United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

March 2008

Conservation Security Program:
Self-Assessment Workbook

Contact: USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

Office Name: _____

Telephone #: _____

The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is a voluntary conservation program administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Helping People Help the Land

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Introduction

About the Conservation Security Program
The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is a unique program that goes beyond the past approach of repairing on-farm conservation problems. Instead, CSP offers rewards to those who have been good stewards of the soil and water resources on their working agricultural land. It also offers incentives for those who wish to exceed the minimum levels of resource protection and enhance the natural resources on the land they manage. By rewarding land stewardship, CSP will ensure that our Nation's private and Tribal agricultural lands remain viable working enterprises.

The program is available in designated watersheds of all 50 States, the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands Areas. The number of watersheds selected for participation in any year depends on funds allocated by Congress. To be eligible for CSP, a majority of your agricultural operation must be within one of the selected watersheds.

For more information about the watersheds selected, contact your local NRCS office, or go to the NRCS Web page: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/.

The program provides equitable access to benefits to all producers regardless of the size of the operation, crops produced, or geographic location. NRCS will establish and publicly announce application sign-up periods.

About this Self-Assessment Workbook
This self-assessment is required for all CSP applications and must be completed and submitted by the applicant by the end date of the sign-up period for the application to be considered for funding. This workbook is also available to be downloaded from http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/.

As you go through this workbook and select the assessment items that describe you, your land, and your conservation system, you will get a good idea about whether you are eligible for CSP at this time. You will check the boxes next to the assessment items that describe your operation. In the benchmark inventory section, you will be asked to record the existing conservation practices and production system on the land you intend to offer for CSP. This benchmark inventory will provide NRCS with information needed to determine CSP eligibility, and serve as the basis for your stewardship plan.

Records and Record Keeping
CSP requires that applicants have a minimum of two years of written records or documentation to support their current conservation system. Applicants will be required to certify in writing the accuracy of their benchmark inventory, and that two years of written records or documentation are available and are being used for the management of their conservation system. Applicants must be able and willing to supply written records and documentation upon request by NRCS. Applicants' records will be needed for the applicant interview.

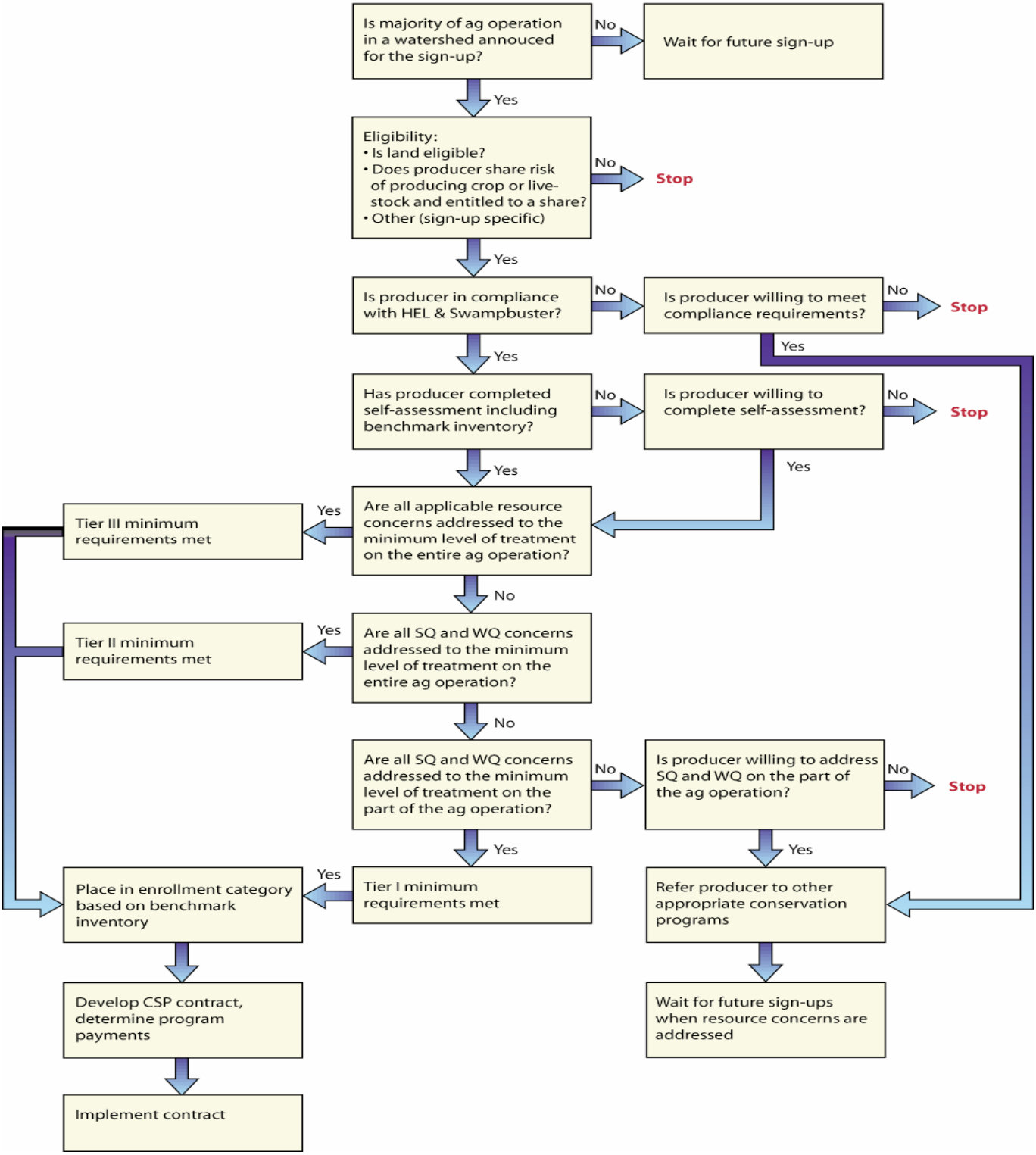
About the Application Process
After you complete this Self-Assessment Workbook you will have a good indication of whether CSP is the right program for you at this time. If you believe your operation is eligible for CSP, the next step will be for you to schedule an interview with your local NRCS office. During the interview, the

NRCS staff will evaluate your Self-Assessment Workbook, benchmark inventory, and associated records to determine whether the applicant, the land, and the conservation system meet basic eligibility requirements and sign-up criteria.

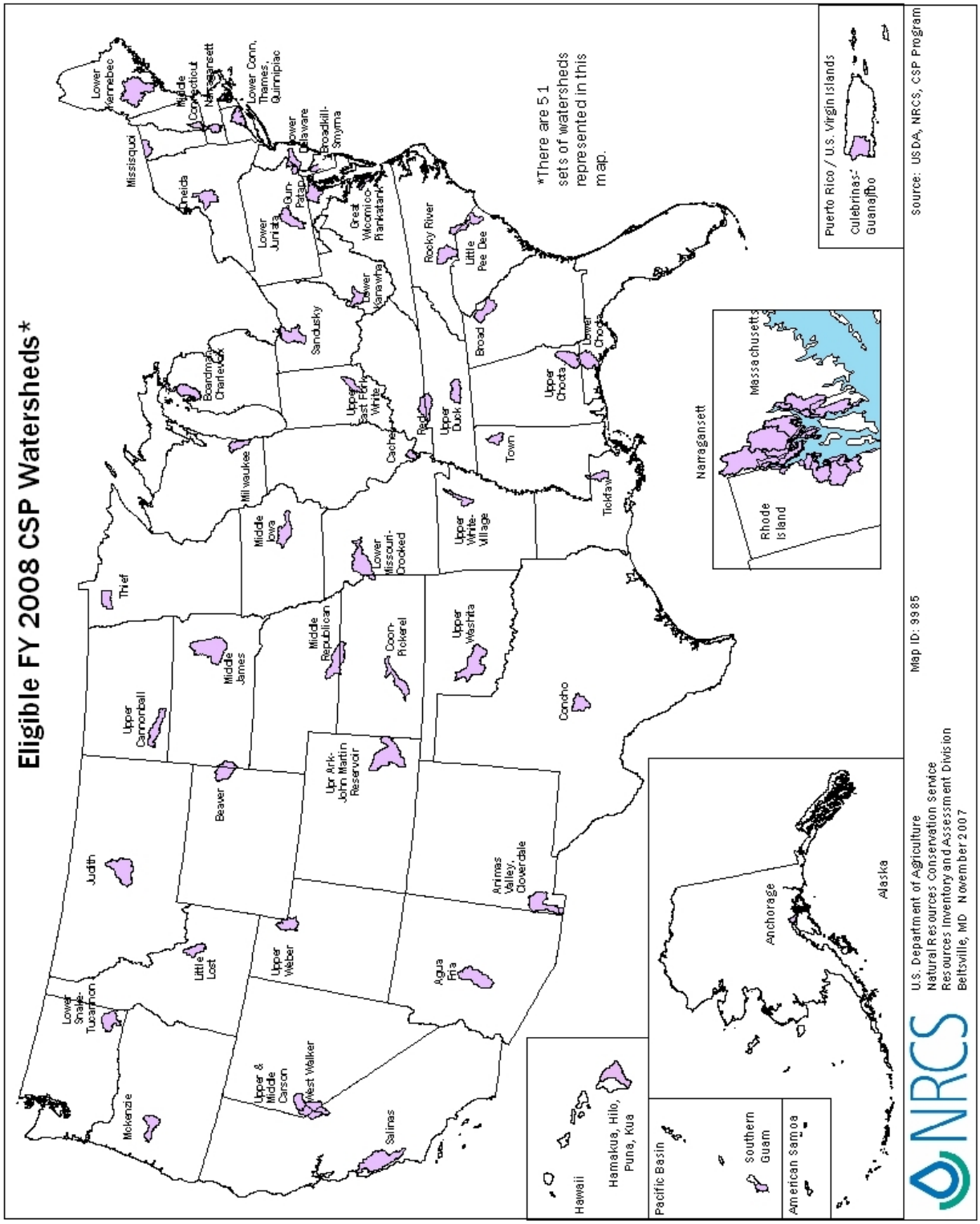
If NRCS determines that your application meets the basic eligibility and sign-up requirements, your application will be placed in a tier as described in the “Application Process Next Steps” section of this workbook.

Your application will then be placed into an enrollment category for funding consideration based on the criteria specified in the sign-up notice and the CSP Applicant Offer Certification Worksheet, see Appendix B, which documents the applicant’s final offer. An applicant must sign and submit the CSP Applicant Offer Certification Worksheet or the application will not be considered for funding. You may choose to be placed into the highest enrollment category for which your application qualifies. It is likely that you will have several tier and enrollment category options from which to choose. NRCS cannot make this decision for you, nor predict if funding will be available for any specific category. The NRCS staff will explain the requirements of the different options available to you so that you can make the right decision for your operation.

CSP Application Process



FY 2008 Watersheds



STEP 1: Applicant and Land Eligibility Assessment

YOUR NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

_____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

In addition to the map of your agricultural operation delineation you will provide in Step 2, please provide a map of the land you wish to enroll in CSP. Also, list the location of the land, or portion of land, you wish to enroll in CSP.

NAME of LAND: _____
(Example – Smith Farm)

ZIP CODE: _____

WATERSHED: _____

LOCATION: _____
(township, range, section, parish, tract#, farm#, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature **Date**

Applicant and Land Eligibility Assessment

The following assessment items will give you an indication of applicant and land eligibility. You will check the boxes next to the assessment items that describe your operation. For those assessment items that DO NOT apply to your operation, write "**N/A**" next to the box.

1. I am an owner, operator, landlord, tenant, or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing any crop or livestock; and is entitled to share in the crop or livestock available for marketing. ☐

   Note:

   Landlords and owners of cash rented land are not eligible to be a CSP applicant.

2. I have control of the land I intend to offer for CSP for the life of the proposed 5- to 10-year contract period. I understand that loss of control may result in financial penalties. ☐

   Note:

   A lease is not required, but tenants must be able to provide written evidence or assurance of control from the landowner(s). You may use the "Control of Land Certification" form in *Appendix C* to provide this evidence.

3. My average adjusted gross income is less than or equal to $2.5 million, or if greater than $2.5 million, 75% came from farming, ranching, or forestry. ☐

   Note:

   To participate in CSP, your average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) for the 3 tax years immediately preceding the year the contract is approved cannot exceed $2.5 million, unless at least 75 percent of the income was derived from agriculture.

   You must complete or have on file with FSA the AGI determination form "CCC-526, Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income Certification" in *Appendix D*, prior to application.

