



United
States
Department of
Agriculture

November 10, 1997

Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

**NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ACT MANUAL (NFSAM)
180-V-NFSAM, Amendment WI 19**

Engineering
6515 Watts Road
Suite 200
Madison, WI
53719-2726

Purpose: To identify personnel with approval authority to complete the wetland conservation (WC) provisions of the 1996 Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act (FAIRA).

(608) 264-5341

Effective Date. Upon receipt.

Explanation. Part 513 of the NFSAM requires that personnel be trained in the use of the NFSAM when doing wetland determinations on agricultural lands and the Corps of Engineers 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual before completing determinations where native vegetation has not been removed.

NFSAM Circular No. 1 became effective September 4, 1997. It requires that all activities related to FAIRA WC provisions be conducted by employees who have received adequate training and experience, as determined by the State Conservationist (STC). These activities include:

- Conducting wetland determinations/delineations
- Scope and effect evaluations
- Functional assessments
- Minimal effects evaluations
- Mitigation planning
- Mitigation easements

Each STC is required to maintain a list of qualified employees who are authorized to perform a particular wetland task.

The following tasks require specific job approval authorization:

1. Conducting wetland determinations and delineations (field staking) on cropland, hayland, and non-native pastures.
2. Conducting wetland determinations and delineations (field staking) on all lands other than cropland, hayland, and non-native pastures.
3. Scope and effect determination of new drainage systems planned or improvement of existing drainage systems.
4. Scope and effect determination for maintenance or replacement of existing systems.
5. Wetland functional assessments.

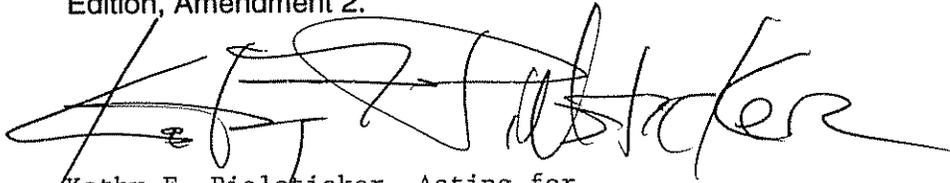
DIST: NFSAM

6. State-wide minimal effect determinations or categorical minimal effect determinations.
7. Minimal effect determinations.
8. Mitigation planning.
9. Mitigation easements.

Job approval will be based on the successful completion of required training courses, and a demonstrated ability to perform the task. Ability can be demonstrated by submitting at least three determinations or evaluations to a person with that approval authority for review and approval. Wetland Specialists (WS) will approve wetland determinations and assessments, and Engineers (ENG) will approve scope and effects. Upon approval from the WS or ENG, you will be granted approval authority for that task by the STC. The STC will maintain a list of employees with their wetland job approval authority. Only persons with the appropriate job approval authority may approve a non-NRCS person's work for an NRCS determination. Attachment #1 is a sample matrix of the training required and typical level to be obtained by position type. However, an employee may earn an approval authority in any area, regardless of their current position, for professional development purposes.

The **initial** list of persons with wetland approval authorities (Attachment #2) is being provided to all NRCS offices. The list will be updated semi-annually, or as needed.

Filing Instructions: Insert after page 513-2 of Section 513.0 in the NFSAM, Third Edition, Amendment 2.



Kathy F. Pielsticker, Acting for
PATRICIA S. LEAVENWORTH
State Conservationist

Attachments