



Local Working Group

EXAMPLE STATE BULLETIN

Date, 20XX

(STATE NAME) BULLETIN NO. (ST) 300-22-__ LTP

Subject: Local Working Groups

Purpose: To provide information and procedures for the Local Working Group meetings.

Expiration Date: Month Day, 20XX

Explanation

This bulletin addresses the Local Working Group (LWG) activities for FY 20XX in (State). Prior to attending LWG meetings, District Conservationists (DC) should review Locally Led Conservation in CPM 440 Part 500, and Local Working Groups in CPM 440 Part 501.

LWG meetings are open to the public. LWGs should be comprised of a diverse group of agricultural and environmental interests. Across the state, many organizations and individuals continue to express interest in participating in LWGs. To facilitate participation, DCs will work with the State Public Affairs Officer to post the schedule for all LWG meetings on the (State) NRCS website. Individuals or groups wanting to become members of a LWG may submit a request that explains their interest and outlines their credentials for becoming a member of the LWG to the LWG chairperson and the DC. The DC will assist the Conservation District (CD) in making decisions concerning membership of the group.

The Memorandum of Agreement with each CD gives the CD the authority and responsibility to chair the LWG. If the CD is unable to, or unwilling to chair the LWG, the NRCS District Conservationist is responsible for chair duties. Districts should work with their DCs and State Associations to consider opportunities to secure facilitation services for the LWG meeting.

DCs will review with the LWG the prior year's planning and implementation progress toward long-range plans, strategic plans, and other resource recommendations. Care should be taken to protect personally identifiable information. Generic treatment information, such as resource concerns, total acres treated, aggregated practice/enhancements and funds obligated, may be shared with the group.

LWG meetings should be an open, orderly discussion driven by natural resource conservation needs. The conservation needs assessment should form the basis for collaboration and provide a basis for long-range plan development and updates. Once the natural resource concerns are identified and prioritized, appropriate Federal, State, local, and nongovernmental program tools can be used, both individually and in combination, to address these resource concerns and attempt to meet the established goals of the community stakeholders. Recognizing that funding levels are finite, LWG should develop recommendations that help NRCS focus human and financial resources toward achievable natural resource solutions.

(Note: the LWGs are advisory in nature and have no implementation or enforcement authority. NRCS uses their input and recommendations to identify conservation planning needs, to prioritize resource concerns for the state's programs, and to develop ranking questions and procedures.)

LWG input and recommendations may assist NRCS in identifying any of the following conditions:

- Identifying significant local, regional, and statewide geographic areas of concern.
- Identifying significant local, regional, and statewide natural resource concerns.
- Technical programmatic recommendation.
- Need for regional or statewide public information and outreach campaign.
- Guidelines for developing ranking criteria for evaluating applications.
- Guidance on eligible conservation activities.
- Technical guidance on conservation practices, including new, innovative practices.
- Identifying, monitoring and analyzing performance indicators.
- Evaluating and reporting program impacts on natural resources and the environment; and
- Coordinating with other Federal, state, tribal, and local public and private activities.

Following the LWG meeting, the Conservationist Districts or DCs will report the outcomes of Local Working Group meetings to the ASTC-FO and ASTC-Programs by

Month Day, 20XX. Reports will be provided to the State Conservationist by Month Day, 20XX.

DC Reporting from the LWG meeting will include:

- Identify existing financial resource needs for FY 20XX
- Review the Conservation Needs Assessment:
 - Define other high priority resource concerns needing treatment
 - Recommended activities to solve identified resource concerns
- Identify NRCS and other programs (i.e EQIP, CSP, ACEP, RCPP, state cost share programs, etc.) or combination of programs that may be used to address other high priority resource concerns
 - 3-year plan to address identified resource concerns
 - Identify the extent of resource concerns to be treated
 - Identify annual program funding required to treat the resource concerns
 - Identify annual technical assistance requirement to assist producers to treat the resource concerns
- Recommendations for application selection criteria for targeted resource concerns
- Policy/technical recommendation for the State Technical Advisory Committee

Contact: For questions contact _____, ASTC-Programs, at ____-____-____ or _____@usda.gov.