

INTRODUCTION

SECTION V –A – UNDERSTANDING THE CONSERVATION EFFECTS PROCESS

INTRODUCTION CPPE

Planning the soil, water, air, plant and animal resources and their interrelationships has increased the complexity of assisting decisionmakers. NRCS can no longer provide alternatives and assistance that address individual problems without considering the efforts on all five resources. Our involvement with water quality has brought this reality to the surface, as the public's concern for the environment has grown.

As a technical agency, NRCS must constantly strive to improve methods to evaluate the potential effects of conservation practices on the resources when providing technical assistance. It is necessary to determine the physical effects relevant to each resource during the planning process. Because a conservation practice has a positive effort on one resource concern does not necessary mean it will also have a positive effort on other resources.

EFFECTS CONCEPT

The conservationist needs to recognize the effort of applying conservation practices in order to select combinations of practices that solve the identified or potential concerns without creating news problems. The effects concept is applicable for formulation of alternatives for specific fields, Conservation Treatment Units (CTUs), or other planning areas. It can also be

used to assist in explaining resource problems, and display treatment options. (The entire effects process will not be needed when working with each decisionmaker. Only unique or complex situations would warrant documentation of the complete effects concept).

WHAT IS CPPE?

The Conservation Practice Physical Effects (CPPE) detail in subjective language the physical effects that conservation practices have on problems for the five resources. This document is to be filed in Section V-A-1 and becomes the foundation for developing site specific worksheets in Section III. The estimation of physical effects is based on professional experience and available technical information. Each resource may have multiple problems that are represented by one of the various columns in the CPPE worksheet. The effects of practices may be greater if they are associated with a land use change.

The key question that should be asked when reviewing the CPPE is, "If this practice is applied, what effect will it have not only on the identified or potential target resource concerns/ Considerations but also on all the other resource concerns/considerations contained in the column heading?" The Headings in each column of the CPPE briefly describe identified or potential resources concerns/considerations.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF CPPE?

The primary purpose of CPPE is to document the physical effects of conservation practices on resource problems.

Also, the purpose of CPPE is to emphasize to conservation planners:

- A. The realization that resources are Interrelated and the treatment of one resource also affects other resources;
- B. The importance of formulating a Conservation Plan that:
 - 1. Considers the effects of Practices on individual concerns of each of the five resources;
 - 2. Facilitates combing of practices into potential alternatives, and
 - 3. Helps evaluate the potential options against quality criteria for achieving a RMS.