

SUBCHAPTER B—CONSERVATION OPERATIONS

PART 610—TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Subpart A—Conservation Operations

Sec.

610.1 Purpose.

610.2 Scope.

610.3 Assistance through conservation districts.

610.4 Technical assistance furnished.

610.5 Interdisciplinary assistance.

Subpart B—Soil Erosion Prediction Equations

610.11 Purpose and scope.

610.12 Equations for predicting soil loss due to water erosion.

610.13 Equations for predicting soil loss due to wind erosion.

610.14 Use of USLE, RUSLE, and WEQ.

Subpart C—State Technical Committees

610.21 Purpose and scope.

610.22 State Technical Committee membership.

610.23 State Technical Committee meetings.

610.24 Responsibilities of State Technical Committees.

610.25 Specialized Subcommittees.

Subpart D—Conservation of Private Grazing Land

Sec.

610.31 Purpose and scope.

610.32 Technical assistance furnished.

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Subpart A—Conservation Operations

§ 610.1 Purpose.

This subpart sets forth Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) policies and procedures for furnishing technical assistance in conservation operations.

[61 FR 27999, June 4, 1996]

§ 610.2 Scope.

(a) Conservation operations, including technical assistance, is the basic soil and water conservation program of NRCS. This program is designed to:

- (1) Reduce soil losses from erosion;
- (2) Help solve soil, water, and agricultural waste management problems;
- (3) Bring about adjustments in land use as needed;
- (4) Reduce damage caused by excess water and sedimentation;
- (5) Enhance the quality of fish and wildlife habitat; and
- (6) Improve all agricultural lands, including cropland, forestland, and grazing lands that include pastureland, rangeland, and grazed forestland so that the long-term sustainability of the resource base is achieved.

(b) The Natural Resources Conservation Service is USDA's technical agency for providing assistance to private landowners, conservation districts, and other organizations in planning and carrying out their conservation activities and programs. NRCS works with individuals, groups, and units of government to help them plan and carry out conservation decisions to meet their objectives.

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§ 610.3 Assistance through conservation districts.

(a) Technical assistance is provided through and in cooperation with conservation districts in the 50 States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These districts, formed under authority of State laws, are operated and controlled by local citizens. They provide the leadership and the program needed to meet the conservation objectives of the district.

(b) NRCS furnishes technical assistance to conservation districts as specified in memorandums of understanding. Soil conservationists assigned to conservation districts work directly with land users and others according to the program needs and the priorities established by the conservation districts.

(c) The practical experience of land users is combined with the scientific knowledge and skills of professional conservationists to plan and carry out locally formulated conservation programs.