

Instructions for Completing the Environmental Evaluation Worksheet (Form NRCS-CPA-52)

INTRODUCTION

The Environmental Evaluation (EE) is “the part of planning that inventories and estimates the potential effects on the human environment of alternative solutions to resource problems” (GM 190 Part 410). This form provides for the documentation of that part of the planning process, and was designed to assist the conservation planner with compliance requirements for applicable Federal laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and policy. The form also provides a framework for documenting compliance with applicable State, Tribal and local requirements.

NRCS is required to conduct an EE for all planning to determine if there is a need for an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EE process results in a "Finding" or conclusion (see guidance for "Q" below) that, either further NEPA analysis is required (EA or EIS) or that no EA or EIS is required because: 1) There is no federal action; 2) The action is categorically excluded; or 3) There is an existing NRCS or NRCS-adopted NEPA document that has sufficiently analyzed the effects of this action. The EE applies to all assistance provided by NRCS (GM 190, Part 410). The NRCS-CPA-52 form is used by NRCS to document the results of the evaluation and show compliance with USDA regulations implementing NEPA at 7 CFR 1b.

A copy of the NRCS-CPA-52, including supporting documentation such as Special Environmental Concerns Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheets, must be included in the administrative file. **Attach additional documents as required or necessary to meet environmental evaluation requirements.**

COMPLETING THE NRCS-CPA-52

A. Client Name

B. Conservation Plan ID # (as applicable)

Program Authority (optional): Identifying the program authority (EQIP, CSP, etc.) can help lead the planner to the appropriate NRCS NEPA document the planner may tie to as addressed later in section "R. Rationale Supporting the Finding".

C. Identification #: Record any other relevant client identification # (farm, tract, field #, etc.).

D. Client's Objective(s) (purpose): (Record results from planning step 2.) Briefly summarize the client's stated objective(s) [synonymous to "Purpose" under NEPA]. Refer to Step 2 of the NRCS planning process found in the NPPH, Part 600.22 for help, if needed. "Purpose" refers to a goal or desired future condition being pursued in the process of meeting the "Need", such as keeping the operation economically viable or meeting TMDL requirements. Clearly articulated purposes become the decision factors used to decide between the action alternatives.

E. Need for Action: (Record results from planning step 1.) Describe the underlying need being met. Why is the action being proposed? What is the root cause of the existing problem or opportunity? The underlying need will define and shape the alternatives and potentially justify the expenditure of federal funds; therefore it is important to accurately articulate the need(s) based on the identified resource concerns and the client objectives. All alternatives should clearly address an underlying need(s). In conservation planning, a "need" is usually a required improvement in the condition of a natural resource(s), such as when the quality of runoff water from a farm does not meet State standards, or inadequate forage supply and/or grazing strategies are resulting in poor livestock performance. Use information from Steps 3 and 4 of the Conservation Planning Process to help define the need. Identify here which Resource Concerns need to be addressed in the plan.

F. Resource Concerns and Existing / Benchmark Conditions:

Resource Concerns (Record results from planning steps 3 and 4.) Record the resource concerns that have been identified through the scoping and Resources Inventory and Analysis processes. Use the Resource Concern List and Planning Criteria Section 3 to identify Resource Concerns present and use approved Measurement and Assessment Tools to compare the potential environmental effects of alternatives. Include resource concerns that apply, adding additional sheets as necessary.

Documenting Existing/Benchmark Conditions (Record results from planning step 4.) Analyze the existing (benchmark) conditions for each relevant concern. Record the amount, kind, status, location and method of measurement for each identified concern. For example, if soil erosion were identified as a resource concern, the recorded benchmark might be "64 ac sheet & rill @ 6T/ac/yr, field 3, RUSLE 2." or "See CART-Assessment results". The benchmark is the baseline from which the change in resource condition under the no action and other alternatives is measured. Without it, there is no context for the degree of change.

Human - Below are some examples for what to consider when addressing Human Economic and Social Considerations.

Land use:

- Is the present land use suitable for the proposed alternative?
- Will land use change after practice(s) installation?
- How will a change affect the operation? (e.g., Feed and Forage Balance Sheet)
- Will the action affect resources on which people depend for subsistence, employment or recreation?
- Will land be taken in or out of production?

Capital:

- Does the producer have the funds or ability to obtain the funds needed to implement the proposed alternative?
- What are the impacts of the cost of the initial investment for this alternative?
- What are the impacts of any additional annual costs for Operation and Maintenance?
- What possible impact does implementing this alternative have on the client's future eligibility for farm programs?

Labor:

- Does the client understand the amount and kind of labor needed to implement, operate and maintain the proposed practice(s)?
- Does the client have the skills and time to carry out the conservation practice(s) or will they have to hire someone?

Management level:

- Does the client understand the inputs needed to manage the practice(s) and the client's responsibility in obtaining these inputs?
- Does the client understand their responsibility to maintain practice(s) as planned and implemented?
- Is it necessary for the client to obtain additional education, or hire a technical consultant, to operate and/or maintain the practice(s)?

Profitability:

- Profitability describes the relative benefits and costs of the farm or ranch operation, and is often measured in dollars. An activity is profitable if the benefits are greater than the costs.
- Is the proposed alternative needed and feasible?
- Do the benefits of improving the current operation outweigh the installation and maintenance costs (positive benefit/cost ratio)?
- Is there a reasonable expectation of long-term profitability/benefits for the operation if implemented?
- Will crop, livestock, or wildlife yield increase/decrease?

Risk:

- What is the potential for monetary loss, physical injury, or damage to resources or the environment?
- Will the proposed alternative aid/risk client participation in USDA programs?
- Is there flexibility in modifying the conservation plan at a future date?
- What issues are involved with the timing of installation and maintenance?
- What are the cash flow requirements of this alternative?
- What, if any, are the hazards involved?

Public Health and Safety:

- What effect (both positive or negative) will the action have on the client and community with regard to public health and safety?
- Are there any hazards associated with no action or any of the alternatives about which the client should be informed?

Tribal:

Tribal is applicable to Federally recognized Indian Tribes, American Indian Tribal citizens and Alaska Natives, and the Native Hawai'ian Community.

- Are there relevant Tribal that may have an influence on the proposed alternatives, and need to be informed (e.g. Tribal Councils, Department Heads, spiritual leaders, and/or other impacted groups)?
- Are there established Tribal norms that are influencing or impacting the selection of alternatives?
- What Tribal local ecological knowledge (e.g. species of concern, areawide plans, watershed
- Are there Tribal practices/protocols that affect the type, size, or function of equipment and materials
- Are there Tribal factors that may influence the timing or duration of conservation practice implementation (e.g. activities practiced seasonally and/or cultural or religious observances or holidays that may impact worker/ contractor availability)?

