



USDA NRCS Caribbean Area Puerto Rico State Technical Committee Meeting (STCM)

Agenda

DATE: September 11, 2024

TIME: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

LOCATION: Salón Virtual - Colegio de Agrónomos de Puerto Rico ([Link](#))

VIRTUAL OPTION: [Join meeting](#) / Meeting ID: 249 597 279 420 / Passcode: mHDaPF

PHONE: 1-202-650-0123 / Phone conference ID: 992 127 093#

Purpose: In accordance with 7 CFR Part 610, Subpart C, NRCS has established a technical committee in each state to assist in making recommendations relating to the implementation and technical aspects of natural resource conservation activities and programs.

Meeting Facilitator: Némesis Ortiz Declet

Invitees: Agricultural producers, owners and operators of nonindustrial private forest land, and other professionals who represent a variety of interests and disciplines in the soil, water, wetlands, plant, and wildlife sciences.

Policy: Title 440 – [Programs Manuals Part 501 - USDA Conservation Program Delivery Subpart C - State Technical Committees](#)

1. **Director's Welcome – Frank Velazquez**
2. **Roll Call – Némesis Ortiz Declet**
3. **Introduction to STCM – Frank Velazquez**
4. **Open Business – Frank Velazquez**
 - a) NRCS Financial Assistance Recap – Frank Velazquez
 - b) NRCS & Puerto Rico Conservation Districts Association Cooperative Agreement – Sheila Hernández
 - c) NRCS Engineering Projects updates – Yilia Baucage Bou
 - d) Equity Subcommittee updates – Némesis Ortiz Declet
 - e) Technical Service Providers Subcommittee updates – Miguel Oliveras
 - f) Wildlife, Wetlands & Forests Subcommittee updates – Iván Llerandi
 - g) Caribbean Geographic Area Rate Cap (GARC) for Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE) – Javier Cruz / Open Discussion

Responsibilities of State Technical Committees

- A. Provide information, analysis, and recommendations to USDA on conservation priorities and criteria for conservation activities and programs, including application and funding criteria, recommended practices, and program payment percentages.
- B. Identify emerging natural resource concerns and program needs.
- C. Recommend conservation practice standards and specifications.
- D. Recommend State and national program policy based on resource data.
- E. Review activities of the local working groups to ensure State priorities are being addressed locally.
- F. Make recommendations to the State Conservationist on requests and recommendations from local working groups.
- G. Assist NRCS with public outreach and information efforts and identify educational and producers' training needs.

5. New Business – *Némesis Ortiz Declét*

- a) P.R. Department of Natural and Environmental Resources & Environmental Quality Board
– Priority watersheds according to environmental quality – *Ángel Meléndez*
- b) P.R. Department of Agriculture – Identifying high priority production areas &
collaboration opportunities – *Agro. Irvine Rodriguez*
- c) Agricultural Cooperative Extension – Identifying high priority production areas &
collaboration opportunities – *José Torres Castillo*
- d) U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
 - National Wildlife Refuges System updates – *Silmarie Padrón*
 - Caribbean Ecological Sciences Field Office updates – *Lourdes Mena*
- e) State Agencies Identified Priorities for 2025 – *Open Discussion*

6. Adjournment