4. I am in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill as amended. ☐

   Note:

   The Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, requires that persons who produce agriculture commodities protect all cropland classified as being highly erodible from excessive erosion and all wetlands from conversion. The provisions have been amended in the 1990, 1996, and 2002 Farm Bills.

   To participate in a USDA program, you must have a Form AD-1026, "Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification", and the needed determinations on file with FSA.

5. Part of the land I wish to enroll in CSP is currently in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) or Grassland Reserve Program (GRP). ☐

Note:

Land enrolled in CRP, CREP, WRP, WREP or GRP cannot be a part of the CSP contract but should be included in your agricultural operation delineation. In addition, land committed to enrollment in CRP is also ineligible.

For example: You would like to enroll a 40-acre parcel that has a 2-acre CRP buffer. You will include all 40 acres in your agricultural operation delineation. However, only the 38 acres that are not enrolled in CRP will be eligible for enrollment in CSP.

6. The land I wish to enroll is private agricultural land or Tribal agricultural land. ☐

Note:

Public land (owned by federal, state or local government) is ineligible for CSP, but should be included in your agricultural operation delineation if the land is under your control.

7. The land I wish to enroll has been planted, considered to be planted, or devoted to crop production, as determined by NRCS, for at least 4 out of the 6 years from May 13, 1996 to May 13, 2002. ☐

Note:

Land that does not meet this condition is not eligible for payment.

Applicant and Land Eligibility Assessment

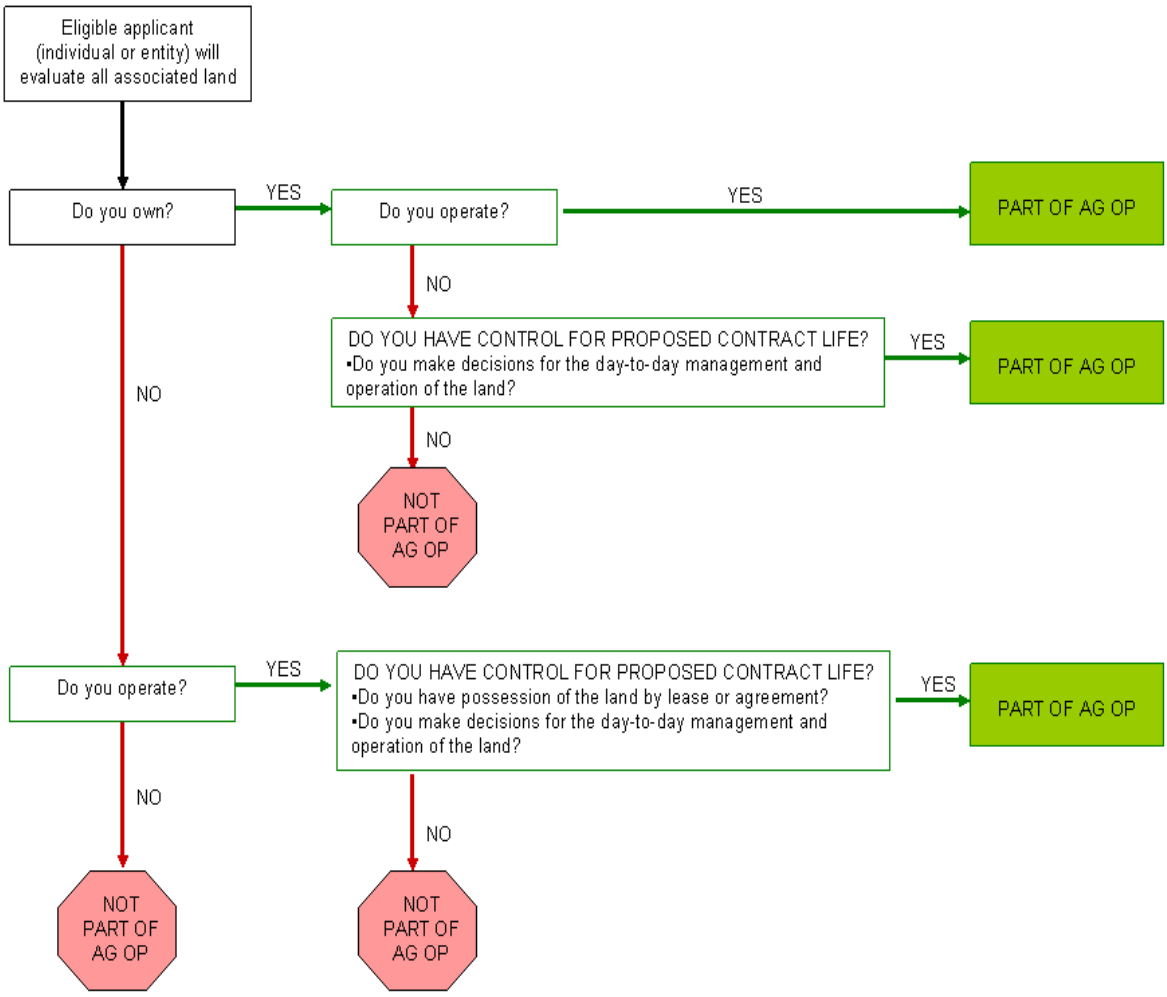
Assessment items 1-4, 6 and 7 will need to be checked for the applicant and land to be considered eligible. IF YOUR ASSESSMENT DIFFERS, you may not be eligible for CSP at this time.

STEP 2: Delineate Your Agricultural Operation

An eligible applicant will delineate their agricultural operation on a map as the initial step in the application process.

When you delineate your agricultural operation, you must include **all land under your control**, whether contiguous or non-contiguous. The operation should constitute a cohesive management unit that is operated with equipment, labor, accounting system, and management that are substantially separate from any other land. The minimum size of an agricultural operation is a field. The following decision tree may assist you in delineating your agricultural operation.

Agricultural Operation (Ag Op) Delineation Decision Tree



In delineating your operation, you may elect to use the Farm Service Agency (FSA) farm boundaries. If you decide to use FSA farm boundaries in your application, the entire farm area must be included within the delineation.

Your delineation must include all agricultural land under your control, including land that is ineligible for CSP payments. Ineligible land includes:

- Land in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) or Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)
- Public land
- Forest land

Although the lands mentioned above are not eligible to receive payments, the conservation work on this land may be used to determine your eligibility for the program.

STEP 3: Minimum Level of Treatment Assessment

Land Use Designations

In order to be eligible for CSP, your land must be considered private agricultural land. Agricultural land means cropland, rangeland, pastureland, and other land on which food, fiber, and other agricultural products are produced. This "other land" includes land of varying cover types, such as cropped woodland and cropped marshes, managed primarily for the production of food, fiber or other agricultural products. Areas used for strip-cropping or alley-cropping and silvopasture practices will be included as agricultural land. The land use designations for CSP are listed below. Check all of the land types you wish to enroll in CSP. You will be asked to complete assessment items for the land uses you wish to enroll.

☐ **CROPLAND** (Please complete the assessment items on pages 11-13, then proceed to STEP 3. Benchmark Inventory on pages 17-18)

A land cover/use category, either irrigated or non-irrigated, that includes areas used for the production of adapted crops for harvest, including but not limited to land in row crops or close-grown crops, forage crops that are in a short or long term rotation with row or close-grown crops, permanent hayland, horticultural cropland, orchards, vineyards and field grown ornamentals.

Hayland: land managed for the production of forage crops that are machine harvested. The crop may be grasses, legumes, or a combination of both.

Cropped Woodland and Marshes: where at least 50% of the area is actively managed to produce an agricultural product. The crop may be grown symbiotically within the system, such as ginseng and wild rice, or harvested directly from the trees, such as maple syrup. For maple syrup production, the number of tapped trees will be used to determine the production area. Once established, the agricultural product is harvested annually. Plants are selectively removed as needed to control disease and insect pests or to prevent overcrowding of the desired species. If utilized, nutrient applications follow University recommendations for the desired crop.

Note: To be eligible for payment, the land must have been planted, considered to be planted, or devoted to crop production, as determined by NRCS, for at least 4 out of the 6 years from May 13, 1996 to May 13, 2002.

☐ **PASTURELAND** (Please complete the assessment items on pages 14-16, then proceed to STEP 3. Benchmark Inventory on pages 17-18)

A land cover/use category of land managed primarily for the production of introduced forage plants for grazing animals and includes improved pasture and silvopasture. Pastureland cover may consist of a single species in a pure stand, a grass mixture, or grass-legume mixture. Management usually consists of cultural treatments: fertilization, weed control, reseeding or renovation, and control of grazing.

☐ **RANGELAND** (Please complete the assessment items on pages 14-16, then proceed to STEP 3. Benchmark Inventory on pages 17-18)

A land cover/use category on which the climax or potential plant cover is composed principally of native grasses, grass-like plants, forbs, or shrubs suitable for grazing and browsing, and introduced forage species that are managed like rangeland. The term would include areas where introduced, hardy and persistent grasses are planted and practices such as deferred grazing, burning, chaining, and rotational grazing are used, with little or no chemicals or fertilizer being applied.

CROPLAND – Minimum Level of Treatment Assessment

The following assessment items will help you determine if the conservation system on the cropland you wish to enroll in CSP meets the minimum program treatment requirements. Final determination of minimum eligibility will be determined by utilizing the appropriate eligibility tool at an interview meeting with NRCS staff. The following questions are a sub-set of the important questions you will be asked at the interview. You will check the boxes next to the assessment items that describe your operation. Each assessment item pertains **only** to the land you intend to enroll in CSP. For those assessment items that DO NOT apply to the land you wish to enroll in CSP, write "**N/A**" next to the box.

Please complete all of the assessment items for each land use type you wish to enroll. Please note that these questions are provided to give the producer a sense and example of conservation measures that would need to be in place to meet the minimum eligibility for water quality. The producer may still be eligible even if every question is not checked. Once again final determination of minimum eligibility for water quality will be determined by utilizing the Soil and Water Quality Eligibility Tool.

Nutrients and Pesticides

In the following assessment items, the term **nutrient** includes organic and inorganic forms from all sources, such as commercial, animal waste, sludge, compost or agricultural by-products. **Pesticide** refers to herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, miticides, and rodenticides. **Pest** refers to insects, plant diseases, rodents and weeds.

1. Where nutrients are applied (manure and/or fertilizer), the rate is based on a nutrient management plan. ☐

   Note:

   A nutrient management plan provides recommendations or procedures to determine the amount, form, placement and timing of plant nutrients to obtain optimum yields while minimizing the risk of surface and ground water pollution. The procedure used to determine nutrient recommendations should be based on one or more of the following:
   - Realistic crop yield goal,
   - Soil test results,
   - Previous crop credits,
   - Leguminous crop credits,
   - Manure application history, and/or
   - Leaf tissue analysis (if appropriate).

   The nutrient management plan should address all sources of nutrients.

2. I use a basic Integrated Pest Management system with scouting and economic thresholds to manage pests and reduce pest management environmental risk. ☐

3. I have two years of written records or documentation that support my current system of fertilization and pest control activities. ☐

Note:

Records should include crop type, projected yields, soil analysis, dates and application rates of all nutrients used. Records should also include the target pest, crop type and type of pesticide used, dates and application rates or the cultural or biological control method used and dates implemented, including spot treatments.

4. When applying pesticides or manure, maintain a minimum setback distance of 33 feet between the application area and intermittent streams/ditches, perennial streams, surface water, surface water inlets and/or sink holes. ☐

Sediment

5. Erosion is controlled in the concentrated flow areas. ☐

Note:

- Conservation measures (such as crop rotation, residue management, contouring or buffers) are maintained to reduce erosion and minimize sediment from entering intermittent streams/ditches, ponds/lake surfaces.

6. Soil Tests are taken at least once every 5th year. ☐

Salinity

7. I have identified saline recharge and discharge areas, I monitor salinity levels and use techniques to manage salinity. ☐

The following are techniques to manage salinity:

- Irrigation and drainage water management
- Deep tillage
- Reduce time land is left fallow
- Use soil amendments, such as gypsum
- Plant salt-tolerant crops
- Well and/or surface water testing

Soil Quality

8. I grow high-residue crops, such as corn, small grains, sorghum at least 1 in 3 years in rotation. ☐

9. I maintain a ground cover between the rows of my vineyard, orchard or field grown ornamentals. ☐

10.	I include some of the following in my crop rotation. • No-till, strip-till, direct seeding, or mulch-till • Perennial grass or hay in rotation • Add organic soil amendments such as manure or compost • Grow cover and green manure crops	☐
	None of the above, but my soil tests results indicates an increase in organic matter.	☐
11.	I take measures to control soil compaction by avoiding tillage when soils are wet, utilizing permanent access roads, reducing tillage operations or growing deep rooted cover crops.	☐

Irrigation

12.	I adjust my irrigation rates for nutrient and pesticide applications.	☐
13.	I control irrigation-induced erosion by using a cover crop, perennial cover, polyacrylamide (PAM), residue management, or irrigation water management.	☐
14.	I apply irrigation water at rates that avoid water loss due to surface runoff or deep percolation.	☐

MINIMUM TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR CROPLAND

Most of the assessment items will need to be checked or have a "**N/A**" next to the check box for the cropland conservation system to be considered eligible. IF YOUR ASSESSMENT DIFFERS, you may not be eligible for CSP at this time. The more items you have checked, the better indication is of your potential eligibility in the CSP program. Please remember that final eligibility for water quality will be determined by completing the Soil and Water Eligibility Tool (SWET) at the interview with NRCS personnel.