G. Special Environmental Concerns (Record results from planning steps 3 and 4.)

Under each Special Environmental Concern, document the current status or condition of the concern. Record the amount, kind, status, location, and method of measurement or source of information for each special resource concern. For example, if endangered species habitat is present, under Endangered and Threatened Species, the recorded benchmark condition is "64 ac, I-bat habitat-roosting cover, field 3, FOTG-2." If it is determined that no floodplains exist within the affected planning area, document the fact and cite the source. The benchmark condition would read "not present, FEMA flood map #xxx."

For guidance in addressing special environmental concerns, see NECH Subpart B and the Special Environmental Concern Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheets. Document any additional State and/or local special environmental concerns in "K. Other Agencies and Broad Public Concerns". Attach additional documentation if needed.

H. Alternatives (Record results from Planning step 5.)

Describe Alternatives Briefly summarize the practice/system of practices being proposed. The RFO, at its discretion, may choose to include the No Action Alternative as part of the EE analysis. If the No Action alternative analysis is not provided, insert "N/A" or leave column and corresponding sections blank. [Note: Per Departmental regulations, the No Action analysis is only required for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)]. To the extent possible, the alternatives should also prevent additional problems from occurring and take advantage of available opportunities. *If there are unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of resources, appropriate alternatives that meet the underlying need must be developed.*

Instructions if the "No Action" analysis is included: Provide a brief summary of the activities that would be implemented in the absence of USDA assistance (financial or technical). Unless a change in management direction or intensity will be undertaken, record effects of existing activities. The "No Action" alternative requires the same level of analysis as other alternatives. It should answer the question of what impacts are likely to occur (or what the predicted future condition of the identified resource concerns might be) under the landowner's current and planned management strategies without implementation of a federally assisted

"Alternatives 1,2,etc.": List here the practices or system of practices being proposed for each alternative. Indicate if the alternative meets RMS criteria based on your State's requirements. One or more other alternatives may be evaluated to aid in the decision-making process or at the request of the client. It is beneficial for one alternative to contain the practices that NRCS has determined best address all of the identified resource concerns (RMS alternative) so the client can consider potential future conservation actions. Use additional sheets if necessary.

It is important to quantify to the extent feasible the differences between each alternative, including the "No Action" alternative. See "Helpful Tips" in the NECH, Part 610.67 for guidance on narrowing the scope of your analysis when considering alternatives.

I. Effects of Alternatives (Record results from planning step 6.)

Under "Amount, Status, Description," record the effect of each alternative on the concerns listed, quantifying where possible. *Consider and document the overall reasonably foreseeable short and long term environmental impacts.* If a change to the concern is predicted, then estimate the amount. Professional judgment should be used where CART-Assessment, Planning Criteria, or other tools are not available.

Resource Concerns Use your State's FOTG Section III Planning Criteria to identify the established threshold levels for resource concerns. Professional judgment should be used where CART-Assessment, Planning Criteria or other tools are not available. Place a check in the "NOT meet PC" box for each resource concern to indicate when CART-Assessment or FOTG Section III Planning Criteria will not be met (i.e., where additional measures are needed to meet PC).

Analyze effects based on the combined effect of all practices on the resource concern. For example, if one proposed practice may impact the water quality of an adjacent stream, but another proposed practice such as a buffer may reduce or eliminate the impact, the overall effect is the one that should be recorded here. As mentioned above, one or more "Other Alternative(s)" may be evaluated to aid in the decision-making process or at the request of the client. Use additional sheets if necessary.

If the "No Action" analysis is included: Record the impacts that are likely to occur (or what the predicted future condition of the identified resource concerns might be) under the client's planned management strategies without implementation of a federally assisted action. Address impacts to each identified resource concern, quantifying where possible. If this information is found elsewhere in the conservation plan, simply provide a summary here.

"Alternatives 1,2, etc.": Record the impacts that are likely to occur under each alternative scenario. Document impacts to each identified resource concern, quantifying where possible. If this information is found elsewhere in the conservation plan, simply provide a summary here. Include both short and long-term impacts in the analysis.

Categories of Effects to Consider- There are two categories of effects that must be considered when predicting the overall reasonably foreseeable short and long term environmental impacts of an alternative on resource concerns:

Direct effects are caused by the alternative and occur at the same time and place.

Indirect effects are caused by the alternative and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable (e.g., "downstream" effects).

The NECH, Part 610.70, "Effects Analysis," provides important information on describing effects so that an adequate analysis can be made and appropriate mitigation measures included when the proposed alternative has adverse effects. (See also Section L.)

J. Impacts to Special Environmental Concerns (Record results from planning step 6.)

Briefly describe the status and/or description of effects on all identified Special Environmental Concerns, and include supporting data as needed. Document the degree of change in amount/condition, using the same protocols and units of measure used to determine the benchmark condition. *It is important to consider and document the overall reasonably foreseeable short and long term environmental impacts on these resources. Make an effects determination by selecting the appropriate choice from the dropdown list:*

- No effect
- May affect
- Undetermined. Further analysis required

For T&E, MBTA, or EFH, select the appropriate choice from the dropdown list:

- No effect
- May Affect, NLAA (or as designated by State)
- May Affect, LAA (or as designated by State)
- Undetermined. Further analysis required

Place a check in the "needs further action" box when effects have not been fully determined or when additional procedural action is needed, such as the need for a permit or completing required consultation with regulatory agencies. Where consultation with another federal agency is required (e.g., USFWS or NMFS) to determine potential environmental effects, follow established State protocols or contact the appropriate NRCS State Specialist for guidance. Neither the NEPA Finding in Section "Q" nor practice implementation should occur until all required consultations and coordination with the appropriate agency have been completed and all necessary permits provided. Planning and practice implementation may continue for practices not involved in required consultation/coordination efforts only if they are not connected to, or dependent on, the other action.

Complete applicable Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheets or other state specific documentation as needed and include them in the client's administrative file. If the Special Environmental Concern is not present in the project area then there is no need to attach the Guide Sheet. Completion of Guide Sheets is not mandatory, but appropriate documentation must be provided. Check your own States' guidance for compliance and planning requirements.

- K. Other Agencies and Broad Public Concerns:** List any necessary easements, permissions, or permits (e.g., Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, wetland mitigation easements, state or county permits) required to implement the alternatives. *Remember that identifying needed permits for ALL alternatives may be an important decision criteria between alternatives and should be considered during the planning process.*

Relay public concerns related to land-use, demographics, landscape characteristics, or other Federal, Tribal, State, and local laws/regulations. Document the impacts of each alternative on these issues. Responses will impact the selection of an alternative as well as issues surrounding "significance."

Document contact and communications with USFWS, NOAA-NMFS, Corps, EPA, SWCD's, NRCS State Office, State/Tribal/local environmental agencies, etc., and others consulted, including public participation activities. The NECH provides important information on public participation requirements.

- L. Mitigation:** Include here any mitigation measures that are NOT already incorporated in the alternatives that will offset any adverse impacts. This may include conditions included in required permits. Briefly describe or reference all mitigation measures to be applied for each alternative. Mitigation actions for the preferred (selected) alternative must be included in the conservation plan, designs, and specifications.

