
Technical Assistance

NRCS employees travel throughout the world to provide short and long-term technical assistance. NRCS bases its assistance on the needs of the host country. Following is a summary of international activities completed by agency personnel during Fiscal Year 2008:

Afghanistan and Iraq were a main focus again for NRCS in FY 2008. NRCS sent 22 specialists on short and long-term assignments to assist in training, planning, development, and reconstruction efforts. They worked closely with the Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, and military representatives.

The following employees provided assistance or are currently serving in Afghanistan:

Tony Beals, Area Agronomist, Price, Utah
Kathleen Dobler, Natural Resources Specialist, Portland, Oregon
Gary Domian, Assistant State Conservationist, Durham, New Hampshire
Bruce Dube, Natural Resource Specialist, Washington, DC
Jon Fripp, Civil Engineer, Fort Worth, Texas
James Green, District Conservationist, Idabel, Oklahoma
Danny Markus, RC&D Coordinator, Parker, Arizona
John Minnick, Resource Conservationist, Annapolis, Maryland
Greg Schlenz, Resource Conservationist, Dayton, Washington
Brian Sorenson, District Conservationist, Delta, Colorado

The following employees provided assistance or are currently serving in Iraq:

Manuel Ayala, International Program Specialist, Beltsville, Maryland
Patrick Broyles, Soil Conservationist, Emporia, Kansas
Johnny Gomez, Soil Conservationist, Casa Grande, Arizona
Dennis Neffendorf, Conservation Agronomist, Fort Worth, Texas
Greg Kindel, RC&D Coordinator, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Jerry Namken, Resource Economist, Washington, DC
Willie Ruffin, Senior Resource Conservationist, Washington, DC
David Speidel, Resource Conservationist, St. Joseph, Missouri
Frank Toupal, Wildlife Biologist, Tucson, Arizona
James Vancura, Project Coordinator, Dorris, California
Steven Welker, RC&D Coordinator, Arecibo, Puerto Rico
Floyd Wood, Natural Resources Manager, Washington, DC

Embassy Science Fellows Program

NRCS sponsored six employees for the Department of State's Embassy Science Fellows Program. Projects consisted of assessing plant resources in the Congo, species conservation in Oman, renewable energy, and forestry in The Philippines, soil fertility in Nigeria, and biofuels in Rwanda. Employees were from field, State, and national offices.

International Meetings

International meetings provide forums for exchange, and NRCS employees benefit by learning and sharing new ideas from our foreign hosts. Fifty-five NRCS employees attended international meetings in 17 countries for information exchange, as members of committees, or to present papers at the meetings. The trend continued with Canada and Mexico being the two countries where employees traveled most.

Foreign Visitors

This year NRCS met with 111 foreign visitors from 9 Countries. Topics covered during these meetings ranged from conservation programs, water resources management, to overviews of NRCS' functions.

The agency's leadership, specialists, and field staff all played important roles as itineraries and training were developed for our foreign guests.

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