Please review your assessment only for the land, or portion of land, that you wish to enroll in CSP. You may want to identify a smaller part of your operation by taking out land that is ineligible, and completing the assessment again.

PASTURELAND and RANGELAND – Minimum Level of Treatment Assessment

The following assessment items will help you determine if the conservation system on the pastureland and rangeland you wish to enroll in CSP meets the minimum program treatment requirements. Final determination of minimum eligibility will be determined by utilizing the appropriate eligibility tool at an interview meeting with NRCS staff. The following questions are a sub-set of the important questions you will be asked at the interview. You will check the boxes next to the assessment items that describe your operation. Each assessment item pertains **only** to the land you intend to enroll in CSP. For those assessment items that DO NOT apply to the land you wish to enroll in CSP, write "**N/A**" next to the box.

Please complete all of the assessment items for each land use type you wish to enroll.

1. I follow a schedule or written plan that includes a grazing schedule and rest periods for all acres grazed. ☐

   Note:

   A Grazing Management Plan provides the kind, class and number of animals that are supported based on the available forage supply. The grazing plan includes deferment, timing and duration of grazing.

2. I have an adequate grazing and roughage supply to meet my livestock needs on a monthly basis. ☐

3. I do have a grazing management contingency plan to adjust livestock numbers for changes in forage production due to drought, flooding, wildfire, and other natural events. ☐

4. I use watering facilities, salting locations, cross fences or herding techniques to improve grazing distributions within pastures. ☐

5. I have two years of written documentation or records that support my current system of grazing management activities. ☐

   Note:

   Records should include: Total grazing acres, forage production per pasture, number of livestock, grazing schedules, existing fences and watering facilities.

6. I manage livestock access to rivers, streams and other water courses. ☐

7. I prevent livestock access to sinkholes and other direct paths to groundwater to protect water quality. ☐

8. I manage access roads, stock trails and other critical areas to limit surface water runoff and to prevent erosion. ☐

9. I have taken adequate steps to safeguard ground water from contamination by properly protecting active or abandoned wells. ☐

   Examples of measures to protect wells:

   - Install sanitary well caps, tightly secured with a screened vent
   - Use pitless adaptors (a special pipe fitting that connects a water line to a well casing and provides a sanitary and frost-proof seal)
   - Prevent surface runoff from reaching the area immediately surrounding the well

Nutrients and Pesticides

In the following assessment items, the term **nutrient** includes organic and inorganic forms from all sources, such as commercial, animal waste, sludge, compost or agricultural by-products. **Pesticide** refers to herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, miticides, and rodenticides. **Pest** refers to insects, plant diseases, rodents and weeds.

10. When I apply fertilizer I follow a schedule or a written plan to apply fertilizers, animal manure, or agricultural by-products. ☐

    Note:

    A schedule or written plan provides recommendations on the amount, form, placement and timing of plant nutrients to obtain optimum yields while minimizing the risk of surface and groundwater pollution. The plan should address all sources of nutrients utilized.

11. When I apply pesticides I follow a schedule or a written plan to conduct pest control activities on my pastureland/rangeland. ☐

    Note:

    A schedule or written plan provides recommendations on the chemical (pesticides), biological (beneficial insects, controlled grazing), or cultural (brush management, burning), control of pests (insects, weeds, plant diseases or rodents). It outlines the use, amount, form, timing and application of the control method to obtain optimum yields while minimizing the risk of surface and groundwater pollution.

12. I do have two years of written records or documentation of my fertilization and pest control activities. ☐

    Note:

    Records should include crop type, projected yields, soil analysis, dates and application rates of all nutrients used. Records should also include the target pest, crop type and type of pesticide used, dates and application rates or the cultural or biological control method used and dates implemented, including spot treatments.

Irrigation

13.	I apply irrigation water at rates that avoid water loss due to surface runoff or deep percolation.	☐
14.	I monitor salinity levels and use techniques to manage salinity. The following techniques can be used: • Irrigation and drainage water management • Use soil amendments, such as gypsum • Plant salt-tolerant forages	☐

MINIMUM TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR PASTURELAND and RANGELAND

Assessment items 1-9 will need to be checked for pastureland and rangeland conservation system to be considered eligible. IF YOUR ASSESSMENT DIFFERS, you may not be eligible for CSP at this time. Please remember that final eligibility for water quality will be determined by completing the Grazing Lands Eligibility Tool at the interview with NRCS personnel.

Please review your assessment only for the land, or portion of land, that you wish to enroll in CSP. You may want to identify a smaller part of your operation by taking out land that is ineligible, and completing the assessment again.

STEP 4: Benchmark Inventory

The Benchmark Inventory will be the foundation of your CSP stewardship plan. It is important that you provide as much information about your operation as possible. You will be asked to describe your management system, such as your crop rotation and associated tillage, or your pasture rotation and associated grazing management activities. You will also be asked to describe any conservation work or practices you have already completed and identify any resource concerns you may have.

Remember to only include the land you wish to enroll in CSP

Examples

Name of Agricultural Operation: Benchmark Farms		Name of Applicant: Joanne Smith
Land Use: crop	Field Name or #: 2	Acres: 33
Crop Rotation/Tillage or Pasture Rotation/Grass Management	Conservation Work or Practices Already Installed or In Use on this Field	Resource Concerns, Problems or Opportunities You Would Like to Address
Corn/soybean/winter rye rotation;	nutrient management, pest	would like to improve habitat for quail
no-till corn into rye stubble. Disk corn	management, scouting, split application	
residue once prior to planting	of nitrogen on corn, grass field border	
soybeans into corn stubble		

Name of Agricultural Operation: Benchmark Ranch		Name of Applicant: John Smith
Land Use: range	Field Name or #: north end	Acres: 245
Crop Rotation/Tillage or Pasture Rotation/Grass Management	Conservation Work or Practices Already Installed or In Use on this Field	Resource Concerns, Problems or Opportunities You Would Like to Address
2 pasture switchback	watering sites, spring burn, fencing,	Invasive weeds from neighboring sites
	salt placement, brush management	starting to come into property

Developing your Benchmark Inventory

In the Tickfaw Watershed, the Benchmark Inventory that provides a foundation for your CSP stewardship plan will be derived by completing the Cropland and Grazing Land Conservation Records, Stewardship Practice and Activity Check List, and Enhancement Check List that are included in your CSP information packet. You may choose to submit a different format of conservation records. However, all of the information that is requested on the provided record forms must be compiled and included in your records. The requested records must cover the activities and operation for the past two (2) years. If you have any questions, or need assistance in completing your benchmark records, please contact your local NRCS Service Center.

Application Process Next Steps

Completing the self-assessment should have provided you with an indication of whether CSP is the right program for you at this time. CSP is one of several conservation programs and services available to help you meet your objectives. The first step towards achieving your conservation goals is to develop a Conservation Plan on your farm or ranch if you do not already have one.

> A **conservation plan** is a record of decisions and supporting information, for treatment of a unit of land. The plan describes the schedule of operations and activities needed to solve identified natural resource problems.

If you believe your operation is eligible for CSP, the next step is to schedule an interview with your local NRCS office. Only one application per eligible applicant will be accepted. During the interview, the NRCS staff will evaluate your Self-Assessment Workbook, benchmark inventory, and associated information to determine whether the applicant, the land, and the conservation system meet basic eligibility requirements and sign-up criteria.

If NRCS determines that your application meets the basic eligibility requirements and sign-up criteria, your application will be placed in a tier. Your tier placement will establish the length of your contract, final stewardship payment rate and contract payment limits. CSP is offered at three tiers of participation. The following are the minimum tier eligibility requirements:

> CSP Tier I - the benchmark condition inventory demonstrates to the satisfaction of NRCS that the applicant has addressed the nationally significant resource concerns of water quality and soil quality to the minimum level of treatment for eligible land uses on **part of the agricultural operation**. Only the acreage meeting such requirements is eligible for program participation.
>
> CSP Tier II - the benchmark condition inventory demonstrates to the satisfaction of NRCS that the applicant has addressed the nationally significant resource concerns of water quality and soil quality to the minimum level of treatment for all eligible land uses on the **entire agricultural operation**. Additionally, the applicant must agree to address another significant resource concern applicable to the watershed to be started no later than two years prior to contract expiration, and completed by the end of the contract period. If the applicable resource concern is already addressed or does not pertain to the operation, then this requirement is satisfied.
>
> CSP Tier III - the benchmark condition inventory demonstrates to the satisfaction of NRCS that the applicant has addressed all of the existing resource concerns listed in Section III of the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) with a resource management system that meets the **minimum level of treatment for all eligible land uses on the entire agricultural operation**.

Your application will then be placed into an enrollment category for funding consideration based on the criteria specified in the sign-up notice and the CSP Applicant Offer Certification Worksheet, which documents the applicant's final offer. An applicant must sign and submit the CSP Applicant Offer Certification Worksheet or the application will not be considered for funding. You may choose to be placed into the highest enrollment category for which your application qualifies. It is likely that you will have several tier and enrollment category options from which to choose. NRCS cannot make this decision for applicants or advise them on which tier and category combination is most advantageous for their situation, nor predict if funding will be available for any specific category. The NRCS staff will explain the requirements of the different options available to you so that you can make the right decision for your operation.

In addition to a stewardship payment, you may also receive payments for enhancements that you are willing to implement as part of your CSP contract. Enhancements are new or innovative activities, techniques, or methods used to improve resource conditions beyond the minimum level of treatment needed for protection. In general, enhancements provide resource benefits; result in an observable or measurable improvement to the condition of one or more of the soil, water air, plant or animal resources; and provide for more efficient resource use. During your interview, you will be provided with a list of the enhancements available in your watershed.

As a part of the self-assessment process, you must also complete the Self-Assessment Workbook Duplicative Payment Addendum, see Appendix A. This step will identify if the potential exists for you to receive payments from CSP and any other USDA conservation program for the same practice on the same land. Such duplicate payments are disallowed by the CSP statute.

Please review the Application Checklist, see Appendix H, to make sure you have all of the necessary information and documents ready for your interview.

Soil and Water Quality Eligibility Tool Questions

Minimum requirement determination questions for cropland to be used during the interview process.

1	Enter the length of your rotation in “years” for the offered acres.	
2	Check if the Soil Condition Index (SCI) was used to determine soil quality eligibility and the SCI was positive for the offered acres. This will trigger a pass for soil quality, but provide no points. Complete the remaining questions.	
3	Based on your rotation, enter the number of your harvested crops that are included in each residue category, 3a-e. These questions have crops grouped based on residue quality and quantity. Do not include cover crops in your responses.	
a	Enter the number of years in your rotation that include the following conditions: fallow crop periods (both chemical and tilled fallow), idle fields, or harvested sod.	
b	Enter the number of harvested crops in your rotation that are included in the list below or included in the comments (or are similar to those listed if not listed): Asparagus, Beans dry edible, Beets, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Strawberries, Vegetables, or similar crops.	
c	Enter the number of harvested crops in your rotation that are included in the list below (or are similar to the list below if not listed): Buckwheat, Canola, Chicory, Coffee, Corn silage, Cotton, Flaxseed, Guar, Hops, Lentils, Peanuts, Pineapples, Potatoes, Safflower, Soybeans, Sugarbeets, Sunflower, Tobacco, or similar crops (see list).	
d	Enter the number of harvested crops in your rotation that are included in the list below (or are similar to the list below if not listed): Amaranth, Berry/Fruit Crops (Trees and Shrubs), Corn Grain/Popcorn, Cranberries, Mint all for oil, Mushrooms, Nut Trees, Rapeseed, Rice, Small Grains, Sorghum all, Sugarcane, or similar crops (see list).	
e	Enter the number of harvested crops in your rotation that are included in the list below (or are similar to the list below if not listed): Dichondra, Grass Hay/Seed, Legume Hay /Seed, Lotus root, or similar herbaceous perennial crops.	
4	Enter the number of harvested crops in your rotation that have “full-width tillage, deeper than 4 inches” less than 60 days prior to planting. This does not include fertilizer injectors, in-row subsoilers or cover crops.	
5	Enter the number of crops in your rotation that have full-width tillage, deeper than 4 inches, performed post-harvest or more than 60 days prior to the normal or next planting date. Ignore alternate year cultivation in every other alleyway during dry season to manage moisture competition in orchards and vineyards. Does not include seedbed preparation immediately prior to planting a cover crop.	
6	Do you use controlled traffic consistently OR do you closely monitor soil moisture prior to all field operations to determine when it is safe to perform field operations to minimize soil compaction.	
7	Enter the number of crops in your rotation for which you establish using a no till system (no full width tillage) with at least 30% residue cover after planting.	
8	Enter the number of crops in your rotation for which you use full width tillage but maintain at least 30% soil cover (residues, composts or other mulch materials) after planting.	