Mitigation includes:

- Avoiding the impacts altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.
- Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree of magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment.
- Reducing or eliminating impact over time by preservation/maintenance operations during action life.
- Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

- M. Preferred Alternative:** (Record results from planning step 7.)

Record the alternative to be implemented and indicate why it was chosen. Ultimately, the client will decide what actions will occur on their land, but NRCS funding or assistance may not always be appropriate for that action. For NRCS assistance to proceed, the alternative must clearly address the underlying need(s) as identified in "E". The Objective(s) (Purpose) stated in "D" serves as the decision factors between alternatives.

- N. Context:** Record the context used in the alternatives analysis. Significance varies with the setting of the proposed action. For instance, in the case of a site-specific action, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. Both short- and long-term effects are relevant.

Part "O" is completed by the planner and Parts "P" thru "S" must be completed by the Responsible Federal Official (RFO).

If NRCS is providing planning assistance for another federal agency, then the NRCS planner must sign Section "O" as the planner. The RFO for the lead agency (e.g., FSA for CRP) will complete everything below the planner's signature. For NRCS the State Conservationist is the RFO, but they may delegate that authority to a designated agency representative. Normally, the authority to serve as RFO is delegated to an Area or Field Office employee for farm bill program agreements. Check with your State Office or State Directives if you have questions.

- O. Signature (planner):** The individual completing Parts "A" thru "N" of the NRCS-CPA-52 must sign and date to indicate they have used the best available information. This may or may not be the same person as the agency representative. In cases where the planner is not an NRCS employee, they must sign in the first signature area and then the NRCS will sign in the second signature area to confirm and validate the information as the responsible agency. When NRCS plans on behalf of another agency, NRCS need sign only as the planner and then the lead agency RFO will complete the rest of the NRCS-CPA-52.
- P. Determination of Significance or Extraordinary Circumstances:** NRCS evaluates each action using its list of special environmental concerns along with the significance factors to determine whether an action has extraordinary circumstances. Action(s) that have potential for significant impacts on the human environment cannot be categorically excluded. Thus, in the absence of any extraordinary circumstances the actions can proceed without the preparation of an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS). Where extraordinary circumstances are determined to exist, the categorical exclusion will not apply, unless the proposed action is modified to resolve the extraordinary circumstances.

Categorical Exclusions (CE): Before documenting the use of a categorical exclusion, it is important to read Section 610.46 of the NECH. This section provides a list of all categorical exclusions that apply to actions as well as more detailed considerations and requirements for their use. For an action to be categorically excluded, there must be appropriate documentation on the NRCS-CPA-52 indicating that the proposed action does not meet any of the criteria for "significance," as discussed above. These criteria are also known as "extraordinary circumstances" when discussing categorical exclusions. *If any part of a proposed plan involves actions that are NOT on the list of allowable categorical exclusions, the entire plan is not eligible for a categorical exclusion.*

To complete the determination on the NRCS-CPA-52, check "yes" or "no" for each of the questions. If you are not sure about the answer, contact your State Environmental Liaison for assistance. The NRCS-CPA-52 must provide evidence to conclude that the activity will not result in extraordinary circumstances or significant adverse environmental effects on the quality of the human environment, either individually or in the aggregate. If any of the extraordinary circumstances are found to apply to the proposed action, then you should determine whether the proposal can be modified to mitigate the adverse effects and prevent the extraordinary circumstances. If this can be done and the client agrees to any necessary change(s) in the proposed action to avoid significant adverse impacts, then the proposed action is to be modified and implemented. If the proposed action cannot be modified or the client refuses to accept a proposed change, then Item 5 in Section "Q" must be checked for the NRCS NEPA Compliance Finding to indicate that additional analysis and documentation is needed.

- Q. NEPA Compliance Finding (check one):** This finding will determine the appropriate NEPA action required. Instructions below correspond to the option numbers in Section "Q" of the Form. In Section "R" document the rationale for your Finding.
- 1) Federal actions do NOT include situations in which NRCS (or any other federal agency) provides technical assistance (CTA) only. The agency cannot control what the client ultimately does with that assistance. Non-Federal actions include, but are not limited to:
 - NRCS providing HEL or wetland conservation determinations.
 - NRCS providing technical designs where there is **no** federal financial assistance.
 - NRCS providing planning assistance or other technical assistance and information to individuals, organizations, States, or local governments where there is no federal financial assistance or other control of the decision or action.

- 2) CE actions are a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment; therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required. First determine whether the proposed action is a categorically excluded action as identified in the USDA regulations implementing NEPA. (USDA and NRCS categorical exclusions are listed in the NECH, Part 610.46.) Note that there may be overarching or CE-specific side board(s) that must be met in order to apply a CE. If the proposed action is listed as a CE action, then assess whether there are any applicable extraordinary circumstances that would prevent the action from being eligible as a CE. Check this box only if the action is categorically excluded **AND** there are no EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES associated with the proposed action. (See NECH Exhibit 610.116, "How to Use NRCS's Categorical Exclusions.")
- 3) Check this box if there is an existing NRCS NEPA document that has sufficiently analyzed the action being proposed. A number of NRCS National Programmatic NEPA documents have analyzed effects of many practices planned under nationwide conservation programs. There may also be Regional, State, or areawide Programmatic NEPA documents that can be referred to. For information about "Tiering" to existing NRCS NEPA documents see the NECH Part 610.81.

Keep in mind that Programmatic EA's and EIS's are not site-specific so they do not attempt to describe every possible type of effect resulting from actions that could be taken. Thus, you must use your knowledge of site-specific conditions to decide if additional analysis is needed. Network diagrams illustrating general effects of conservation practices are associated with national or State EA's or EIS's. These diagrams may help in analyzing effects of practices. If the planner believes the site-specific impacts are outside the range of effects described in the programmatic EA or EIS, this box may not be checked.

Copies of NRCS national programmatic NEPA documents may be viewed on NRCS' Environmental Compliance web page.

- 4) It is possible to tier to NEPA documents prepared by other Federal agencies if those documents have been formally adopted by NRCS as outlined in the USDA Regulations and agency directives. NRCS must have prepared and published the agency's own Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for an EA or Record of Decision for an EIS in order for a NEPA document to be "adopted". For information about "Tiering" to NEPA documents see the NECH Section 610.81.
- 5) If 1), 2), 3), or 4) do not apply, the action may cause a significant effect on the quality of the human environment and an EA or EIS may be required. Additional analysis may be required to comply with NEPA. Contact the State Environmental Liaison or equivalent for guidance on completing this analysis and provide them with a copy of the NRCS-CPA-52 and supporting documentation.

R. Rationale Supporting the Finding: Explain the reasons for making the "Finding" in "Q".

If "Q 1)" was selected, explain why the action is NOT a federal action subject to USDA regulations implementing NEPA.

If "Q 2)" was selected, document the categorical exclusion(s) applicable to the entirety of the proposed action and indicate that there are no extraordinary circumstances.

