes the minimum treatment level necessary to adequately address the resource concerns that are identified during the planning process for 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 according to Conservation Practice Standards in Section IV, NHFOTG.

Resource Management Systems for a unit of land are developed with a client using a planning process to help clients make well informed resource use and treatment decisions. 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 decisionmaker does not adversely contribute to the problem.

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

In these 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.

For an Acceptable Management System (AMS) identified by the State Conservationist appropriate Quality Criteria will be developed, approved and documented in Section III, NHFOTG.

#### **I. Natural Resources**

##### **A. Soil**

1. Erosion
2. Condition
3. Deposition

##### **B. Water**

1. Quantity
2. Quality (Ground)

3. Quality (Surface)
4. Condition

C. Air

1. Quality

D. Plants

1. Suitability
2. Condition

E. Animals

1. Habitat
2. Population

### **Application of RMS Criteria**

Additional considerations useful in the RMS planning process include economic, social or cultural resource factors. The differing economic, social or cultural resource situations of a decisionmaker will determine the type and degree of treatment attained at any point in time. Where an RMS is not attainable at the present time, the progressive planning process (the incremental process of building a plan consistent with the decisionmaker's ability to plan and implement) may be used to ultimately achieve an RMS. The progression on individual planning units is always toward the planning and implementation of an RMS.

The following guidelines should be applied to determine the practical limits of resource planning in formulating RMS.

#### II. Human Considerations

These guidelines are designed as a checklist for planners to consider the human aspects in formulating and evaluating RMS.

##### A. Economics

1. Cost Effectiveness

There is a reasonable relationship between the cost of the system and the changes in resource conditions it brings about.

2. Financial Condition

There is an ability to acquire funds to install and maintain the system over time without destroying the financial viability of the operation.

3. Markets

There are adequate or sufficient management skills, land, materials, and equipment present or obtainable to operate and maintain the system.

4. Input Level

There are adequate or sufficient management skills, land, labor, material and equipment present or obtainable to operate and maintain the system.

5. Base Acreage

Base acreage for USDA programs is adequately maintained.

6. USDA Programs

The system would not preclude a normal degree of participation in USDA programs.

7. Sustainability

There is a reasonable expectation of long-term profitability for the operation as a whole.

B. Social Considerations

1. Public Health and Safety

Local community standards regarding public health and safety are followed.

2. Values

Social, family, religious values, peer pressure, and societal goals are considered.

3. Client Characteristics

Client characteristics, including age, planning horizon, special emphasis groups, and resources limited and otherwise are considered

4. Risk Tolerance/Aversion

The degree of risk is reasonable compared to the alternatives.

5. Tenure

Tenure (owner or renter) or time available (e.g. part-time, absentee) does not affect the ability to install, manage or maintain the system.

## C. Cultural Considerations

### 1. Absence of Presence

Absence of presence of cultural resources must be established. The definition of cultural resources is that used by the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

### 2. Significance

Significance will be determined by qualified, cultural resources personnel according to the National Register of Historic Places criteria.

### 3. Neutral or Positive Effects

The system can be applied to an area containing significant cultural resource if it has a neutral or positive effect on that resource.

### 4. Negative Effects/Mitigation

Consulting parties as defined in GM 420, Part 401, agree that a system with negative effects on the cultural resources can still be applied if mitigation occurs to lessen those negative effects.