9	Enter the number of crops in your rotation for which you establish a cover crop either prior to or after harvest and do not harvest the cover crop; OR you maintain vegetation between the rows in areas such as vineyards or orchards.	
10	Enter the number of years in your crop rotation that have perennial vegetation (hay or grass cover and permanent covers in orchards and vineyards) – include the establishment year.	
11	Enter the number of different crop species/types in your rotation, including different types of cover crops.	
12	CHECK if your operation is in a low rainfall area (less than 14 inches of annual precipitation) AND most of the water needed for crop production is applied through a sprinkler or drip irrigation system that produces no surface runoff. Does not include furrow or flood irrigation.	
13	CHECK if there are no visible signs of sheet and rill erosion AND concentrated flow areas show no signs of gullies AFTER 2 inches or less of rain in 24 hours (temporary or permanent).	
14	CHECK if you maintain at least two of the following in-field erosion control practices, such as but not limited to: (a) a crop rotation with high residue crops, (b) residue management practices, (c) cover crops, (d) covered alleyways, (e) contouring, (f) strip cropping, (g) windbreaks, (h) terraces, (i) grassed waterways, (j) contour buffer strips, (k) field borders, (l) water and sediment control basins.	
15	CHECK if you have water courses or water bodies (lakes, ponds, ditches or intermittent or perennial streams) on the offered acres.	
16	If #15 was checked yes, CHECK if all Perennial streams, ponds and lakes are bordered with vegetated buffers at least 20 feet wide. If livestock are grazed on these cropland acres, they restricted from water sources or water bodies by fencing or water gaps. For flooded rice and cranberry fields, dikes that are at least 20 feet wide can substitute for vegetated buffers.	
17	If #15 was checked yes, CHECK if you maintain a minimum setback of 33 feet or greater when applying manure or pesticides from all intermittent streams/ditches, perennial streams, ponds/lakes, surface water inlets and open sink holes. Spot spraying within the setback is permitted according to the pesticide label.	
18	CHECK if no organic or chemical insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides or other pesticides are used. (This triggers a pass for pesticides.)	
19	CHOOSE ONE (a-c) Integrated Pest Management level BELOW	
a	CHECK if you apply any pesticides (types listed in # 18) <u>without an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) system.</u>	
b	CHECK if you use a <u>low-level of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)</u> using <u>at least one of the following</u>: using pest-free seeds and transplants, cleaning tillage and harvesting equipment between fields, and scheduling irrigation to avoid situations conducive to disease development, using pest-resistant varieties, crop rotation, trap crops, pest scouting, biological pest controls.	
c	CHECK if you use a <u>basic (medium level) Integrated Pest Management (IPM)</u> system consisting of scouting and use economic thresholds before treating pests (weeds, insects, or disease) using spot spraying, banding or other reduced usage of chemical.	
20	CHECK if you use an environmental risk screening tool (such as WIN-PST or similar) to reduce pesticide risk to soil and water resources.	

21	CHECK if you use partial treatment by spot spraying, banding, directed spraying, or hand hoeing to reduce the amount of pesticide applied. This can be checked in addition to the IPM choices above and even if some pesticides are applied to the entire field.	
22	CHECK if you soil test (or tissue test for orchards, vineyards, or other permanent crops) all offered fields on a regular basis (at least once every 5 years) AND you use the test results to plan your nutrient application rates.	
23	CHECK if you apply your fertilizers and/or manure based on established or realistic crop yields from crop records.	
24	CHECK if you calculate the appropriate nitrogen and phosphorus credits from manure, irrigation water, previous crop, or soil organic matter from either an analyses or book values to plan your nutrient application rates and timing.	
25	CHECK if phosphorus is not applied on fields that have phosphorus soil tests indicated as 'very high' or 'excessive'; OR if no soils on the offered acres have 'very high' or 'excessive' ratings. Use the ratings on the soil test report or ratings for “very high” or higher from your Land Grant University. Small applications of starter fertilizer are exempted.	
26	CHECK if you do any of the following a) inject or incorporate phosphorus fertilizer or manure at least 2 inches deep within 24 hours of application, according to soil test results and realistic crop yields; b) apply phosphorus on 80% residue cover or 80% crop canopy cover, according to soil test results and realistic crop yields; or c) do not apply phosphorus.	
27	CHECK one of the Nitrogen Choices (27a-c) below. Answer as an average for the entire rotation:	
a	CHECK if you apply most of your nitrogen (manure or fertilizer) within one month prior to planting OR if most N is applied after soil temperatures are below 50oF.	
b	CHECK if you apply most of your nitrogen (manure or fertilizer) after the crop has emerged.	
c	CHECK if no nitrogen (manure or fertilizer) is ever applied OR if most N is applied as a split application (pre-plant & post plant), according to soil tests or crop growth stage.	
28	CHECK if manure, compost, or other organic amendment is applied to meet (but not exceed) crop nutrient needs, according to soil tests (or tissue tests in permanent crops).	
29	CHECK YES if Salinity or Sodicity is a concern on your offered acres. (NO triggers a Pass for Salinity or Sodicity). If YES, complete questions 30-33.	
30	CHECK if you have identified saline recharge or discharge areas on your offered acres.	
31	CHECK if you manage saline seeps by using high water use, salt tolerant crops or cropping pattern to manage or minimize salinity in the soil, surface water, and/or ground water.	
32	CHECK if you manage the type and rate of soil fertility amendments and irrigation based on your soil and irrigation chemistry for your saline or sodic soils on your offered acres.	
33	CHECK if you manage the application of irrigation water to minimize salt delivery to surface and ground water.	

Grazing Lands Eligibility Tool Questions

Minimum requirement determination questions for pasture and rangeland to be used during the interview process.

1	Adequate grazing and roughage supply is available to meet animal demands on a monthly basis to maintain or enhance plant vigor and composition, protect soil surface from accelerated erosion, and increase soil organic matter.	
2	A minimum of 2 years of written records or documentation to support the current grazing management system are available documenting the kind, class, and number of animals and identifying the periods of grazing, rest, and other treatments for each grazing unit.	
3	Livestock watering facilities; fences; salting, mineral, and supplemental feeding locations; and/or herding techniques are installed or implemented for proper livestock grazing distribution.	
4	Access roads, stock trails and other critical areas are managed to limit surface water runoff and control accelerated soil erosion.	
	Water Courses Do you have any water courses on offered acres? If Yes, Answer 5 and 6	
5	Manage grazing of riparian areas adjacent to water courses to maintain adequate plant cover to reduce amounts of sediment, pesticides, and nutrients in surface runoff; help stabilize streambanks; and increase soil organic matter.	
6	Livestock feeding areas and other areas where livestock concentrate, such as off stream watering areas and salting and mineral locations are not located adjacent to water courses and if located adjacent to water courses have buffers, filter strips, sediment basins, or other measures established to prevent direct, unfiltered runoff into surface waters.	
	Pesticides Do you apply any pesticides? If Yes, Answer 7 and 9	
7	**CHOOSE ONE (1) Integrated Pest Management CHOICE BELOW - IF "No IPM Used" CHECK HERE.**	
7a	(Choice 1) A full Integrated Pest Management system is not yet implemented, but one or more IPM management techniques that are appropriate for the site are utilized on a regular basis.	
7b	(Choice 2) A basic Integrated Pest Management system with scouting and economic thresholds is used to manage pests and reduce pest management environmental risk.	
7c	(Choice 3) A high level IPM system with pesticides applied only as a last resort is used to manage pests and reduce pest management environmental risk.	
8	Selective Treatment by spot application, individual plant treatment, or directed spraying is utilized to reduce amount of pesticide applied. This can be in addition to other IPM choices above.	

9	When applying **pesticides**, maintain a minimum setback distance of 33 feet between the application area and intermittent streams/ditches, perennial streams, ponds/lakes, surface water inlets and open sink holes. Or, utilize pesticides labeled for aquatic use that give desired control.	
	Nutrients Do you apply any nutrients? If Yes, Answer 10 and 17	
10	Nutrients are applied according to a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP). NMP should outline the amount, form, placement and timing of plant nutrients to obtain optimum yields while minimizing the risk of surface and groundwater pollution.	
11	Soil Tests are taken at least once every 5th year.	
12	When applying **manure**, maintain a minimum setback distance of 33 feet between the application area and intermittent streams/ditches, perennial streams, ponds/lakes, surface water inlets and open sink holes.	
13	No nitrogen (manure/fertilizer)is ever applied. (This triggers a pass for nitrogen)	
14	**CHOOSE ONE (1) NITROGEN CHOICE BELOW**	
14a	(Choice 1) Most nitrogen (manure or fertilizer) is applied at the beginning of the growing season as a top-dress.	
14b	(Choice 2) Most nitrogen (manure or fertilizer) is split applied: first application at start of growing season and then applied as needed after one or more grazing events during the year except last one of the growing season.	
15	No Phosphorus is applied via fertilizer, manure, biosolids, or other amendments. (This triggers a pass for phosphorus)	
16	No Phosphorus is applied where soil test indicate a “very high or excessive” rating. For pasture renovation only band apply starter application of P.	
17	Where applicable, nitrogen and phosphorus additions from manure, irrigation water, supplemental feed, and soil organic matter are calculated from analyses or book values and used to plan nutrient application rates.	
	Salinity Do you have any saline seeps or other management induced saline areas? If Yes, Answer 18 and 20	
18	Saline recharge and discharge areas have been identified.	
19	For saline seeps discharge areas, grazing is managed to maintain and/or improve existing salt tolerant vegetation.	
20	For saline seeps, grazing is managed in recharge area on permanent pasture and rangeland to provide optimum vegetation type and cover to minimize soil water percolation below root zone thereby reducing saline flows at seep discharge areas.	

CSP Self-Assessment Workbook

Duplicative Payments Addendum

Duplicative Payments

The Farm Bill and CSP regulations prohibit duplicative payments under CSP and other conservation programs on the same land. CSP applicants' assistance to provide the following requested information is appreciated.

Are you under agreement or contract to receive payments from another conservation program on any of the land being offered for enrollment during the current CSP sign-up.

YES_____ NO_____

If your response was "YES", please identify the:

- **Conservation program -**

_____

_____

- **What payment is for –**

_____

_____

_____

- **Land where applied –**

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B

CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM (CSP)
APPLICANT OFFER CERTIFICATION WORKSHEET

I, _____, the CSP Applicant, submit this *final offer* for consideration during CSP sign-up number _____. As Applicant, I have fulfilled my responsibilities to complete and submit the following:

☐ **CSP Self Assessment Workbook**

☐ **Benchmark Condition Inventory and associated information that includes:**

- ☐ A map, aerial photograph, or overlay that delineates the entire agricultural operation, including land use and acreage (this delineation will remain constant for the term of this offer, or contract if my offer is accepted, unless a contract modification request is approved by NRCS to add newly acquired land);
- ☐ A map of the land offered for CSP;
- ☐ A description of my production system(s) on the land offered;
- ☐ The existing conservation practices and resource concerns, problems, and opportunities on the land offered;
- ☐ Other information needed to document existing conservation treatment and activities (written records or documentation of historic stewardship practices are needed for the Applicant Interview);
- ☐ A description of the significant resource concerns and other resource concerns that I am willing to address through the adoption of new conservation practices and measures; and
- ☐ A list of enhancements I am currently applying, or will apply.

☐ **I certify that:**

1. The Benchmark Condition Inventory and the written records or documentation that support the inventory are accurate to the best of my knowledge.
2. Two years of written records or documentation are available and are being used for the management of my conservation system. I will supply written records and documentation upon NRCS request.

