

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
Post Office Box 2890
Washington, D.C. 20013

JUN 04 2012

SUBJECT: LTP - Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

TO: State Conservationists
Director, Caribbean and Pacific Island Areas

File Code: 300-19

The CSP obligation period for fiscal year (FY) 2012 has been delayed due to the Financial Management Modernization Initiative (FMMI) migration and late reallocation of acres. As a result, I am authorizing the State Conservationists (STC) administrative flexibility to grant waivers to ensure CSP payments are promptly made after October 1 of each fiscal year for activities carried out in the previous fiscal year. Accordingly, this waiver authority ensures participants awarded a contract late in the year have an opportunity to earn FY 2013 contract payments for FY 2012 work. This waiver applies only to the first payment under FY 2012-1 contracts obligated after June 1, 2012.

States should work with applicants to schedule at least one enhancement in FY2012 of the proposed contract. Practices of a contract may not be scheduled in FY 2012 according to program policy. Some enhancements can be readily installed before September 30, 2012. However, for some applicants it will be challenging to select enhancements that can be installed in this short time. For this reason, I am granting STCs the option to use administrative flexibility as needed. The flexibilities authorized under this waiver include the following options, which are in order as they are to be considered:

- 1) Applicants who cannot fulfill the program policy of adopting at least one enhancement in the first fiscal year of the contract will be allowed to schedule the enhancement in the Conservation Measurement Tool (CMT) for FY 2012 if they can later show proof that they commenced the enhancement before September 30, 2012. An enhancement is considered commenced if the participant can provide evidence of commitment of labor or incurred cost. These enhancements include, but are not limited to commencement of construction activities, purchase of materials, or contracting of services.
- 2) Applicants who cannot fulfill the option above may be allowed to schedule an enhancement for FY 2012 if the enhancement will be implemented or installed no later than December 31, 2012. This option may be requested by a participant. The STC will consider each request on a case-by-case basis. If the STC grants the request, the enhancement will be scheduled in the first fiscal year (FY 2012) in CMT. However, the payment will not be made until the enhancement can be certified as completed by the participant.

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For waiver requests that are approved, STCs will be responsible for ensuring waiver provisions are properly documented, carried out, and strictly adhered.

States are responsible for ensuring that contracts remain in compliance by conducting annual contract reviews early in the year in accordance to 440-CPM, part 508, Subpart K, Section 508.103.

Note: All FY 2012-1 contracts will expire on December 31, 2016, to accommodate a full 5 years of implementation under the exceptions listed above.

If you have questions, please contact Jeffrey White, Team Leader, at (202) 720-3524, or email at: Jeffrey.White@wdc.usda.gov.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave White". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dave White
Chief

cc:

Homes Wilkes, Special Assistant to the Chief, NRCS, Washington, D.C.
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