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**409.0 General.**

(c) New Mexico NRCS requires all conservation plans to be recorded in Customer Service Toolkit.

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**409.1 Conservation Planning Objective.**

(2) All conservation plans developed in New Mexico will be developed to the RMS level for all resource concerns identified needing treatment. The client may or may not choose to accept the RMS level plan. NRCS will continue to work with the client to achieve the RMS level, while assisting in installing practices that are acceptable to the client and NRCS.

(b) In New Mexico, when developing a conservation plan for a program, an RMS level for all resource concerns identified within the operation will be presented as an alternative, at a minimum.

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**409.2 Conservation Planning Assistance Delivery.**

(g) In New Mexico, NRCS will provide assistance to our clients that have state and federal land as part of their operating unit. A coordinated process will be used that includes the decision makers on all of the land within the operating unit. An agreement with the land management agency will be required when a significant amount of NRCS resources will be needed above that normally used in the conservation planning process. The state resource conservationist will serve as contact for these cases.

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#### **409.3 Requirements for Providing Conservation Planning Assistance.**

(b) All conservation plans developed by NRCS employees in New Mexico will be approved by an NRCS-NM approved certified conservation planner with the appropriate land use type (Cropland, Grazingland, Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan-CNMP, other.)

(c) (4) Area Conservationists will approve all staff in the area, as appropriate, as certified conservation planners. Each Area Conservationist will submit to the State Conservationist by January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year the current list of approved conservation planners in their area.

(d) In New Mexico, volunteers, conservation districts and state personnel to become certified must meet the same requirements as NM NRCS employees. There must be an agreement in place with the employing district or agency that recognizes the Field Office Technical Guide as the basis for all assistance provided to clients.

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**409.9 Minimum Criteria to Achieve an NRCS Certified Conservation Planner Designation.**

(c) In New Mexico, certified conservation planners will be certified based on land use types of RMS plan used to obtain certification. Four land use types will be used: Cropland, Grazingland, AFO-CNMP, and Other. If the RMS plan submitted for certification has more than one land use type present, certification can be made on the land use types adequately prepared. Those certified conservation planners that hold professional certifications from organizations such as, SRM, SWCS, ASA will be recognized as a certified conservation planner II for the appropriate land use type. Candidates for the AFO-CNMP certification must have successfully completed the New Mexico CNMP Workshop in addition to the normal 10 module conservation planning course or obtain a waiver from the state resource conservationist

(d) (4) In New Mexico, the Area Conservationist will be the designated reviewer of the RMS plan for a CMU that will be used by a candidate for NRCS certification. The RMS plan will be reviewed and concurred in by the supervisor. The reviewed and concurred in plan will be submitted to the Area Conservationist for approval by the before delivery to the client. The Area Conservationist designee will serve as the qualified observer to accompany the candidate to meet with the decision maker on delivery of the plan. Exhibit A will be used to document approval of the plan. The employee's Job Approval Authority for Ecological Practices (NM-CPA-219) will be update to reflect the status of conservation planning certification.

(e) (3) All New Mexico certified conservation planners will have five days of training, either internal or external, in the subject matter related to the approved classification of certified conservation planner in a three year period. Those courses that have subject matter for more than one landuse type maybe counted toward the 5-day requirement for all appropriate landuse types.

(f) (4) Those certified conservation planners in their third year of certification will submit a RMS plan for a CMU for each land use type of certification needing renewal. The RMS plan will be reviewed and concurred in by the supervisor. The RMS plan will be approved by the Area Conservationist. This approval will maintain certification for another three years. A field review is optional. A record of training received, since the last certification, will be maintained as part of the documentation.

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(g) Those New Mexico employees that have Job Approval Authority will be considered certified specialists for the appropriate elements of a CNMP.