☐ **I understand that the evaluation of my offered land was based on the typical system information I represented and provided to NRCS in the CSP Self-Assessment Workbook, the Benchmark Condition Inventory, and during the Applicant Interview. If my offer is accepted, a Self-Assessment Verification will be conducted to verify that the conservation stewardship represented during this process is on the land. By my signature, I expressly agree with and make final the following tier, category, and subcategory assignments for my CSP sign-up number _____ application:**

TIER_____CATEGORY_____SUBCATEGORY_____

_____ _____

APPLICANT **DATE**

October 2006

Control of Land Assurance by Owner Worksheet

CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM (CSP)

Control of Land Assurance by Owner

LAND UNIT DESCRIPTION:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

For the above described land unit that I own, I provide my assurance that my Tenant, _____, will have control of this land and has the authority to act as decision maker for the management and operation of this land for the purpose of satisfying the terms and conditions of a Conservation Stewardship Contract, for the proposed contract period.

_____ _____

Landowner Signature **Date**

This form is available electronically.

CCC-526
(10-15-03)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Commodity Credit Corporation

PAYMENT ELIGIBILITY
AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME CERTIFICATION

1A. County FSA Office or Service Center Address *(Include Zip Code)*

1B. Telephone Number *(Include Area Code)*:

The authority to collect the following information is Pub. L. 107-171. This authority allows for the collection of information without prior OMB approval mandated by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

NOTE: *The following statements are made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a), as amended. The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Pub. L. 107-171), and the regulations at 7 CFR Part 1400, as amended, authorize the collection of the information required by this certification. The information will be used to establish payment eligibility in accordance with the requirements of the law for applicants who are requesting program benefits subject to these provisions. Providing this information is voluntary; however, failure to furnish the requested information will result in a determination of ineligibility for program benefits. This information may be used by and provided to other agencies, IRS, Department of Justice, other State or Federal law enforcement agencies, and in response to orders of a court magistrate, or administrative tribunal. All information provided herein is subject to verification by the Commodity Credit Corporation. As provided in various statutes, failure to provide true and correct information may result in civil suit or criminal prosecution and the assessment of penalties or pursuit of other remedies.* ***PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COUNTY FSA OR SERVICE CENTER OFFICE.***

2A. Individual or Entity's Name and Address *(Include Zip Code)*

2B. Telephone Number *(Include Area Code)*:

3. Program Year

4. Identification Number *(SSN or Tax ID No.)*

CERTIFICATION OF AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME: Each individual or entity that requests program benefits must complete a certification of average adjusted gross income.

By signing this form, I acknowledge that:

- all definitions, requirements, and examples on Page 3 of this form were reviewed;
- this certification of average adjusted gross income is true and correct, and will be considered a continuous certification through 2007, unless changes or revisions are submitted;
- it is my responsibility to timely notify FSA in writing of any changes in the farming, ranching or forestry operation, or financial status that may affect this certification;
- evidence such as tax records, certified public accountant's certification, or other documentation may be required to validate this certification.

5. Type of Operation *(Check One)*

☐ Individual *(Complete Item 6)*

☐ Trust or Estate *(Complete Item 7)*

☐ Corporation *(Complete Item 8)*

☐ Limited Partnership, Limited Liability Company, Limited Liability Partnership or Similar Entity *(Complete Item 9)*

☐ Tax-Exempt or Non-Profit Organization *(Complete Item 10)*

6. **Individual** For individuals that file the IRS Form 1040, specific lines on the form represent the adjusted gross income and the income from farming, ranching or forestry operations. The income from farming, ranching or forestry is derived from the schedule F, IRS form 4835 or comparable form.

A. The average of the adjusted gross income, as specified on the IRS Form 1040 (or similar item on IRS Forms for individuals) for the applicable 3 years, was $2.5 million or less. YES ☐ NO ☐

If "NO", proceed to Item 6B.

B. The average of the amount reported to be from farming, ranching, or forestry operations on the IRS Form 1040 (or similar on Form 1040A or 1040EZ) for the applicable years, was at least 75 percent of the amount represented as adjusted gross income on the Form 1040 (or comparable amount on Form 1040A or 1040EZ). YES ☐ NO ☐

C. Signature

Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

CERTIFICATION OF AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME *(Continuation)*

7. **Trust or Estate** For a trust or estate, the adjusted gross income is the total income and charitable contributions reported to IRS on the IRS Form 1041, or comparable forms. The income for farming, ranching and forestry is derived from the Schedule F, IRS form 4835 or comparable form.

A. The average of the adjusted gross income as defined above, and reported to the IRS for the applicable 3 years, was $2.5 million or less. YES ☐ NO ☐

If "NO", proceed to Item 7B.

B. The average of the amount represented to be from farming, ranching, or forestry operations as reported to the IRS for the applicable years, was at least 75 percent of the amount used for Item 7A above. YES ☐ NO ☐

C. Signature	Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

8. **Corporation** For a corporation, the adjusted gross income is the total of the final taxable income and any charitable contributions reported to the IRS on Form 1120, or comparable forms. The income from farming, ranching and forestry is derived from the Schedule F, IRS form 4835 or comparable form.

A. The average of the adjusted gross income as defined above and reported to the IRS for the applicable 3 years, was $2.5 million or less. YES ☐ NO ☐

If "NO", proceed to Item 8B.

B. The average of the amount represented to be from farming, ranching, or forestry operations as reported to the IRS for the applicable years, was at least 75 percent of the amount used for Item 8A above. YES ☐ NO ☐

C. Signature	Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

9. **Limited Partnership (LP), Limited Liability Company (LLC), Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) or Similar Entity** For an LP, LLC or LLP, the adjusted gross income is the total income from trade or business activities plus guaranteed payments to the members as reported to the IRS. The income from farming, ranching and forestry is derived from the Schedule F, IRS form 4835 or comparable form.

A. The average of the adjusted gross income as defined above and reported to the IRS for the applicable 3 years, was $2.5 million or less. YES ☐ NO ☐

If "NO", proceed to Item 9B.

B. The average of the amount represented to be from farming, ranching, or forestry operations as reported to the IRS for the applicable years, was at least 75 percent of the amount used for Item 9A above. YES ☐ NO ☐

C. Signature	Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

10. **Tax-exempt or Non-profit Organization** For a tax-exempt and non-profit organization, the adjusted gross income is the unrelated business taxable income excluding any income from non-commercial activities as reported to the IRS. The income from farming, ranching and forestry would be derived from the schedule F, or IRS form 4835 or comparable form.

A. The average of the adjusted gross income as defined above and reported to the IRS for the applicable 3 years, was $2.5 million or less. YES ☐ NO ☐

If "NO", proceed to Item 10B.

B. The average of the amount represented to be from farming, ranching or forestry interests as reported to the IRS for the applicable years, was at least 75 percent of the amount used for Item 10A above. YES ☐ NO ☐

C. Signature	Date (MM-DD-YYYY)

AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 included average adjusted gross income as a payment eligibility requirement. Any individual or entity requesting certain 2003 through 2007 program payments will be subject to this provision. Any individual or entity that is determined to have an average adjusted gross income, as defined, that is less than 75 percent from farming, ranching or forestry operations and that exceeds $2.5 million will be ineligible for any covered benefit during the applicable year.

DEFINITIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION

Average Adjusted Gross Income means the average of the adjusted gross income or comparable measure of the individual or entity over the preceding 3 tax years. For instance, if 2003 program benefits are requested, the tax years for average adjusted gross income determination would be 2002, 2001 and 2000.

Entity means a corporation, joint stock company, association, limited partnership, charitable organization, or similar entity, including any such entity or organization participating in the operation as a partner in a general partnership, a participant in a joint venture, a grantor in a revocable trust, or as a participant in a similar entity, as determined by the Secretary.

The manner in which the Adjusted Gross Income can be determined for an entity can be found in the regulations at 7 CFR Part 1400.

Commensurate Reduction means that any covered benefit issued to an entity, general partnership, or joint venture shall be reduced by an amount that is commensurate with the direct or indirect ownership interest the entity, general partnership, or joint venture of each individual who does not comply with the adjusted gross revenue requirement.

Certification of Compliance means that an individual or entity shall provide either a certification by a certified public accountant that the average adjusted gross income does not exceed the requirement; or provide information and documentation regarding the adjusted gross income through other procedures established by the Secretary.

Income from farming, ranching or forestry means income derived from producing crops, livestock, or unfinished raw forestry products.

Special Rules for Certain Individual and Entities are applicable to those entities that are not required to file a tax return, and individuals and entities that did not have taxable income in one or more tax years used to determine the 3-year average. Please consult with personnel at your local FSA office or service center for more information.

EXAMPLES

Situation 1 - Joe Smith requests benefits from the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program and from a Conservation Reserve Program contract approved effective for 2003. Mr. Smith's average adjusted gross income exceeds $2.5 million and was all from farming and livestock operations.

Determination - At least 75 percent of the average adjusted gross income was received from farming, ranching and forestry operations. Therefore, Mr. Smith complies with the adjusted gross income requirement and is eligible for the program benefits requested.

Situation 2 - Grace Jones is a share rent landowner and requests benefits from the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program on a contract with her tenant. Ms. Jones' average adjusted gross income was less than $2.5 million and over 75 percent was from non-agricultural interests.

Determination - Less than 75 percent of the average adjusted gross income was from farming, ranching and forestry, but the amount was less than $2.5 million. Therefore, Ms. Jones is eligible for the program benefits requested.

Situation 3 - William Davis is a share rent landowner and requests benefits from the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program on a contract with his tenant. Mr. Davis' average adjusted gross income was greater than $2.5 million and over 75 percent was from non-agricultural sources.

Determination - Less than 75 percent of the average adjusted gross income was from farming, ranching and forestry, and exceeds $2.5 million. Therefore, Mr. Davis is ineligible for the program benefits requested.

Situation 4 - Mark Johnson is a 25 percent stockholder in Johnson Farms, Inc. Johnson Farms requests benefits from the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program. The average adjusted gross income for Johnson Farms was all from farming and ranching. The average adjusted gross income for each of the stockholders was mostly from non-agricultural sources and the amounts were less than $2.5 million with the exception of Mark.

Determination - Any program benefit issued to an entity, general partnership, or joint operation shall be reduced by an amount commensurate with the direct or indirect ownership interest of an individual or entity who has an average adjusted gross income in excess of $2.5 million. Therefore, Johnson Farms is eligible for the benefits requested, but reduced by the 25 percent, which represents the interest held by Mark.

This form is available electronically.
AD-1026 Appendix (04-20-06)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Form Approved - OMB No. 0560-0185

Appendix to Form AD-1026
Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification

The following conditions of eligibility are required for persons to receive any USDA loans or other program benefits that are subject to highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions, unless an exemption has been granted by USDA.

By signing Form AD-1026, Item 12, the producer certifies receipt of this form, and unless an exemption has been granted by USDA, agrees to the following on any farms in which such person has an interest:

A	**NOT** to plant or produce an agricultural commodity on highly erodible fields unless actively applying an approved conservation plan or maintaining a fully applied conservation system.
B	**NOT** to plant or produce an agricultural commodity on wetlands converted after December 23, 1985.
C	**NOT** to convert wetlands by draining, dredging, filling, leveling, landclearing or any other means that would allow the planting of any crop, pasture, agricultural commodity, or other such crops.
D	**NOT** to use proceeds from any FSA farm loan, insured or guaranteed, or any USDA cost-share program, in such a way that might result in negative impacts to wetlands, except for those projects evaluated and approved by NRCS.

NOTE: Signature on Form AD-1026 gives representatives of USDA authorization to enter upon and inspect all farms in which the producer has an interest for the purpose of confirming the above statements.

Any questions concerning the requirements of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, shall be directed to your County FSA Office personnel before signing AD-1026 in Item 12.

NOTE: *The following statements are made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a) and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended. The authority for requesting the following information to be supplied on this form is the Food Security Act of 1985, Pub. L. 99-198, and regulations promulgated under the Act (7 CFR Part 12). The information will be used to determine eligibility for program benefits and other financial assistance administered by USDA agencies. The information may be furnished to other USDA agencies, IRS, Department of Justice, or other State and Federal law enforcement agencies, and in response to orders of a court magistrate or administrative tribunal. Furnishing the Social Security Number is voluntary. Furnishing the other requested information is voluntary; however, failure to furnish to correct, complete information will result in a determination of ineligibility for certain program benefits and other financial assistance administered by USDA agencies. The provisions of criminal and civil fraud statutes, including 18 USC 286, 287, 371, 641, 1001; 15 USC 714m; and 31 USC 3729, may be applicable to the information provided by the producer on this form.*

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0185. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. ***RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM AD-1026 TO YOUR COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) OFFICE (address printed in Item 6 of AD-1026A).***

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND CONSERVATION (HELC) AND WETLAND CONSERVATION (WC) CERTIFICATION

(See Page 3 for Nondiscrimination, Public Burden and Privacy Act Statements).

