

Providing Adequate Documentation: Taking Good Conservation Assistance Notes



REVISED 7/21/2020
GRW



Why Should Adequate Documentation Be Important To You?

- Reduce chances for errors
- Improves communication with the client and contractors
- Provides a timeline of events for potential complaints and appeals
- NRCS is changing the way we do business
 - Compliance teams
 - Area/state support staff
 - Shared employees
 - Details and acting DCs
 - More oversight

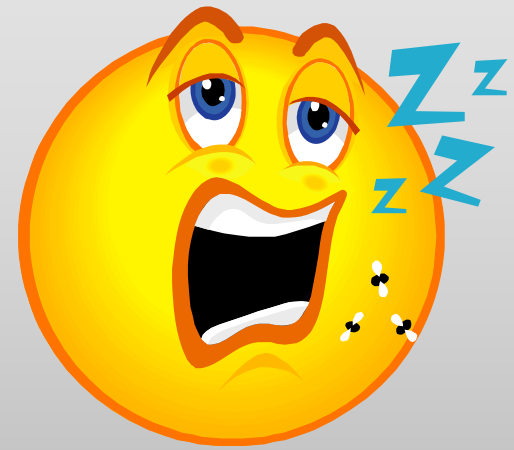
Who is Responsible?

- Everyone!
 - Everyone who works with a participant or on a project is responsible to make sure the complete story is told.



Nine Steps of Conservation Planning

- **Phase I: Collection & Analysis**
 - 1. Identify Problems & Opportunities
 - 2. Determine Objectives
 - 3. Inventory Resources
 - 4. Analyze Resources
- **Phase II: Decision Support**
 - 5. Formulate Alternatives
 - 6. Evaluate Alternatives
 - 7. Make Decisions
- **Phase III: Application and Evaluation**
 - 8. Implement the Plan
 - 9. Evaluate the Plan



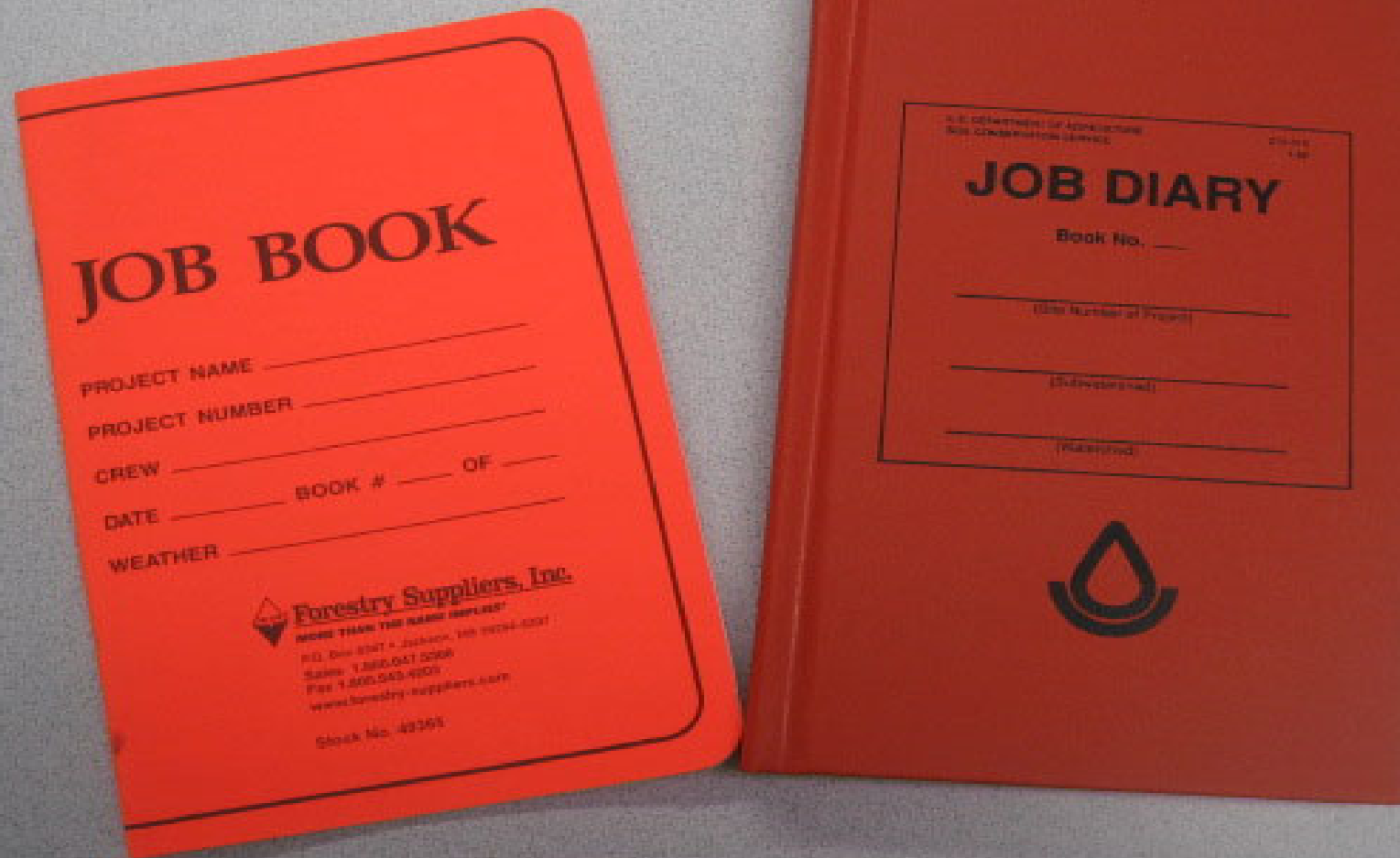
Taking Assistance Notes (NRCS 6 Notes)