If "Q 3)" was selected, identify any applicable NRCS NEPA document. Record the citation of the NRCS NEPA document you are tiering to.

If "Q 4)" was selected, identify any applicable NRCS NEPA document that was officially adopted from another agency. Record the citation of the NRCS adopted NEPA document you are tiering to.

If "Q 5)" was selected, document your analysis and provide this information (NRCS-CPA-52 and supporting documents) to your State Environmental Liaison or equivalent.

S. Signature of Responsible Federal Official (RFO): The appropriate agency RFO must sign and date. The RFO should wait to make the finding until all consultations are finalized, and permits identified. This signature certifies that the proposed action/plan complies with all NRCS policies implementing NEPA and all other applicable Federal, State, Tribal and local laws/Executive Orders.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service NRCS-CPA-52 01/2026 ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION WORKSHEET		A. Client Name: B. Conservation Plan ID # (as applicable): Program Authority (optional): C. Identification # (farm, tract, field #, etc. as required): 		
D. Client's Objective(s) (purpose):				
E. Need for Action:		H. Alternatives		
		No Action (optional) ✓ if RMS ☐	Alternative 1 ✓ if RMS ☐	Alternative 2 ✓ if RMS ☐
Resource Concerns				
In Section "F" below, analyze, record, and address concerns identified through the Resources Inventory process (see FOTG Section 3 - Resource Concerns List and Planning Criteria for guidance). To integrate CART-Assessment Results into this worksheet, navigate to the "CART-Results" tab or press the designated button ("View CART-Results tab"). Follow the instructions in that page to complete the process.				
F. Resource Concerns and Existing/ Benchmark Conditions (Analyze and record the existing/benchmark conditions for each identified concern)		I. Effects of Alternatives		
		No Action (optional)	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
		Amount, Status, Description (Document overall short- and long-term environmental impacts)	Amount, Status, Description (Document overall short- and long-term environmental impacts)	Amount, Status, Description (Document overall short- and long-term environmental impacts)
		✓ if does NOT meet PC	✓ if does NOT meet PC	✓ if does NOT meet PC
SOIL				
		☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC
		☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC
		☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC
		☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC
		☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC
WATER				
		☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC
		☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC
		☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC
		☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC	☐ NOT meet PC

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				B. Conservation Plan ID # (as applicable):			
				Program Authority (optional):			
F. Resource Concerns and Existing/ Benchmark Conditions (Analyze and record the existing/benchmark conditions for each identified concern)		I. Effects of Alternatives (continued)					
		No Action (optional)		Alternative 1		Alternative 2	
		Amount, Status, Description (Document overall short- and long-term environmental impacts)	✓ if does NOT meet PC	Amount, Status, Description (Document overall short- and long-term environmental impacts)	✓ if does NOT meet PC	Amount, Status, Description (Document overall short- and long-term environmental impacts)	✓ if does NOT meet PC
AIR							
		☐		☐		☐	
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC	
		☐		☐		☐	
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC	
PLANTS							
		☐		☐		☐	
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC	
		☐		☐		☐	
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC	
		☐		☐		☐	
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC	
ANIMALS							
		☐		☐		☐	
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC	
		☐		☐		☐	
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC	
		☐		☐		☐	
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC	
ENERGY							
		☐		☐		☐	
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC	
		☐		☐		☐	
		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC		NOT meet PC	
Human Economic and Social Considerations							
☐ Land Use ☐ Capital ☐ Labor ☐ Management Level ☐ Profitability ☐ Risk ☐ Public Health & Safety ☐ Tribal ☐ Other							

  U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION WORKSHEET		NRCS-CPA-52 01/2026	A. Client Name:			
		B. Conservation Plan ID # (as applicable): Program Authority (optional):				
Special Environmental Concerns: Environmental Laws, Executive Orders, Policies, etc.						
In Section "G" complete and attach Environmental Procedures Guide Sheets for documentation as applicable. Items with a "•" may require a federal permit or consultation/coordination between the lead agency and another government agency. In these cases, effects may need to be determined in consultation with another agency. Attach Guide Sheet(s) and any other applicable documentation, including state specific documentation as required.						
G. Special Environmental Concerns (Document existing/ benchmark conditions)	J. Impacts to Special Environmental Concerns					
	No Action (optional) Document All Impacts (Document overall short- and long-term environmental impacts)	✓ if needs further action	Alternative 1 Document All Impacts (Document overall short- and long-term environmental impacts)	✓ if needs further action	Alternative 2 Document All Impacts (Document overall short- and long-term environmental impacts)	✓ if needs further action
•Clean Air Act Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
•Clean Water Act / Waters of the U.S. Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
•Coastal Zone Management Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
Coral Reefs Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
•Cultural Resources / Historic Properties Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
•Endangered and Threatened Species Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
•Essential Fish Habitat Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
Floodplain Management Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
Invasive Species Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
•Migratory Birds/Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
Natural Areas Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
Prime and Unique Farmlands Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
Riparian Area Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
Scenic Beauty Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
•Wetlands Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐
•Wild and Scenic Rivers Undetermined.Further analysis required		☐		☐		☐

United States Department of Agriculture U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service NRCS-CPA-52 01/2026		A. Client Name:	
ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION WORKSHEET		B. Conservation Plan ID # (as applicable): Program Authority (optional):	

K. Other Agencies and Broad Public Concerns Easements, Permissions, Public Review, or Permits Required and Agencies Consulted.	No Action (optional)	Alternative 1	Alternative 2

L. Mitigation (Record actions to avoid, minimize, and compensate)			

M. Preferred Alternative	√ preferred alternative			
	☐	☐	☐	
	Supporting reason			

N. Context (Record the context of alternatives analysis)
 The significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality.

O. Planner Signature - To the best of my knowledge, the data shown on this form is accurate and complete:
An NRCS Certified Planner employee (Level 3 or above), must sign the second signature line to confirm and validate that the best available information was used to accurately complete the environmental evaluation. Any planner (not an NRCS Certified Planner employee (Level 3 or above)) who contributed or was actively engaged in the completion of this EE will sign and date the first signature line. When the preferred alternative is not a federal action where NRCS has control or responsibility, NRCS will sign only as the certified planner and provide a copy of this form to the lead agency responsible for documenting compliance with NEPA according to their own regulations and procedures.

Signature (Other)	Title	Date
Signature (NRCS Certified Planner)	Title	Date

If preferred alternative is not a federal action where NRCS has control or responsibility and this NRCS-CPA-52 is shared with someone other than the client, then indicate to whom this is being provided.

The following sections are to be completed by the Responsible Federal Official (RFO)

NRCS is the RFO if the action is subject to NRCS control and responsibility (e.g., actions financed, funded, assisted, conducted, regulated, or approved by NRCS). These actions do not include situations in which NRCS is only providing technical assistance because NRCS cannot control what the client ultimately does with that assistance and situations where NRCS is making a technical determination (such as Farm Bill HEL or wetland determinations) not associated with the planning process.