1. Name of Producer	2. I.D. Number *(Last 4 digits only)*	3. Crop Year

	YES	NO
4. Do you have any interest in land that produces or could produce an agricultural commodity? ***If "YES", or, if you are a Farm Loan Applicant continue with Item 5. If "NO", and you are not a farm loan applicant, go to Item 12 and sign and date.***	☐	☐
5. ***For farm loan applicants only:*** Will you conduct any activities for fish production, trees, vineyards, shrubs, building construction, or other non-agricultural purposes on lands for which a wetland determination has not been completed by NRCS?	☐	☐
6. Are you a landlord or tenant on any farm that will not be in compliance with HELC and WC provisions? ***If "YES", enter the farm number or contact your County FSA Office before completing this form. Farm Number: _____ (Contact your county FSA office if you are unsure of the HEL or wetland determinations applicable to your farming interests.)***	☐	☐
7. Do any of your landlords refuse to comply with HELC requirements on any farms? ***If "YES", enter the farm number or contact your County FSA Office before completing this form. Farm Number: _____***	☐	☐
8. List affiliated persons with farming interests. ***See Page 3 for an explanation. Enter "NONE", if applicable.***		

	YES	NO
9. During the crop year entered in Item 3 above, or the term of a requested USDA loan, did you or will you plant and produce an agricultural commodity on land for which a highly erodible determination has not been made?	☐	☐
10. Since December 23, 1985, or during the current crop year, or during the term of a requested USDA loan, has anyone performed, or will anyone perform any activities to:		
A. Create new drainage systems, or conduct land leveling, filling, dredging, land clearing, excavation, or stump removal, that has **NOT** been evaluated by NRCS? ***If "YES", indicate year(s): _____***	☐	☐
B. Improve or modify an existing drainage system that has **NOT** been evaluated by NRCS? ***If "YES", indicate year(s): _____***	☐	☐
C. Maintain an existing drainage system that has **NOT** been evaluated by NRCS? ***If "YES", indicate the year(s): _____*** *Note: Maintenance is the repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of the capacity of existing drainage systems to allow for the continued use of wetlands currently in agricultural production and the continued management of other areas as they were used before December 23, 1985. This allows a person to reconstruct or maintain the capacity of the original system or install a replacement system that is more durable or will realize lower maintenance or costs.*	☐	☐

11. If "YES" to Items 5,10A and/or 10B or 10C enter the following for the land the answer applies to:
   - A. Farm and/or tract/field number: _____
   - B. Activity: _____
   - C. Current land use (specify crops): _____
   - D. County: _____

A "YES" answer in Items 5, 9 or 10 authorizes FSA to refer this AD-1026 to NRCS. If you check "YES" to Item 10C, NRCS does not have *to conduct a certified wetland determination. (Contact your County FSA Office if you are unsure about the answers to Items 5, 9 and 10.)*

Continuous AD-1026 Certification:

I have read the AD-1026 Appendix and understand and agree that my eligibility for certain USDA program benefits is contingent upon this certification of compliance with highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985 as amended, and if a determination is made that results in a violation and ineligibility, I agree to refund all applicable payments.

- **I agree to the terms and conditions stated on AD-1026 Appendix on all land in which I have or will have an interest and understand that I am responsible for any non-compliance with these provisions.**
- **I agree that I will file a revised AD-1026 if there are any changes in my operation or activities that may affect compliance with these provisions.**
- **I understand that affiliated persons are also subject to compliance with these provisions and their failure to comply or file AD-1026 will result in loss of eligibility to persons or enterprises with whom they are affiliated.** ***(See Page 3 of this form for affiliated persons.)***

12. Signature of Producer ▶ ***I hereby certify that the information on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and I authorize NRCS to make a HEL and/or certified wetland determination on the tract or farm numbers listed above.***

Producer's Signature _____ Date *(MM-DD-YYYY* _____

13. Referral to NRCS *(Completed by FSA)* *Sign and date if a NRCS determination is needed for any reason including a "YES" answer in Items 5, 9, 10A, 10B, or 10C.*	13A. Signature of FSA Representative	13B. Date *(MM-DD-YYYY)*

ORIGINAL - FSA COPY ☐ **NRCS COPY** ☐ **PRODUCER'S COPY** ☐

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ITEM 8 OF AD-1026

The producer requesting benefits on AD-1026 shall attach a list of the applicable affiliated persons with farming interests who are required to file AD-1026. Follow the rules in this table to determine affiliated persons.

IF *producer, requesting benefits is a (an) . . .*	***THEN*** *affiliated persons who must file AD-1026 if they have farming interests are . . .*
individual **NOTE: If the individual filing is a minor child, the father and mother shall be listed as affiliates**	spouse or minor children with separate farming interests, or who receives benefits under their individual ID number.
	estates, trusts, partnerships, and joint ventures in which the individual filing, or the individual's spouse or minor children have an interest.
	corporations in which the individual filing or the individual's spouse or minor children have more than 20% interest.
general partnership	first level members of the entity.
limited partnership	
limited liability company	
joint venture	
estate	
irrevocable or revocable trust	
Indian tribal venture or group	
corporation with stockholders	first level shareholders with more than 20% interest in the corporation
State	none
Church or other charitable organization	
county	
city	
public schools	
corporation with no stockholders	

KEY TO NRCS DETERMINATIONS IN ITEMS 8 THROUGH 11 LISTED ON AD-1026A

8. HEL = Highly Erodible Land:
- **"Y"** = NRCS determined highly erodible land.
- **"N"** = NRCS determined no highly erodible land.
- **" "** = NRCS has not made a determination.

9. 027 = Approved Conservation Plan (CPA-027):
- **"Y"** = Tract has an approved conservation plan.
- **"N"** = Tract **does not have** an approved conservation plan.
- **"X"** = HEL flag is "Y". Producer has a 2-year grace period after soil survey is available to obtain an approved conservation plan.

10. A027 = Applying Conservation Plan:
- **"Y"** = Producer is actively applying an approved conservation plan or system.
- **"N"** = Producer is **NOT** actively applying an approved conservation plan or system.

11. W = Wetlands:
- **"Y"** = NRCS determined wetlands on this tract. (* See footnote.)
- **"N"** = NRCS determined no wetlands on this tract.
- **" "** = NRCS has not made wetland determinations on entire tract.

***** NRCS has determined a wetland does exist on this tract. Contact your local NRCS office or FSA office for details concerning the location of the wetland and restrictions applying to the land according to NRCS determination before planting an agricultural commodity or performing any drainage or manipulation on this tract.

NOTE: *The following statements are made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a) and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended. The authority for requesting the following information to be supplied on this form is the Food Security Act of 1985, Pub. L. 99-198, and regulations promulgated under the Act (7 CFR Part 12). The information will be used to determine eligibility for program benefits and other financial assistance administered by USDA agencies. The information may be furnished to other USDA agencies, IRS, Department of Justice, or other State and Federal law enforcement agencies, and in response to orders of a court magistrate or administrative tribunal. Furnishing the Social Security Number is voluntary. Furnishing the other requested information is voluntary; however, failure to furnish correct, complete information will result in a determination of ineligibility for certain program benefits and other financial assistance administered by USDA agencies. The provisions of criminal and civil fraud statues, including 18 USC 286, 287, 371, 641, 1001; 15 USC 714m; and 31 USC 3729, may be applicable to the information provided by the producer on this form.*

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0185. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. ***RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM AD-1026 TO YOUR COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) OFFICE (address printed in item 6 of AD-1026A).***

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

NRCS-CPA-1200
OMB 0578-0013 Expires 9/30/09

CONSERVATION PROGRAM APPLICATION

Name:	**Application Number:**
Address:	**Application Date:**
	County and State:
Telephone:	**Watershed:**
	Subaccount:
Location (Legal Description or Farm and Tract Number):	

(Please note that not all questions apply to all Programs)

1. This is an application to participate in the:

❑ **Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)**	❑ **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**
✔ **Conservation Security Program (CSP)**	❑ **Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)**

2. ❑ **Yes** ❑ **No** **If applying for the EQIP or CSP, are you either a Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher or a Beginning Farmer or Rancher?**

If you wish to apply in either of these categories, you must complete certification requirements. For more information please go to the following url: http://www.lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/

3. ❑ **Yes** ❑ **No** **Do you have farm records established with the appropriate USDA Service Center Agency?**

If no, you must establish them with the appropriate USDA Service Center Agency prior to submitting this application.

4. Are you applying for a conservation program contract as an (check one of the following):

❑ **Individual**

❑ **Entity** (Corporation, Limited Partnership, Trust, Estate, etc...)

a) Please enter entity name and tax identification number:

Name: **Tax Number:**

b) ❑ **Yes** ❑ **No** Do you have appropriate documents including proof to sign for the entity?

❑ **Joint Operation** (General Partnership, Joint Venture)

a) Please enter entity name and tax identification number:

Name: **Tax Number:**

b) ❑ **Yes** ❑ **No** Do you have appropriate documents including proof to sign for the entity?

5. ❑ **Yes** ❑ **No** **If applying for the EQIP, are you engaged in livestock or agricultural production, and have you produced at least $1000 of agricultural products in a year?**

6. Is the land being offered for enrollment used for agricultural or livestock production?

❑ **Agriculture** **Crop Type:**

❑ **Livestock Production** **Livestock Type:**

7. ❑ Yes ❑ No If applying for the EQIP and if the application includes irrigation practices, has the land been irrigated at least 2 of the last 5 years?

8. The land is (Check all that apply):

- ❑ **Private Land**
- ❑ **Public Land (Federal, State, or Local Government)**
- ❑ **Tribal, Alloted, Ceded or Indian Land**

9. Certification of control of the land under the application:

- ❑ **Deed or other evidence of land ownership**
- ❑ **Written lease agreement**
  Years of control are through
- ❑ **Other agreement or legal conveyance**
  Years of control are through

10. ❑ Yes ❑ No Is the land under this application enrolled in any other conservation program?

On the farm identified above, the Applicant agrees to participate in the identified program if the offer is accepted by the NRCS. The undersigned person shall hereafter be referred to as the "Participant." The participant understands that starting a practice prior to contract approval causes the practice to be ineligible for program financial assistance. The participant will obtain the landowner's signature on the contract or provide written authorization to install structural practices.

The Participant agrees not to start any financially assisted practice or activity or engage the reimbursable services of a certified Technical Service Provider before a Contract is executed by CCC. The Participant may request, in writing, a waiver of this requirement for financially assisted practices by the NRCS State Conservationist.

All participants that certify eligibility as a Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher or Beginning Farmer will provide all records necessary to justify their claim as requested by a NRCS representative. It is the responsibility of the participant to provide accurate data to support all items addressed in this application at the request of NRCS. False certifications are subject to criminal and civil fraud statutes.

The Participant acknowledges that highly erodible land conservation/wetland conservation, adjusted gross income certifications, and member information for entities and joint operations are on file with the appropriate USDA Service Center Agency.

11. ❑ Yes ❑ No I've read the appropriate program appendix.

Applicant Signature	**Date**

PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a) and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0578-0013. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 45 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of Discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a). This information is used to track contract or agreement progress. The authority for requesting the following information is 7 CFR 630 (Long Term Contracting); 7 CFR 1410 (CRP); 7 CFR 631 and 702 (IEQIP); 7 CFR 636 (WHIP); 7 CFR 622 (WPFPP); 7 CFR 1465 (AMA); 7 CFR 1469 (CSP); 7 CFR 625 (HFR); 7 CFR 1494 (FRPP); and 7 CFR 1467 (WRP). Furnishing information is voluntary and will be confidential; however, it is necessary in order to receive assistance.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Commodity Credit Corporation

APPENDIX TO FORM NRCS-CPA-1202 CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM (CSP) - CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP CONTRACT

1 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR CSP

A The Participant must complete and file Form AD-1026 (Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification) and meet the requirements set forth therein, in accordance with the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended. By signing this Conservation Stewardship Contract (Contract), the Participant certifies that the Participant has completed and filed the AD-1026 and meets the requirements set forth in the highly erodible land conservation-wetland conservation (HELC-WC) provisions.

B The Participant must complete and file Form CCC-526 (Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income Certification) and meet the requirements therein. By signing this Contract, the Participant certifies that the Participant has completed and submitted Form CCC-526 and meets the requirements therein.

C The Participant must complete and file Form CCC-501A (Member's Information), or its equivalent, if he or she represents a business classified as an entity or joint operation by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) under 7 CFR part 1400.