- **Notetaking Basics**

- Be clear and to the point
- No opinions or “I think”
- Do not include information that is not relative
- Entries should be in chronological order
- Do not record information for others
- Try not to leave notes open-ended
- Don't wait to write assistance notes
 - Complete them while the information is fresh in your mind

Engineering Job Diaries

- **Job Diaries required by NEM 512.41**
- **Level of detail should be based on the complexity of the work.**
- **Technical assistance notes should reference the existence of the job diary and photographic documentation**
- **Documentation of daily project activities is an essential part of the QA inspector's role**



Job Diary Examples can be found in
Part 645 National Engineering Handbook –
Construction Inspection

JOB DIARY ASSISTANCE NOTES

LOCATION OF UNIT

NOTES OF SIGNIFICANT ASSISTANCE PROVIDED, ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED, DECISIONS REACHED, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS OR COMPONENT PRACTICES INSTALLED, AND FOLLOW UP PROVIDED, RECORDED CHRONOLOGICALLY BELOW AND ON ADDITIONAL PAGES TO PROVIDE A HISTORY OF IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES AND ANY DESIGN MODIFICATIONS.

[illegible]

Similarities of Job Diary and Technical Assistance Notes

- **Chronological**
- **Factual**
- **Records work and activities on real time basis**
- **No opinions, hearsay, gossip, defamatory comments, or information not related to the job**

Items to Document

- Pre-construction conference details
- Description of work being done
(equipment, materials, progress made)
- Problems encountered and action taken to correct
- Conversations with contractor and landowner
- Reference to testing with notation of results
- Site conditions, especially unexpected ones
- Detailed record of any rejected work or materials
- Equipment record
- Quantities completed

Job Diary OR 6 notes????

Notes on job investigation and resource concern ID	6 Notes
References to permits applied for or received	6 Notes
Details of pre-construction meeting	Job Diary
Details of pipe delivered: ASTM, diameter, length	Job Diary
Construction started 6/1/2020, see job diary for details	6 Notes
A list of equipment on site	Job Diary
Construction problems needing a design change or contract modification	BOTH

Additional Documentation

- E-mail and IM correspondence
 - To and/or from producer or contractor
 - e.g. Regarding practice completion, time-lines, etc.
 - To/from area staff
 - Approved design changes
 - Approvals to add funds / modifications
 - Any interpretation of policy directly related to the project

Anyone working with the conservation plan or contract file should be able to follow progress of the implementation through the 6-note documentation.

Summary

- Good 6-notes will tell the history of the land, contract, etc.. and allow for anyone in the office or outside of that office to be able to pick up the file and to know what was done and why.
- It should include ALL interactions and be written in an unbiased manner that is free from opinions.
- The wording should be professional and written in a manner that is understandable and to the point.