P. Determination of Significance or Extraordinary Circumstances
 To answer the questions below, consider the severity (intensity) of impacts in the contexts identified above. Impacts may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.

If you answer ANY of the below questions "yes" then contact the State Environmental Liaison as there may be extraordinary circumstances and significance issues to consider and a site specific NEPA analysis may be required.

Yes	No	
☐	☐	• 1) Is the preferred alternative expected to cause significant effects on public health or safety?
☐	☐	• 2) Is the preferred alternative expected to significantly affect unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas?
☐	☐	• 3) Are the effects of the preferred alternative on the quality of the human environment likely to be highly controversial?
☐	☐	• 4) Does the preferred alternative have highly uncertain effects or involve unique or unknown risks on the human environment?
☐	☐	• 5) Does the preferred alternative establish a precedent for future actions with significant impacts or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration?
☐	☐	• 6) Is the preferred alternative known or reasonably expected to have potentially significant environment impacts to the quality of the human environment either individually or cumulatively over time?
☐	☐	• 7) Will the preferred alternative likely have a significant adverse effect on ANY of the special environmental concerns? Use the Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheets to assist in this determination. This includes, but is not limited to, concerns such as cultural or historical resources, endangered and threatened species, wetlands, floodplains, coastal zones, coral reefs, essential fish habitat, wild and scenic rivers, clean air, riparian areas, natural areas, and invasive species.
☐	☐	• 8) Will the preferred alternative threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements for the protection of the environment?

United States Department of Agriculture U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service NRCS-CPA-52 01/2026 ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION WORKSHEET		A. Client Name: B. Conservation Plan ID # (as applicable): Program Authority (optional):	
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Q. NEPA Compliance Finding (check one) The preferred alternative:		
		Action required
☐	1) is not a federal action where the agency has control or responsibility.	Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required
☐	2) is a federal action ALL of which is categorically excluded from further environmental analysis AND there are no extraordinary circumstances as identified in Section "P" .	Document in "R.2" below. No additional analysis is required
☐	3) is a federal action that has been sufficiently analyzed in an existing Agency state, regional, or national NEPA document and there are no predicted <u>significant adverse environmental effects</u> or extraordinary circumstances.	Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required.
☐	4) is a federal action that has been sufficiently analyzed in another Federal agency's NEPA document (EA or EIS) that addresses the proposed NRCS action and its' effects <u>and has been formally adopted by NRCS</u> . NRCS is required to prepare and publish its own Finding of No Significant Impact for an EA or Record of Decision for an EIS when adopting another agency's EA or EIS document. (Note: This box is not applicable to FSA)	Contact the State Environmental Compliance Liaison for list of NEPA documents formally adopted and available for tiering. Document in "R.1" below. No additional analysis is required
☐	5) is a federal action that has NOT been sufficiently analyzed or may involve predicted significant adverse environmental effects or extraordinary circumstances and may require an EA or EIS.	Contact the State Environmental Compliance Liaison. Further NEPA analysis required. Explain in Notes Section.

R. Rationale Supporting the Finding	
R.1 Findings Documentation	
R.2 Applicable Categorical Exclusion(s) (more than one may apply) NOTE: Prior to determining a proposed action is categorically excluded under an NRCS CE, the proposed action must also incorporate the applicable NRCS conservation practice standards as found in the Field Office Technical Guide.	

In accordance with USDA regulations and agency policy, I considered the effects of the alternatives on Resource Concerns, Economic and Social Considerations, Special Environmental Concerns, and Extraordinary Circumstances, and have issued the NEPA finding identified above.

S. Signature of Responsible Federal Official:		
_____ Signature	_____ Title	_____ Date

Additional Notes

Substantial Improvement: 40 >

Moderate Improvement: 39 - 20

Slight Improvement: 19 - 0.1

No Improvement: $0 <$



Client Name:
Conservation Plan ID # :
Program Authority :
Identification # :
CART-Assessment ID:

[illegible]

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT AREAS NECH 610.23 Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet		Client/Plan Information:	
Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other			
Description: Coastal zone management areas (CZMAs) are located within or near the officially designated coastal zone of a State, such as 1) coastal waters and adjacent shorelines, including the lands or waters inside and under those zones, and 2) areas that strongly influence adjacent coastal zones of the 35 States that have coastal zone management programs. Federal action(s) must be "consistent" with the goals and objectives of the State's Coastal Zone Management Program (as required by Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act). Refer to NRCS H-190, Part 610 for additional guidance.			
STEP 1. Are Coastal Zone Management Areas (CZMAs) present or relevant to the scope of this analysis? NOTE: "Relevant" means any activity within or outside this SEC that may likely affect any land or water use or natural resource of the coastal zone.			
☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 2. Will any of the alternatives evaluated be consistent with the goals/objectives of the State's CZM Program? NOTE: When applicable, advise client if additional coordination is needed for an alternative's implementation to comply with the CWA.			
☐ Yes If "Yes," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Advise the client to contact the appropriate regulatory agencies with permitting jurisdiction for the site to determine what requirements must be met prior to implementing the proposed action or alternative.			
STEP 3. Effects Determination			
	No Action (optional) 	Alternative 1 	Alternative 2
Notes: 			

CORAL REEFS NECH 610.24		Client/Plan Information:	
Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet			
Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other			
Description: The term Coral Reefs is defined as the species, habitats, and other natural resources associated with coral reefs in all maritime areas and zones subject to the jurisdiction or control of the United States e.g., Federal, State, territorial, or commonwealth waters), including reef systems in the South Atlantic, Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and Pacific Ocean. Coral reefs are also waters of the U.S. as defined in the CWA and are subject to Section 404 permit requirements. There are 7 U.S. Jurisdictions participating in the Coral Reef Task Force (CRTF) include: 1) American Samoa, 2) Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, 3) Florida (Broward, Martin, Palm Beach, Miami-Dade, or Monroe Counties), 4) Guam, 5) Hawaii, 6) Puerto Rico, and 7) U.S. Virgin Islands. If proposed action is within the CRTF Jurisdiction, refer to NOAA's Local Action Strategy and incorporate recommended measures to mitigate foreseeable impacts. Refer to NRCS H-190, Part 610 for additional guidance.			
STEP 1. Is the planning area in or relevant to any of the 7 U.S. Jurisdictions participating in the Coral Reef Task Force (CRTF)? NOTE: "Relevant" means any activity within or outside this SEC that may likely affect Coral Reefs. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 2. Will any of the alternatives evaluated have the potential to affect the conditions of the coral reef ecosystem? NOTE: When applicable, advise client if additional coordination is needed for an alternative's implementation. ☐ Yes If "Yes," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Advise the client to contact the appropriate regulatory agencies with permitting jurisdiction for the site to determine what requirements must be met prior to implementing the proposed action or alternative.			
STEP 3.		Effects Determination	
		No Action (optional)	Alternative 1
Notes:			