D The Participant must have control of the land for the Contract period. By signing this Contract, the Participant certifies that the Participant will control the land subject to this Contract for the term of this Contract period and shall, upon demand, provide evidence to CCC demonstrating that such Participant will control the land for that period. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and NRCS will determine Tribal land eligibility.

E A Participant shall not be eligible for payments for: (1) practices that are required to meet HELC and WC compliance requirements found in 7 CFR part 12, (2) practices that are included in maintenance agreements (with financial reimbursements for maintenance) that have existed prior to participation, (3) the construction or maintenance of animal waste storage or treatment facilities or associated waste transport or transfer devices for animal feeding operations, (4) the purchase or maintenance of equipment, (5) a non-land based structure that is not integral to a land based practice, (6) practices that were applied with financial assistance through any

other USDA conservation program, or (7) enhancement activities that are also earning financial assistance payments through another USDA program on the same land, at the same time.

F Land otherwise eligible for the CSP shall not be eligible if the land is publicly owned, enrolled in CRP, WRP, or GRP, is subject to a deed restriction prohibiting the application of the conservation stewardship plan and associated stewardship practices and activities, or where a benefit has or will be obtained from a Federal agency in return for the Participant's agreement not to implement the conservation plan and associated practices on the land during the same time as the land would be enrolled in the CSP. By signing this Contract, the Participant certifies that no such restrictions apply to the subject land.

G A Participant is responsible for obtaining the authorities, permits, easements, or other approvals necessary for the implementation, operation, and maintenance of the conservation practices in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. A Participant must comply with all laws and is responsible for all effects or actions resulting from the Participant's performance under this Contract.

H The Participant who submitted the CSP application must be an owner, operator, landlord, tenant, or share cropper who shares in the risk of producing any crop or livestock; and must be entitled to a share in the crop or livestock available for marketing from the applicable agriculture operation (or would have shared had the crop or livestock been produced) to be eligible to participate in CSP.

2 SELECTING OFFERS FROM APPLICANTS

All applications from priority watersheds will be evaluated using enrollment categories based on specific sign-up criteria until funding is exhausted. Form NRCS-CPA-1200, Conservation Program Contract Application, and this NRCS-CPA-1202-CSP (Appendix) represent a request to enter into the Conservation Security Program under the terms specified in this Contract.

3 AGREEMENT

A The Participant agrees to:

(1) Place eligible land into the CSP for the period of time as specified on Form NRCS-CPA-1202 beginning on the date this Contract is executed by CCC;

(2) Not start any financially assisted practice or activity, or engage the reimbursable services of a certified Technical Service

Provider before this Contract is executed by CCC. The Participant may request, in writing, a waiver of this requirement by the NRCS State Conservationist or designee;

(3) Secure funding for the desired services of a TSP through contract development or contract modification with NRCS before engaging the services of a TSP;

(4) Apply or commence financially assisted practices or activities as agreed to in this Contract. The Participant may request, in writing, a waiver of this requirement and Contract modification from the NRCS State Conservationist or designee;

(5) Establish conservation practices and activities specified in the Contract as scheduled, to operate and maintain new or existing practices or activities specified in the conservation stewardship plan for the intended purpose for the life span identified in this Contract, and to comply with the terms and conditions of this Contract and all Federal, State, Tribal and local laws;

(6) Share responsibility for ensuring that Form NRCS-CPA-1155, Contract Plan Schedule of Operations, is accurate and complete. The NRCS has no authority to compensate participants for practices and/or activities that are not in the Contract at the time of obligation.

(7) Not undertake any action on land under the Participant's control which tends to defeat the purposes of the CSP program, as determined by CCC;

(8) Discontinue work in the general area of the site and notify NRCS immediately if during the application of any practice or activity a previously unidentified endangered species, archeological or historical site is encountered;

(9) Provide receipts, as necessary, as proof of payments, and to maintain proof of payment documentation for 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the practice or activity was completed, and to present this documentation to CCC within 30 days if selected for administrative compliance check;

(10) Allow access to the land under Contract to the CCC representative for monitoring progress of this Contract;

(11) Supply records and information as required by CCC to determine compliance with the Contract and requirements of CSP

within 30 days of request;

(12) Maintain at least the level of stewardship identified in the benchmark inventory for the entire Contract period, as appropriate, and implement and maintain any new practices or activities required in the contract;

(13) Modify or update an existing practice, if necessary, to meet minimum Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) practice standards within a reasonable time, as determined by the State Conservationist, after the date of determination that the practice does not meet the standard;

(14) In the event of land transfer, notify NRCS within 60 days of the transfer of interest to an eligible transferee who accepts the contract's terms and conditions, or the contract will be terminated; and

(15) Comply with sign-up announcement requirements.

4 CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PLAN

A By signing the Contract, the participant agrees:

(1) That the conservation stewardship plan is hereby incorporated as a part of the Contract; and

(2) To implement and maintain the practices and activities as identified and scheduled in the conservation stewardship plan.

5 PAYMENTS

A Payment under this Contract is subject to the availability of funds. In the event that annual funding is insufficient to fund existing contract requirements, payments on the existing contracts will be prorated in that contract year, as determined by the Chief.

B Subject to the availability of funds, CCC will make stewardship, existing practice, new practice or enhancement payments at the rates specified in this Contract after a determination by CCC that an eligible practice or activity has been established in compliance with the conservation stewardship plan of operations and in accordance with appropriate standards and specifications, and appropriate instructions. In order to receive payments, the Participant, upon technical certification of the completed practice or activity, must execute and file with CCC a Form NRCS-CPA-1245, Practice

Approval and Payment Application, along with any receipts, as necessary.

C In order to be reimbursed for technical services approved under this agreement and performed by a certified Technical Service Provider ("TSP") hired by the Participant, a Participant must execute a request for payment in Form NRCS-CPA-1245. The Participant must also submit to CCC an invoice from the TSP for the work performed, as well as any documentation CCC may require in order to ensure that the technical services were carried out in accordance with NRCS requirements and specifications.

It is the Participant's responsibility to ensure that the technical services obtained from a TSP hired by the Participant meet program requirements. CCC will not reimburse the Participant if the technical services provided by the TSP do not meet CSP requirements. If CCC terminates this Contract as provided under paragraph 10 of this appendix, CCC may seek reimbursement of any TSP payments made to the Participant.

D All payments received as part of a Contract are reported to the United States Internal Revenue Service. For information related to tax liabilities consult with a tax accountant or refer to IRS publication 225, Farmers Tax Guide.

E Payments will only be issued for practices that meet or exceed the practice standards described in the FOTG, and for enhancement activities that meet or exceed job sheets or application instructions.

F Collection of amounts due from a Participant for improper payment will follow procedures of the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996. NRCS will notify the Participant to identify the reason for the improper payment and the amount owed. Collections not received within 30 calendar days will be entered into the National Finance Center Internet Billing System. Unpaid bills accrue interest beginning 30 days after the billing date.

G Any Participant that will receive financial benefit from the implementation of this Contract must be a signatory on the Contract. Unless signature authority is not granted or assigned on the Contract, any Participant on the Contract may approve payment applications for the Contract.

6 PROVISIONS RELATING TO TENANTS AND LANDLORDS

A No payment will be approved for the current year if CCC determines

that any of the following conditions exist:

(1) The landlord or operator has not given the tenants that have an interest in the unit of concern covered by the conservation stewardship plan, or that have a lease that runs through this Contract period at the time of sign up, an opportunity to participate in the benefits of the program.

(2) The landlord or operator has adopted any other scheme or device for the purpose of depriving any tenant of any benefits to which such tenant would otherwise be entitled. If any such conditions occur or are discovered after payments have been made, all or any part of the payments, as determined by CCC, must be refunded with interest and no further payments shall be made.

7 MISREPRESENTATION AND SCHEME OR DEVICE

A A Participant who is determined to have erroneously represented any fact affecting a determination with respect to this Contract and the regulations applicable to this Contract, adopted any scheme or device which tends to defeat the purposes of this Contract, or made any fraudulent representation with respect to this Contract, will not be entitled to payments or any other benefits made under this Contract. The Participant must refund to CCC all payments received plus interest and liquidated damages. In addition, NRCS will terminate the Participant's interest in all Conservation Stewardship Contracts.

B CCC will charge interest on monies it determines to be due and owing to CCC under this Contract. Under debt collection procedures, unpaid bills accrue interest beginning 30 days after the billing date. The interest rate will be determined using the current value of funds rate, published annually in the Federal Register by the United States Department of Treasury.

C The provisions of paragraph 7A of this Appendix shall be applicable in addition to any other criminal and civil fraud statutes.

8 CHANGES TO TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS CONTRACT

A If any changes to the terms and conditions of this Contract become necessary prior to the date that this Contract is approved on behalf of CCC, CCC will notify, in writing, the Applicant signing the NRCS-CPA-1202 of such change and such person(s) will be given 10 days from the date of notification in which to agree to the revised terms and conditions or to withdraw from this Contract request. The

Applicant agrees to notify, in writing, the CCC of an intention to withdraw the program participation request within 10 days from the date of the issuance of such notice and further agrees that failure to notify the CCC will constitute agreement to the revised terms and conditions.

B CCC may unilaterally modify this Contract when the installed practice or activity would cause adverse impacts to significant cultural and/or environmental resources without mitigation action.

C The Participant and CCC may modify this Contract by mutual agreement when:

(1) Both the Participant and the appropriate approving authority (State Conservationist, or Designated Conservationist) agree to this modification;

(2) At the request of the Participant, the modification is consistent with the purposes of CSP, or the Participant requests to increase tier level, upon approval by NRCS;

(3) A transfer of this Contract occurs, provided the contract area remains intact, NRCS approval is obtained, and an eligible transferee accepts all terms and responsibilities under this Contract including operation and maintenance of those practices or activities already installed or to be installed.

D All modifications to this Contract processed through paragraph 8C must be approved in writing by the authorized NRCS official and the Participant or an individual granted signature authority through a valid Power of Attorney filed in the local Service Center. Unless signature authority is not granted or assigned on the Contract, any Participant on the Contract may approve modifications for the Contract.

9 CORRECTIONS

CCC reserves the right to correct all errors in entering data or the results of computations in this Contract.

10 CONTRACT TERMINATION

A If a Participant fails to carry out the terms and conditions of this Contract, CCC may terminate this Contract or determine that such failure does not warrant termination. In either case, CCC may require the Participant(s) to refund, payments received under this Contract, or require the Participant(s) to accept such adjustments in

subsequent payments as are determined to be appropriate by CCC.

Refunds determined by CCC to be due and owing to CCC under this provision will accrue interest at the current value of funds rate, published annually in the Federal Register by the United States Department of Treasury. Under debt collection procedures, unpaid bills accrue interest beginning 30 days after the billing date.

B The CCC may terminate this Contract, in whole or in part, without liability, if CCC determines that continued operation of this Contract will result in the violation of a Federal statute or regulation, or if CCC determines that termination would be in the public interest.

11 RECOVERY OF COST

A In the event the Participant violates the terms of this Contract, the Participant voluntarily terminates this Contract before any contractual payments have been made, or this Contract is terminated with cause by CCC, the CCC will incur substantial costs in administering this Contract which may not be possible to quantify with certainty. Therefore, in addition to the refund of payments plus interest due as set forth in paragraph 10, the Participant agrees to pay liquidated damages up to an amount equal to 20 percent of the total financial assistance obligated to the Participant in this Contract, at the time of termination. This liquidated damages payment is for recovery of administrative costs and technical services and is not a penalty.

B The Participant may be required by the CCC to refund all or a portion of any assistance earned under CSP if the Participant sells or loses control of the land under this Contract and the new owner or transferee is not eligible for CSP or refuses to assume responsibility under the contract.

12 EFFECTIVE DATE

This Contract is effective when signed by the Participants and an authorized representative of CCC. Except as otherwise provided for herein, this Contract may not be terminated or modified unless by mutual agreement between the parties. Within the dates established by CCC, this Contract must be signed by all required Participants. In the event that a statute is enacted during the period of this Contract which would materially change the terms and conditions of this Contract, the CCC may require the Participant to elect between modifying this Contract consistent with the provisions of such statute or Contract termination.

13 GENERAL TERMS

A The regulations in 7 CFR part 1469 for the CSP are incorporated, by reference, herein. In the event of a conflict between these regulations and the terms of this Appendix, the provisions of the regulations will prevail.

B This Contract shall be carried out in accordance with all applicable Federal statues and regulations. Any ambiguities in this Contract and questions as to the validity of any of its specific provisions shall be resolved in favor of CCC so as to give maximum effect to the conservation stewardship purposes of this Contract.

