

HIGHLY ERODIBLE LANDS (HEL) INTERPRETATIONS

The Highly Erodible Soil Map Unit Lists developed as of January 1, 1990 will be used for **ALL** highly erodible land determinations. The USLE factor values developed as of January 1, 1990 will be used to determine the erodibility index (see below). Both the list and the factors values are located in the electronic Field Office Technical Guide, section II (eFOTG).

GENERAL

Highly Erodible Land (HEL) determinations are made to administer provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990, and the Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act of 1996. Person's who comply with the HEL conservation provisions are eligible for USDA benefits, provided they meet specific program requirements.

The National Food Security Act (Part 511) identifies procedures to follow for developing and amending HEL soil map unit lists as well as determining and revising HEL field determinations.

ERODIBILITY INDEX

Highly erodible land (HEL) is land that has an erodibility index of 8 or greater. The Erodibility Index (EI) formula for a soil map unit is as follows:

$$\frac{R \times K \times LS}{T} = EI$$

R = rainfall and runoff

K = susceptibility of the soil to water erosion

LS = combined effects of slope length and steepness

T = tolerable soil loss

Explanations of these factors with tables and maps are available in this section of the Technical Guide.

REFERENCES

- (1) National Food Security Act, 4th Edition, Amendment 1, USDA-NRCS, 2008
<http://policy.nrcs.usda.gov/default.aspx?l=179>
- (2) National Soil Survey Handbook Part 622.05
<http://soils.usda.gov/technical/handbook/contents/part622.html#05>
- (3) Topographic Factor (LS)
<http://efotg.nrcs.usda.gov/references/public/WV/topographicfactorls.pdf>
- (4) Rain and Runoff Factor (R)
<http://efotg.nrcs.usda.gov/references/public/WV/rarf.pdf>
- (5) Erosion Factors
<http://efotg.nrcs.usda.gov/references/public/WV/EROSIONFACTORSFORSOILSINWV.pdf>