CULTURAL RESOURCES / HISTORIC PROPERTIES NECH 610.25 Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other	Client/Plan Information:
Description: This guide sheet helps determine whether NRCS actions require cultural resource review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). States may tailor this Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet to reflect State-based Prototype Programmatic Agreements (PPAs) with SHPOs, Tribal consultation protocols or operating procedures pertinent to your state, or other State-specific processes. For additional information regarding compliance with Section 106 of NHPA and NRCS cultural resources policy refer to Title 420, General Manual (GM), Part 401, Cultural Resources; for current operating procedures see your state's PPA or Title 190, National Cultural Resources Procedures Handbook (NCRPH), Part 601. Note regarding consultations: When the undertaking has the potential to affect cultural resources or historic properties, it is important to follow the 36 CFR Part 800 regulations that implement Section 106 and NRCS policy to complete consultation with mandatory (SHPOs, THPOs, federally recognized Indian Tribes, and Native Hawaiian Organizations) and identified consulting parties during the course of project planning. Consultation is not specifically documented on this guide sheet but occurs during Steps 2, 3, 4 and 6. Consultations must be conducted in accordance with your state's PPA and NRCS cultural resources policy.	
STEP 1. Initial Screening Is NRCS the lead federal agency or otherwise involved in the action through funding, technical assistance, federal approval, or participation in a joint project? (Check all the apply) ☐ Yes—NRCS is funding or controlling the action. ☐ Yes—The action requires federal approval with NRCS as lead agency. ☐ Yes—NRCS is providing technical assistance. ☐ Yes—The action a joint project with NRCS as lead federal agency. ☐ No—None of the above apply If 'Yes', go to Step 2. If 'Yes', go to Step 2. If 'Yes', go to Step 2. If 'Yes', go to Step 2. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 7 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning. STEP 2. Potential to effect Does the undertaking have the potential to affect cultural resources or historic properties? ☐ Yes ☐ No If 'Yes', go to Step 3. If "No", document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 7 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning. STEP 3. Area of Potential Effect (APE) Has the undertaking's Area of Potential Effect (APE) been defined, including all areas that will or may be impacted (immediate project area(s), roads, borrow areas, grading, materials and equipment storage locations, disposal sites, etc.) and Section 106 consulting parties have been consulted about the APE? ☐ Yes ☐ No If "Yes", go to Step 4. If "No" or "Unknown", follow the protocols in your state PPA and NRCS cultural resources policy or consult with the state CRC or CRS to determine the APE.	

STEP 4. Identify Cultural Resources

Were any cultural resources identified within the APE at any stage of identification (field inspection or investigations)?

NOTE: Review the appropriate records (National, state, and local registers, lists, and data bases) to determine whether cultural resources or historic properties have been recorded within and near the APE. Interview the landowner, producer, or sponsor to determine whether cultural resources or historic properties are known within or near the APE. Conduct cultural resources field inspections or investigations in the APE. Field inspections can be performed by NRCS personnel who have completed Cultural Resources training modules 1 through 8 under the supervision / authorization of the NRCS State Cultural Resources Specialist. Investigations are conducted by Secretary of Interior qualified NRCS personnel or contractors.

- ☐ Yes—identified during field inspection If “Yes”, CRS will initiate cultural resources investigations.
- ☐ Yes—recorded during investigations If “Yes”, CRS will proceed to consultations.
- ☐ No If “No”, review your state cultural resources protocol to determine whether additional review by the CRS is required. If no additional review by the CRS is required, document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 7 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. If additional review by the CRS is required, follow your state's protocol. The Effects Determination is "Undetermined. Further analysis is required."

STEP 5. Modify Actions

If cultural resources or historic properties were identified in the APE, can actions be changed to avoid effects?

- ☐ Yes If “Yes”, go to Step 6.
- ☐ No If “No,” contact CRC/CRS and wait for guidance before finalizing design or project implementation.

STEP 6. Consultation

Has the CRS or designated official confirmed that identification and evaluation are complete, that, if necessary, additional steps to resolve adverse effects have been determined, and that consultation with SHPOs, THPOs, Tribes, and other consulting parties are complete and documented?

- ☐ Yes If “Yes”, document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 7 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.
- ☐ No If “No,” contact CRC/CRS and wait for additional guidance before project implementation. The 'Effects Determination' is 'Undetermined. Further analysis is required.'

STEP 7.

Effects Determination

No Action <i>(optional)</i>	Alternative 1	Alternative 2

Crosswalk

No Effect = No historic properties affected.

May Affect = No adverse effects to historic properties OR adverse effects to historic properties with statement of the finding and explanation documented for each alternative

Undetermined. Further analysis required. = Use when No Effect or May Affect cannot be selected OR when you cannot complete Section 106 due to need for additional review or consultation

Notes:

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT NECH 610.28 Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet		Client/Plan Information:	
Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other			
Description: The Magnuson-Stevens Act is the primary law governing marine fisheries management in the U.S. The Act covers essential fish habitat (EFH), which are areas identified as being vital for sustaining marine or anadromous fish populations. EFH for federally managed marine fisheries includes freshwater habitats, such as wetlands, rivers, and lakes and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity. NOAA-Fisheries implements and enforces the management measures through fisheries management plans. Note: For the Great Lakes fisheries refer to state-specific procedures. Refer to NRCS H-190, Part 610 for additional guidance.			
STEP 1. Is EFH present or relevant to the scope of this analysis? NOTE: For viewing important habitats for managed fish species, refer to the NOAA Fisheries - Essential Fish Habitat Mapper at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/map/essential-fish-habitat-mapper. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 4. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 2. Will any of the alternatives evaluated have the potential to affect EFH? NOTE: Evaluate beneficial and adverse short-term, long-term and cumulative effects; If adverse effects, consultation with the NOAA-Fisheries is required for project implementation. When applicable, advise client if additional coordination is needed for an alternative's implementation to comply with the EFH. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 3. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 4. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 3. Have any avoidance and/or minimization measures been included in the conservation plan and provided to the client in the implementation requirements, as applicable? ☐ Yes If "Yes," document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Advise the client what avoidance and/or minimization measures must be implemented as part of the proposed action or alternative. Proceed with Planning ☐ No If "No," document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative. Proceed with Planning.			
STEP 4.		Effects Determination	
	No Action <i>(optional)</i>	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Notes:			

