



*USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service*  
*United States Department of Agriculture*

*375 Jackson Street*  
*St Paul, MN 55101*  
*Phone: 651 602 7900*  
*Fax: 651 602 7914*

Transmitted via e-mail

December 11, 2003

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 360-4-7

SUBJECT: PER – 2004 MINNESOTA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP STATE TRAINING PLAN

Purpose. To distribute the 2004 State Training Plan

Expiration Date. December 31, 2004.

This bulletin is to distribute the Fiscal Year 2004 State Training Plan.

WILLIAM HUNT  
State Conservationist

DIST: NRCS All Employees  
SWCD All Employees  
BWSR All Employees

ATTACHMENTS:  
Explanation of State Training Plan  
Calendar Year 2003 Accomplishments  
2004 Minnesota Training Plan

*The Natural Resources Conservation Service works hand-in-hand  
with the American people to conserve natural resources on private lands.*

**AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**

## **MINNESOTA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP STATE TRAINING PLAN CALENDAR YEAR 2004**

Training is an integral part of the total natural resource conservation program in Minnesota. Training provides each Minnesota Conservation Partnership Employee the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to succeed in their respective position.

Training priorities for 2004 include assisting employees to achieve the criteria required for Conservation Planning and Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning certifications. Another priority will be to insure that currently certified staff maintains that status through required continuing education.

The Minnesota Conservation Partnership State Training Plan includes the Calendar Year 2003 Accomplishments and the Calendar Year 2004 Minnesota Training Plan.

### **ICAMS Training Database**

ICAMS training inventory is utilized to gather training needs and formulate training plans based on requests. Area Training Teams set up training sessions based on their available expertise. Requests not addressed by the Area Training Teams are reviewed at the State Office level. The NRCS Employee Development Committee (EDC) reviews other requests and will look to other sources; e.g., National Employee Development Center (NEDC), colleges, tech schools or private vendors to fill the training needs.

### **ICAMS Career Plans**

Every individual should have an ICAMS Career Plan which reflects the training needed to grow and develop to full potential. Career Plans need to be created with the employee's immediate supervisor and should be part of the performance appraisal process. ICAMS allows each employee to keep a historical record of training requests and training completed.

### **Employee Responsibilities:**

- ❖ Review training needs with their supervisor to determine valid and job-related training needs. This includes reviewing course write-up and making sure prerequisites have been met.
- ❖ Attend and participate in training sessions in which they are enrolled.
- ❖ Use initiative to locate training opportunities from outside sources.

### **Supervisor Responsibilities:**

Supervisors are responsible for assuring each employee is afforded the opportunity to participate in available training events. Employees and Supervisors are jointly responsible for creating a Career Plan that best reflects individual needs. If training needs in the Career Plan cannot be met through on-the-job training then the employee needs to make a request through ICAMS.

SWCD Managers must review employee's requests and obtain SWCD Board approval and budgeting utilizing the Conservation Partners Training Request form (dated 6/02). National Employee Development Center (NEDC) courses may be held out of state. A one-week course can cost up to \$1500 for travel and per diem, two-week courses \$2500 - \$3000, depending on location.

### **Area Training Teams:**

Area Training Teams around the state are comprised of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), Board of Water & Soil Resource (BWSR), Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees (MACDE), Watershed District (WD) employees, and Local Water Planners. The function of the Area Training Teams is to review area training needs, coordinate training and set up sessions, and make recommendations to the state training committee of additional training needs.

#### **NRCS Employee Development Committee:**

The NRCS Employee Development Committee reviews training requests and creates a viable training plan that will serve the most employees based on the available training budget.

#### **Special Requests**

NRCS Employee Special Training Requests (MN-PER-025) are signed by the Area Conservationists or State Office Coaches and forwarded to the State Training Officer for funding approval. The State Training Officer monitors the state training budget for available funds, then forwards the special requests to the State Conservationist for approval. Minnesota policy allows for payment of training provided by nongovernment sources (colleges, technical schools). The course work must directly address the objectives in the employees Career Plan. Reimbursement will be based on the following criteria:

- ❖ Training is directly related to the NRCS mission.
- ❖ Training is not available through the Conservation Partnership.
- ❖ Request is made by a permanent NRCS employee.
- ❖ Requested training is listed in the individual's Career Plan.

#### **Schedule of Events**

The Schedule of Events is an electronic calendar of training and events significant to the conservation partnership. Every two weeks the Schedule for the next 6 months is automatically sent to all employees of NRCS, SWCD, and BWSR. Watershed Districts, Local Water Planners, and others can subscribe through Internet access. The schedule is designed to inform and to avoid scheduling conflicts.

#### **NRCS State Training Budget**

NRCS training budget monies will be allocated based on the training needs, whether program driven or for requests from the state training needs inventory. The training budget will be managed by the State Training Officer, monitored by the Employee Development Committee, and approved by the State Conservationist.