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*Helping People
Help the Land*

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Transmitted via Email

December 7, 2006

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 200-7-1

SUBJECT: ECN – ACTUAL COST DATA COLLECTION

ACTION DUE BY: MARCH 30, 2007

Purpose. To provide guidance on the collection of actual cost data.

Expiration date. September 30, 2007

Effective immediately actual cost data will be collected on a representative number of all applicable measures and practices in each Area. The main source of cost data will be obtained from documents collected from Farm Bill program participants through the cost share certification and payment process. Additional information can be gathered from suppliers, the Farm Service Agency, the Extension Service, and other sources. For data collection purposes a “representative number” means a minimum of five practice payments per NRCS administrative Area per practice. For example, an Area that receives 15 cost share payment requests for the Grass Waterway practice will be required to submit cost data to the State Office on at least five of these payments. Areas can choose to submit more than the minimum of five data points per practice and this will increase the reliability of our average cost data.

Actual cost data is needed for the practices found in Table 1. The actual cost data will be recorded in the Minnesota Actual Cost Data Collection Database. The database will be updated annually to reflect changes in practices and components. The database will be populated and maintained at the State Office.

Table 1

Anaerobic Digester – Controlled Temperature	no.	366	Pond Sealing, Flexible Membrane	no.	521A
Animal Mortality Facility	no.	316	Prescribed Burning	ac.	338
Closure of Waste Impoundments	no.	360	Pumping Plant	no.	533
Composting Facility	no.	317	Restoration And Management of Declining Habitats	ac.	643
Contour Buffer Strips	ac.	332	Riparian Forest Buffer	ac.	391
Cover Crop	ac.	340	Roof Runoff Management	no.	558
Critical Area Planting	ac.	342	Sediment Basin	no.	350
Cross Wind Trap Strips	ac.	589C	Sinkhole and Sinkhole Area Treatment	no.	725
Dam	no.	402	Spring Development	no.	574
Diversion	ft.	362	Stream Crossing	no.	578
Early Successional Habitat Development/Management	ac.	647	Stream Habitat Improvement and Management	ac.	395
Fence	ft.	382	Streambank & Shoreline Protection	ft.	580
Field Border	ft.	386	Structure for Water Control	no.	587
Filter Strip	ac.	393	Subsurface Drain	ft.	606
Forest Site Preparation	ac.	490	Terrace	ft.	600
Forest Stand Improvement	ac.	666	Tree/Shrub Establishment	ac.	612
Grade Stabilization Structure	no.	410	Underground Outlet	ft.	620
Grassed Waterway	ac.	412	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	ac.	645
Heavy Use Area Protection	ac.	561	Vegetative Barrier	ft.	601
Hedgerow Planting	ft.	422	Waste Facility Cover	no.	367
Herbaceous Wind Barriers	ft.	603	Waste Storage Facility	no.	313
Irrigation System - Sprinkler	ac.	442	Wastewater Treatment	no.	629
Lined Waterway or Outlet	ft.	468	Wastewater Treatment Strip	ac.	635
Manure Transfer	no.	634	Water & Sediment Control Basin	no.	638
Mulching	ac.	484	Water Well	no.	642
Obstruction Removal	ac.	500	Watering Facility	no.	614
Pasture & Hayland Planting	ac.	512	Well Decommissioning	no.	351
Pipeline	ft.	516	Wetland Restoration	ac.	657
Pond	no.	378	Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment	ft.	380

The following description of responsibilities associated with the collection of actual cost data will be followed in FY2007. In future years the Area office may be expected to assume additional responsibility including entering data into the state database. Changes to the process described will be announced through an amendment to the Minnesota FOTG.

- Each District Conservationist is responsible for gathering receipts, invoices, bills and other associated cost data from Farm Bill program participants' contracts. This information is provided to the Area office for processing cost share payment.

- The Area Office will summarize the cost data on the Actual Cost Data Collection Summary Sheet, which is attached to the bulletin as a word document and as an Excel file. The Area Office will submit the summary sheet and associated documentation (receipts, etc) at least once per quarter to the State Office. The first cost data collection is due into the state office by March 30, 2007.
- The State Office will review the data, enter the data in the Minnesota Actual Cost Data Collection Database, calculate average costs, and submit the average cost data to the State Conservationist for approval. Once the State Conservationist has reviewed and approved the average costs, they will be uploaded into the eFOTG, Section I, Cost Data.

The following table outlines the schedule of activities by discipline described in paragraph b:

Discipline	Item	Deadline
District Conservationist	Cost Data Gathered	Ongoing
Area Office	Review and Summarize Cost Data Gathered by the District Conservationist, Submit the Cost Data to the State Office	At least once a Quarter
State Office (Economist)	Review cost data, Enter the data into the Minnesota Actual Cost Data Collection Database, calculate average costs, submit average costs to State Conservationist	September 1 st
State Conservationist	Review and approve average costs for use in program cost lists	September 15 th
State Office (Economist or respective Program Manager)	Average costs updated and posted on the eFOTG	October 1 st

If Field Offices or Area Offices have additional cost data information, such as custom rates, suppliers, or information from other local sources, they can submit that information along with the information from participants' contracts.

In January, Leah Duzy and Allan Sommer will be conducting a net conference with Area Program Specialists and Accounting Technicians to discuss the collection of cost data. Additional information regarding the net conference is forthcoming. If you have any questions regarding the collection of actual cost data, please contact Leah Duzy, Agricultural Economist, at (651) 602-7867 or leah.duzy@mn.usda.gov.

/s/

WILLIAM HUNT
State Conservationist

Enclosure

DIST: ASTC (FO)
FO
Leah Duzy, Economist, St. Paul, MN
Allan Sommer, Economist, St. Paul, MN