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT NECH 610.29 Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet		Client/Plan Information: 	
Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other			
Description: NRCS policy on floodplains (190-GM, Part 410, Subpart B, Section 410.25) reflects the requirement of E.O. 11988, that decisions by Federal agencies must recognize that floodplains have unique and significant public values. Floodplain means the low and relatively flat areas adjoining inland and coastal waters including flood prone areas of offshore islands as determined by the elevation and flood hazard area extent. A critical action is one of the factors that must be considered when conducting the environmental analysis, and may require additional analysis and public engagement. Typical critical actions for NRCS include land uses for which even a slight chance of flooding would create unacceptable adverse effects, such as construction of facilities producing or storing volatile, toxic, or water-reactive materials. Refer to NRCS H-190, Part 610 for additional guidance.			
STEP 1. Are floodplains present or relevant to the scope of this analysis? NOTE: The FEMA's National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) helps federal agencies, and their non-federal partners and grantees identify if a project may be located within a floodplain. Refer to the FEMA NFHL viewer at https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8b0adb51996444d4879338b5529aa9cd, or other best available data in your state. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 4. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 2. Will any of the alternatives evaluated have the potential to affect the existing natural and beneficial values of the floodplain or lands adjacent or downstream? NOTE: When applicable, advise client if additional coordination is needed for an alternative's implementation to comply with the Floodplain Management. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 3. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 4. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 3. Will any of the alternatives evaluated result in a "critical action"? NOTE: A 'critical action' means land uses for which even a slight chance of flooding would create unacceptable adverse effects, such as construction of schools, hospitals, nursing homes, utilities, and facilities producing or storing volatile, toxic, or water-reactive materials. If yes, contact your state lead for environmental compliance. ☐ Yes If "Yes," document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Advise the client what avoidance and/or minimization measures must be implemented as part of the proposed action or alternative. Proceed with Planning ☐ No If "No," document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative. Proceed with Planning.			
STEP 4.		Effects Determination	
	No Action <i>(optional)</i> 	Alternative 1 	Alternative 2
Notes: 			

MIGRATORY BIRDS, BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT, NECH 610.31 Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet		Client/Plan Information:							
Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other									
Description: The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) is the domestic law that affirms, or implements, the United States commitment to four international conventions (with Canada, Japan, Mexico, and Russia) for the protection of a shared migratory bird resource. Executive Order 13186, Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds, requires NRCS to consider the impacts of planned actions on migratory bird populations and habitats for all planning activities. Migratory birds are essentially all wild birds found in the United States, except the house sparrow, starling, feral pigeon, and resident game birds, such as pheasant, grouse, quail, and wild turkeys. A list of migratory birds is found in 50 CFR Part 10. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protect Act (BGEPA) also prohibits the take of bald and golden eagles and their nests. BGEPA provides protection to all Bald and Golden Eagles by prohibiting all commercial activities and some noncommercial activities involving bald or golden eagles, including their feathers or parts. Refer to NRCS H-190, Part 610 for additional guidance.									
STEP 1. Are any of the following relevant to the scope of this analysis? NOTE: 'Relevant' means any activity within or outside this SEC that may likely affect migratory bird species, occupied nests, or their eggs or BGE, occupied/unoccupied nests, or their eggs. ☐ Yes Migratory bird species, occupied nests, or eggs. If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ Yes BGE nest (occupied/unoccupied), eggs, or winter roost. If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ Yes Both Migratory bird species (occupied nests, or eggs), and BGE nest (occupied/unoccupied, eggs, or winter roost). If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ No Neither are present or relevant. If checked, document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative. Proceed with Planning.									
STEP 2. Will any of the alternatives evaluated result in "take" that will have populations-level impacts on migratory birds/BGE or any part, nest or egg? NOTE: "Take" is defined as, a broad range of actions that include harassing, harming, pursuing, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing, disturbing or collecting an endangered wildlife species, or any attempt to engage in such conduct. When applicable, advise client if additional coordination is needed for an alternative's implementation to comply with the MBTA/BGEPA. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 3. ☐ No If "No," document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative. Proceed with Planning.									
STEP 3. Have any avoidance and/or minimization measures been included in the conservation plan and provided to the client in the implementation requirements, as applicable? NOTE: Follow state-specific guidance and procedures. ☐ Yes If "Yes," document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Advise the client what avoidance and/or minimization measures must be implemented as part of the proposed action or alternative. Proceed with Planning ☐ No If "No," document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative. Proceed with Planning.									
STEP 4. Effects Determination <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>No Action (optional)</th> <th>Alternative 1</th> <th>Alternative 2</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				No Action (optional)	Alternative 1	Alternative 2			
No Action (optional)	Alternative 1	Alternative 2							
Notes:									

NATURAL AREAS NECH 610.32 Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet		Client/Plan Information:	
Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other			
Description: Natural Areas are defined as land and water units where natural conditions are maintained. They may be designated areas of Federal government, non-federal government, or private land. Designation may be formal, as provided under Federal regulations, or by foundations or conservation organizations specifically created to acquire and maintain natural areas, or informal in the case of private landowners that specify an area as a natural area and manage it accordingly. Common resources for designated Natural Areas include, but is not limited to State, Local, or Tribal Natural Heritage/Natural Area programs, USDA-FS Research Natural Areas, NPS-National Natural Landmarks Program, conservation easements and other protected areas, non-profit databases/inventories, or other state-specified resource			
STEP 1. Are designated Natural Areas present or relevant to the scope of this analysis? NOTE: 'Relevant' means any activity within or outside this SEC that may affect a designated Natural Area. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 2. Will any of the alternatives evaluated have the potential to affect the integrity of a designated Natural Area? NOTE: When applicable, advise client if additional coordination is needed for an alternative's implementation to comply with the Natural Areas programs. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', additional review, authorizations, or controls may be needed before implementing the proposed action or alternative. Advise the client what avoidance and/or minimization measures must be implemented as part of the proposed action or alternative. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 3 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 3.		Effects Determination	
	No Action <i>(optional)</i>	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Notes:			

PRIME AND UNIQUE FARMLANDS NECH 610.33 Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet		Client/Plan Information:	
Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other			
Description: The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) is intended to minimize the impact Federal programs have on the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. For the purpose of FPPA, farmland includes prime farmland, unique farmland, and land of statewide or local importance. Per 7 CFR 658.5, Farmland does not include land already in or committed to urban development or water storage. Conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses does not include the construction of on-farm structures necessary for farm operations. If you are uncertain about the effects or exemption on prime and unique farmlands in your planning area, consult the State Soil Scientist. Refer to H-190, Part 610 for additional guidance.			
STEP 1. Are FPPA-Prime and Unique Farmland present or relevant to the scope of this analysis? NOTE: 'Relevant' means an alternative you are evaluating may affect prime farmland, unique farmland, and land of statewide or local importance. If you are uncertain about identification of prime and unique farmland in your planning area, contact your State Soil Scientist and refer to NRCS H-190, Part 610 for additional guidance. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 2. Will any of the alternatives evaluated have the potential to permanently convert land to non-agricultural use? NOTE: When applicable, advise client if additional coordination is needed for an alternative's implementation to comply with regulatory provisions for the protection of Prime and Unique Farmlands. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', additional review, authorizations, or controls may be needed before implementing the proposed action or alternative. Advise the client what avoidance and/or minimization measures must be implemented as part of the proposed action or alternative. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 3 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 3.		Effects Determination	
	No Action (optional)	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Notes:			

