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Transmitted via email

January 13, 2004

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 250-4-9

SUBJECT: FNM – ALLOCATION OF TIME FOR WORK ON CONSERVATION PROGRAMS IN THE DIRECT CHARGE ACCOUNTING PROCESS

Purpose: To provide guidance for charging time in WebTCAS.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2004

Starting in FY2004 NRCS is using a revised process to allocate and account for staff time spent on conservation programs. Direct charge accounting rules indicate that the time spent completing conservation planning steps 1-7 are allocated to Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) unless a decision is made that the plan being developed will be for an approved 2004 conservation program application. All time spent on conservation planning before a funding decision is charged to CTA. All conservation planning time after the application approval decision is reached will be charged to the program.

From a planning perspective, as of October 1, 2003 all plans must be completed in ToolKit. From a contracting perspective all 2004 EQIP and WHIP contracts must be completed using ProTracts. This process means that our use of ProTracts will require conservation plans be completed in ToolKit first and then uploaded.

Under this scenario, the development of 2004 EQIP and WHIP contracts will require considerable time spent on conservation planning prior to official contract approvals. This process could lead to an under-charging of planning time to programs. To more accurately reflect the specific program time spent on conservation planning field staff will allocate time charges spent developing conservation plans as follows:

- 1) do not wait for an official funding decision to charge planning time to a program.
- 2) funding decisions (for time charges only) will be based on the best judgment of the District Conservationist as to whether the application being handled will be funded.

The charts below will help identify the correct time charges for the different types of work involved with conservation programs. Each program has different points at which field staff can determine if it's likely that an application will be funded and adjust their conservation planning time between CTA and the program (EQIP, WHIP, CRP, GRP, WRP). Also note that starting this year program time is charged to specific Activity Codes. All staff must charge their time to the correct Activity code when working on conservation programs.

**WHIP TIME CHARGES**

<b>Work Being Performed</b>	<b>WebTCAS Program and Activity Code</b>	<b>WebTCAS Program Modifier</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing approved contracts</li> </ul>	<b>WHIP -</b> Application Assistance	'04 Approved – <b>CY</b> All others – <b>PY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation Planning Assistance required to score WHIP applications includes; Resource Inventory Problem Identification Determine Producer Objectives Develop Alternatives</li> </ul>	<b>CTA –</b> Planning Assistance	<b>NA</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determining program eligibility.</li> <li>Completing WHIP application and scoring worksheets</li> <li>Loading applications into ProTracts</li> </ul> (only those applications scoring above the minimum threshold are required to be entered into ToolKit and ProTracts)	<b>WHIP –</b> Eligibility and Ranking	All 2004 applications – <b>CY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation planning and contract assistance on all applications scoring above the minimum approval threshold (applications that will be approved).</li> </ul> This includes loading information into ToolKit	<b>WHIP –</b> Contract Planning Assistance	<b>CY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revising conservation plans and contracts on approved applications</li> </ul>	<b>WHIP –</b> Contract Planning Assistance	'04 Approved – <b>CY</b> All others – <b>PY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation planning assistance on applications that score below the minimum threshold for approval</li> </ul>	<b>CTA</b> Planning Assistance	<b>NA</b>



## WRP TIME CHARGES

<b>Work Being Performed</b>	<b>WebTCAS Program and Activity Code</b>	<b>WebTCAS Program Modifier</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing approved contracts</li> </ul>	<b>WRP -</b> Application Assistance	'04 Approved – <b>CY</b> All others – <b>PY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation Planning Assistance required to score WRP applications includes; Resource Inventory Problem Identification Determine Producer Objectives Develop Alternatives</li> </ul>	<b>CTA –</b> Planning Assistance	<b>NA</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determining program eligibility.</li> <li>Completing WRP application and scoring worksheets</li> <li>Loading applications into ProTracts</li> </ul> <p>(only those applications scoring above the minimum threshold are required to be entered into ToolKit and ProTracts)</p>	<b>WRP –</b> Eligibility and Ranking	All 2004 applications – <b>CY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation planning and contract assistance on all applications that are approved. This includes loading information into ToolKit</li> </ul>	<b>WRP –</b> Contract Planning Assistance	<b>CY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revising conservation plans and contracts on approved applications</li> </ul>	<b>WRP –</b> Contract Planning Assistance	'04 Approved – <b>CY</b> All others – <b>PY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conservation planning assistance on applications that are not funded</li> </ul>	<b>CTA</b> Planning Assistance	<b>NA</b>

**CRP TIME CHARGES**

<b>Work Being Performed</b>	<b>WebTCAS Program and Activity Code</b>	<b>WebTCAS Program Modifier</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implementing approved contracts</li></ul>	<b>CRP -</b> Application Assistance	'04 Approved – <b>CY</b> All others – <b>PY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Determining program eligibility.</li></ul>	<b>CRP –</b> Eligibility and Ranking	<b>CY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conservation planning and contract assistance on all eligible applications, this includes loading information into ToolKit</li></ul>	<b>CRP –</b> Contract Planning Assistance	All 2004 applications – <b>CY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revising conservation plans and contracts on approved applications</li></ul>	<b>CRP –</b> Contract Planning Assistance	'04 approved – <b>CY</b> All others - <b>PY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conservation planning assistance on applications that are not eligible includes loading ineligible information into ToolKit.</li></ul>	<b>CTA -</b> Planning Assistance	<b>NA</b>

Direct Questions on the information contained in this bulletin to your ASTC (FO).

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State Conservationist

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