C NRCS is administering this Contract on behalf of the CCC. Therefore, where this Contract refers to "CCC", NRCS may act on its behalf for the purposes of administering this Contract. When the term "Participant" is used in this Contract, it shall be construed to mean all Participants signing this Contract. Likewise, when the term "Applicant" is used in this Contract, it means all Applicants signing this Contract.

D Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters - Primary Covered Transactions (7 CFR part 3017).

(1) The Participant certifies to the best of the Participant's knowledge and belief, that the Participant and his or her principals:

(a) Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;

(b) Have not within the three-year period preceding this agreement had a criminal conviction or civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, state or local government) Contract, including violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;

(c) Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state, or local) with commission of any of the offenses set forth above in paragraph 13D (1)(b) of this certification;

(d) Have not within the three-year period preceding this agreement had one or more public Contracts (federal, state or local) terminated for cause or default;

(2) If the Participant is unable to certify to any of the statements set forth in paragraph 13D (1), the Participant shall attach an explanation to this agreement.

E This Contract is a financial assistance agreement, not a procurement contract and is governed by the terms set forth herein.

F The term "contract" as used in this Appendix means the program documents, including:

- Conservation Program Contract, Form NRCS-CPA-1202;
- Appendix to Form NRCS-CPA-1202, Form NRCS-CPA-1202-CPC (Appendix);
- Conservation Plan Schedule of Operations, Form NRCS-CPA-1155; and
- Revision of Conservation Plan/Schedule of Operations, Form NRCS-CPA-1156.

Such contract shall set forth the terms and conditions for Conservation Program participation and receipt of Conservation Program payments.

14 RIGHTS TO APPEAL AND REQUEST EQUITABLE RELIEF

A The Participant may appeal an adverse decision under this Contract in accordance with the appeal procedures set forth at 7 CFR part 11, Subpart A and part 614. Pending the resolution of an appeal, no payments shall be made under this agreement. Before a Participant seeks judicial review, the Participant must exhaust all appeal rights granted within these regulations.

B The Participant may also request equitable relief as provided under 7 U.S.C. 7996 and 7 CFR 635 with the requirements of that provision.

15 EXAMINATION OF RECORDS

The Participant agrees to give the CCC or the Comptroller General, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to this Contract. The Participant agrees to retain all records related to this agreement for a period of three years after completion of the terms of this agreement in accordance with the applicable OMB circular.

16 DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE (7 CFR part 3021)

By signing this Contract, the Participant certifies that the Participant will comply with the requirements of 7 CFR part 3021. If it is later determined that the Participant knowingly rendered a false certification, or otherwise violates the requirements of the Drug-Free Workplace Act (Public Law 100-690, Title V, Subtitle D; 41 U.S.C. 701 et seq.; 7 CFR part 3021,) CCC, in addition to any other remedies available to the United States, may take action authorized under the Drug-Free Workplace Act.

17 CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING (7 CFR part 3018) (Applicable if this agreement exceeds $100,000)

A The Participant certifies, to the best of the Participant's knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the Participant, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement;

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress, in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions; and

(3) The Participant shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub awards at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all sub recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

18 CERTIFICATION REGARDING AND ASSURANCES REGARDING COMPLIANCE WITH PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (See generally 7 CFR parts 3015, 3016, and 3019)

A As a condition of this Contract, the Participant certifies and assures that it is in compliance with and will comply in the course of the agreement with all applicable laws, regulations, Executive Orders and other generally applicable requirements, including those set out in 7 CFR 3115.205(b) applicable to non-profit institutions, which are hereby incorporated into this Contract by reference, and such other regulatory and statutory provisions as are specifically set forth herein.

B Without limiting the general applicability of paragraph A above, the Participant, if it is a non-profit, further agrees to comply with the provisions of 7 CFR part 3019, including the contract provisions required at Appendix A.

The following Participants by entering their signature acknowledge receipt of this Form NRCS-CPA-1202-CSP (Appendix) and agree to its terms and conditions thereof. Further, if the undersigned are succeeding to an existing Contract, the undersigned agree and certify that no agreement exists or will be entered into between the undersigned, the previous owner and operator of the property, or mortgage holder that would, maintain or create an interest in the property for any previous Participant on this Contract for that property, or to receive payments under the contracts.

_____ Date _____

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

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National Enhancement List

Air Quality

Agricultural Odor

Use control and treatment of exhausts from confined animal facilities to reduce the production and transport of odorous compounds through the air.

Ozone Precursors

Control ozone precursors (nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds) by reducing chemical and fuel volatilization, controlling emissions from animals and their manures.

Particulate Matter

Airborne particulate matter (both coarse and fine) can be managed through these types of activities: Minimize soil disturbance through reduced or no till to control wind erosion; treat unpaved roads and other traffic areas with a dust control palliative to reduce dust generation; control ammonia emissions from soils and animals to control production of airborne nitrate.

Energy

Energy Audit Agricultural Operations

An energy audit identifies and evaluates energy management opportunities on the farm or ranch. The audit quantifies the baseline energy use, identifies major conservation opportunities, and assesses costs and savings of implementing recommended changes.

Recycle 100% of Waste Lubricants on Farm

Excess lubricants, including waste oils are delivered to permitted recycling centers for re-refinement or reprocessing.

Renewable Energy Generation

Electricity is generated for on-farm use by way of wind turbine, solar panels and/or small hydro systems.

Grazing

Monitoring

Measurement, recording, and interpretation of changes in soil and plant conditions to evaluate and refine management decisions to evaluate effects of current management on soil and plant conditions and refine management strategies as needed.

Grazing Management

Implementation of at least two of the following activities: 1) Rotation of salt, mineral, and supplemental feeding areas; 2) Utilize decision support tools to aid in grazing management; 3) Improve soil quality and plant condition through management of pasture legume species composition decision making; 4) Utilize grazing management plans that provide 60% or greater rest periods during growing season; 5) Prescribed burning patterns to improve wildlife habitat diversity

Plant Management

Cropped Woodland Improvement

Forest stand improvement of cropped woodlands to optimize growth and health of overstory and understory. Includes manipulation of species composition, stand structure and stocking rates to achieve desired results while maintaining a healthy forest ecosystem.

Soil Quality

Soil Conditioning Index Thresholds

A base level SCI is determined for each watershed that must be met or exceeded in order to earn an enhancement. An enhancement is paid for costs of practices that produce increases in SCI scores above the base level.

Compaction Avoidance through Controlled Traffic

Controlled traffic helps avoid soil compaction problems, which are linked to increased runoff and sedimentation and reduced yields. The enhancement pays for a fraction of the cost to implement controlled traffic practices.

Water Management

Drainage Water Management

Drainage water management activities control the level and timing of drainage water out of fields with either surface or subsurface drainage.

Salinity Management

Level 1 - Assessment activities to determine the extent and severity of salinity problems using Electrical Conductivity (EC) testing of soil and irrigation water. Level 2 - Conduct Electro-Magnetic Induction (EMI) mapping of fields subject salinity contamination.

Irrigation Management

Incremental improvements in irrigation efficiency by changing irrigation method and/or management.

Field Poly Tubing and Drip Tape Recycling

Participate in a field poly tubing or drip tape recycling program in which the producer rolls up his used field poly tubing or drip tape, stores it at an on or off-site location approved by the recycling company until being picked up.

Remote Monitoring of Irrigation Pumping Plant

The pumping plant monitoring system includes installation of necessary sensors and communication package at the pump with an automated recording and communication system. When combined the system monitors the status of the watering system and notifies the owner/manager of system changes.

Reduction of Evaporative Losses

Use methods (mulches, windbreaks, maintenance of high surface residue levels and night time application of irrigation water) to reduce evaporative losses as an integral part of an irrigation water management (IWM) system.

Water Quality

Nutrients

Acceptance of this enhancement requires a participant to implement or maintain a Nutrient Management plan (NRCS 590) OR a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) and a minimum of 2 nutrient management enhancements. The enhancements must go beyond basic nutrient management by including a higher level of management.

Water Quality & Air Quality

Pesticides

Acceptance of this enhancement requires a participant to implement or maintain a high level Integrated Pest Management (IPM) system or 2 or more pesticide risk mitigation activities applicable to all enterprises. A high level IPM system must go beyond basic pest management by including pest prevention and avoidance mitigation techniques, and only utilize pest suppression techniques when pest monitoring indicates that an economic pest threshold has been exceeded.

Wildlife

Shallow Water Habitat Management

Create shallow wetland habitats for use by amphibians, reptiles, and other species to complete their life requisites (e.g., reproduction and feeding) and to provide a water source for other wildlife species and aquatic insects. These shallow (average 6-18 inches deep but not to exceed 30 inches) aquatic habitats will be buffered by perennial vegetation dense enough to retard erosion and trap sediments before entering the shallow water habitat.

Widening of Buffers to Enhance Upland, Aquatic Habitat and Water Quality

Widening existing conservation buffers (contour buffer strips, filter strips, riparian forest buffer, riparian herbaceous cover, vegetative barriers, grassed waterways, field borders) that currently meet NRCS conservation practice standard criteria can provide food and cover for native and game species as well as enhancing aquatic habitat by providing shade, input of wood or carbon to the stream, and stabilizing streambank conditions. Additionally, these extended buffers offer more surface area to filter out sediments and agro-chemicals.

Pollinator Areas

Establish new or diversify existing habitat areas, including conservation buffers, borders, edges, edges, corridors, or patches, with flowering plants (forbs, legumes, shrubs, vines, and trees). A minimum of 10 different species of native flowering plants (annuals and perennials) that provide bloom diversity over the entire growing season will compose greater than 40% of the stand. Compensation will be on a per acre basis.

Managing Riparian Zones

Incorporate conservation measures to protect fish and wildlife habitat in riparian zones of rivers, streams, isolated wetlands, ponds, floodplain wetlands, and lakes. These measures include employment of timed grazing regimes to accommodate seasonal and life history needs of both terrestrial and aquatic species (such as ground-nesting birds, neotropical migrants, fish, amphibians, riparian reptiles, and other species of concern); fencing to protect sensitive or recovering riparian vegetation, stream banks, and water quality; re-location of equipment or activities out of riparian zones and floodplains; riparian forest management to encourage recruitment of large trees to the stream or river, and retention of snags and downed wood for riparian wildlife; and removal of fish passage barriers. The number of actions/measures will be based on recognized management guidelines for targeted species, but will be limited to a maximum of 2 per acre or 10 per contract.

Wildlife Friendly Haying Management

Incorporate conservation measures in hayland to provide a variety of habitat conditions in patches to maximize wildlife use. These measures include employment of timed haying and to avoid periods when upland wildlife are nesting or fawning, idling hayland during the nesting or fawning period, leaving a residual forage height conducive to wildlife nesting and fawning for the following year, interseeding of native legumes and forbs or conversion of exotic pasture/hayland plantings to a mixture of species which meets the life history needs of the targeted grassland wildlife species

Appendix H

The following application checklist will assist you gather the necessary information for the interview process.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST		
☐	1.	Completed Self-Assessment Workbook
☐	2.	Maps A map delineating your entire agricultural operation: A map of land offered for CSP. A conservation plan may be used to identify the type of practices installed.
☐	3.	Records - You must have at least 2 years of written records for each of the following practices you apply: ☐ Nutrient Management Records should include: yields, soil analysis, dates and application rates of all inorganic and organic fertilizers, including animal waste ☐ Pest Management Records should include: target pest, crop or forage type and the type of pesticide used, dates and application rates or the cultural or biological control method used and dates implemented, including spot treatments ☐ Grazing Management Records should include: total acres, production per acre, number of livestock, grazing schedules, maps showing existing practices, such as fences and watering facilities, and aerial photos showing the condition of the grazing land ☐ Irrigation Schedule/ Water Management Records should include: crop type, rainfall amounts (if appropriate), irrigation dates and amounts applied ☐ Waste Utilization Records should include crop type, projected yields, soil analysis, waste analysis, dates and application rates of all animal waste applied
☐	4.	Duplicative Payments Addendum (Appendix A)
☐	5.	Applicant Offer Certification Worksheet (Appendix B)
☐	6.	Control of the Land (Appendix C) Control means: possession of the land by ownership, lease, or agreement; and authority to act as decision maker for the management and operation of the land
☐	7.	Form CCC-526, Payment Eligibility Average Adjusted Gross Income Certification (Appendix D)
☐	8.	Form AD-1026, Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification (Appendix E)
☐	9.	Form NRCS-CPA-1200, Conservation Program Application/Contract (Appendix F)

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

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