RIPARIAN AREA NECH 610.34 Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet		Client/Plan Information:	
Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other			
Description: NRCS policy (190-GM, Part 411.3(d)) requires NRCS to integrate riparian area management into all plans and alternatives. Riparian ecosystems occupy the transitional area between the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Typical examples include floodplains, stream banks, and lakeshores. Riparian areas may exist within all land uses, such as cropland, hay land, pastureland, rangeland, and forestland. Note: Although Federal law does not specifically regulate riparian areas, portions of riparian areas, such as wetlands and other waters of the U.S. may be subject to Federal regulation under provisions of the Food Security Act, Clean Water Act, NEPA, and State, Tribal, and local legislation. Refer to H-190, Part 610 for additional guidance.			
STEP 1. Are Riparian Areas present or relevant to the scope of this analysis? NOTE: 'Relevant' means any activity within or outside this SEC that may affect Riparian Areas ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 2. Will any of the alternatives evaluated have the potential to affect the functions and values of a riparian area? NOTE: When applicable, advise client if additional coordination is needed for an alternative's implementation to comply with regulatory provisions for the protection of Riparian Areas. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', additional review, authorizations, or controls may be needed before implementing the proposed action or alternative. Advise the client what avoidance and/or minimization measures must be implemented as part of the proposed action or alternative. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 3 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 3.		Effects Determination	
	No Action <i>(optional)</i>	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Notes:			

SCENIC BEAUTY NECH 610.35 Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet		Client/Plan Information:	
Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other			
Description: Scenic beauty can be defined as the viewer's positive perceived value of special, unique and memorable physical elements of a landscape. The landscape has a consistently definable appearance that can be described by the visual elements of landform, water, vegetation, structures and sky. These visual elements provide a ready basis for describing the changing landscape as altered by human decisions. Landscape may include the viewshed of the local environment in a rural or urban setting. Management of the visual landscape is the process of manipulating the physical elements and functions of the landscape to achieve specific resource objectives. Refer to NRCS H-190, Part 610 for additional guidance.			
STEP 1. Is Scenic Beauty present or relevant to the scope of this analysis? NOTE: 'Relevant' means any activity within or outside this SEC that may likely affect the scenic quality of the general landscape or any specifically designated, unique, or valuable scenic landscape. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 2. Will any of the alternatives evaluated have the potential to affect the scenic quality of the general landscape or any specifically designated, unique, or valuable scenic landscape? NOTE: When applicable, advise client if additional coordination is needed for an alternative's implementation to maintain the Scenic Beauty elements and functions. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', additional review, authorizations, or controls may be needed before implementing the proposed action or alternative. Advise the client what avoidance and/or minimization measures must be implemented as part of the proposed action or alternative. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 3 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 3.		Effects Determination	
	No Action <i>(optional)</i>	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Notes:			

WETLANDS NECH 610.36 Evaluation Procedure Guide Sheet		Client/Plan Information:	
Check all that apply to this Guide Sheet review: ☐ Alternative 1 ☐ Alternative 2 ☐ Other			
Description: Executive Order (EO) 11990 requires that Federal agencies take action to minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands, and to preserve and enhance the beneficial functions of wetlands when "providing federally undertaken, financed or assisted construction and improvements" on public lands. NRCS wetland protection policy for implementing EO 11990 defines wetlands as areas, natural or artificial, that have hydric soil, hydrophytic vegetation, and indicators of wetland hydrology and includes private lands (190-GM, Part 410, Subpart B, Section 410.26). Generally, wetlands include swamps, marshes, bogs, many bottomland hardwood areas and similar areas but also includes temporary/seasonally ponded areas when they meet the definition of a wetland.			
STEP 1. Are wetlands present or relevant to the scope of this analysis? NOTE: 'Relevant' means any activity within or outside this SEC that may likely affect wetlands. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', go to Step 2. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 4 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 2. Will any of the alternatives evaluated have the potential to affect natural or artificial wetlands as defined in 190-GM, Part 410? NOTE: When applicable, advise client if additional coordination is needed for an alternative's implementation to comply with the NRCS Wetlands Protection policy. ☐ Yes If 'Yes', additional review, authorizations, or controls may be needed before implementing the proposed action or alternative. Advise the client what avoidance and/or minimization measures must be implemented as part of the proposed action or alternative. ☐ No If "No," proceed to Step 3. Document the corresponding 'Effects Determination' in Step 3 and on the NRCS-CPA-52 for each alternative, including information sources used. Proceed with planning.			
STEP 3.		Effects Determination	
	No Action <i>(optional)</i>	Alternative 1	Alternative 2
Notes:			

RESOURCE CONCERN CHECKLIST Field Inventory Guide Sheet (Optional)		Client/Plan Information:
Identify the resource concern(s) that need to be addressed and the assessment tool(s) used for the evaluation.		
SOIL	☐ Sheet & Rill ☐ Wind Erosion ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Ephemeral gully erosion ☐ Classic gully erosion ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Bank erosion from streams, shorelines or water conveyance channels ☐ Subsidence ☐ Organic matter depletion ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Compaction ☐ Concentration of salts or other chemicals ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Soil organism habitat loss or degradation ☐ Aggregate instability	
	Assessment tools, Problems & Notes:	
WATER	☐ Ponding and flooding ☐ Seasonal High water table ☐ Seeps ☐ Drifted snow ☐ Surface water depletion ☐ Ground water depletion ☐ Naturally available moisture use ☐ Inefficient irrigation water use ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____	☐ Nutrients transported to surface water ☐ Nutrients transported to groundwater ☐ Pesticides transported to surface water ☐ Pesticides transported to groundwater ☐ Pathogens and chemicals from manure, bio-solids or compost applications transported to surface water ☐ Pathogens and chemicals from manure, bio-solids or compost applications transported to groundwater ☐ Salts transported to surface water ☐ Salts transported to groundwater ☐ Petroleum, heavy metals, and other pollutants transported to surface water ☐ Petroleum, heavy metals, and other pollutants transported to groundwater ☐ Sediment transported to surface water ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____
	Assessment tools, Problems & Notes:	
AIR	☐ Emissions of particulate matter (PM) and PM precursors ☐ Emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Emissions of ozone precursors ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Objectionable odors ☐ Emissions of airborne reactive nitrogen	
	Assessment tools, Problems & Notes:	
PLANTS	☐ Plant productivity and health ☐ Plant structure and composition ☐ Plant pest pressure	☐ Wildfire hazard from biomass accumulation ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____
	Assessment tools, Problems & Notes:	
ANIMALS	☐ Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates ☐ Aquatic habitat for fish and other organisms ☐ Elevated water temperature ☐ Other: _____	☐ Feed and forage imbalance ☐ Inadequate livestock shelter ☐ Inadequate livestock water quantity, quality and distribution ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Other: _____
	Assessment tools, Problems & Notes:	
ENERGY	☐ Energy efficiency of equipment and facilities ☐ Other: _____ ☐ Energy efficiency of farming/ranching practices and field operations	
	Assessment tools, Problems & Notes:	

Field Inventory Guide Sheet - Notes Section