

# Guidelines for Program Appraisal, Assessment and Review of Resource Conservation & Development Office in New Mexico

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***Appraisals are an opportunity to share information and to understand how operations are being managed. It should be viewed as a learning process for all participants. Appraisals are to be performed with a helpful and positive attitude, which will produce benefits for all.***

***Appraisals assess conformance to legal requirements, rules, regulations, and established policy. They determine if functions, activities, and programs are being carried out in accordance with the NRCS mission, objectives and program priorities.***

***Appraisals in conjunction with quality reviews, direct supervision, direct assistance, and performance appraisals provide leadership with the means to determine conformance to policy and procedures. They also provide the means for determining the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and activities.***

This guide suggests activities to be appraised, evaluated, and reviewed in Resource Conservation & Development offices in New Mexico. An important part of the appraisal process is to evaluate and estimate the commendable, and praiseworthy. And so, it would also be the task of identifying the lesser items to improve and redirect shortcomings or deficit areas. It is always hoped that a positive and forward direction is the desired outcome of all appraisals.

Each commendable as well as pertinent finding of deficient activities should be documented in sufficient detail describing why the activity was identified as such. Agreed-to actions will then be identified and should include 1) what is to be corrected, 2) the person or position responsible for correcting the action, and 3) a date by which the corrective action should be completed.

In addition, recommendations may be identified. These could be in written or oral form. It is expected that the people/person responsible will take some corrective actions on these recommended items.

For those activities requiring a more extensive appraisal, the narrative report should, 1) document the activity, 2) the reason for the recommending a more extensive appraisal, and 3) the agreed-to or recommended immediate corrective actions that need to be taken pending completion of a more comprehensive appraisal.

If there are conduct or personnel issues identified, reviewers will provide information to the immediate supervisor and above. Immediate supervisor will take the approach to inform the individual(s). Items should be regarded as sensitive and discussed as such. Discussion should be considered confidential.

It is recommended that a "team" approach of 3 or more be considered for the appraisal. It may be composed of the following: 1) RC&D Program Manager, 2) State Association President, 3) Administrative Officer, 4) RC&D Administrative Assistant, 5) One or two coordinators from an outside state, 6) Special Emphasis Program Manager or other Civil Rights specialist. Special circumstances may merit involvement of others.

Appraisals should begin with an entrance conference with all participants present including the program manager. It should be viewed as a question and answer session. An exit conference will be conducted to review all items providing clarification and needs with all participants including the program manager.

The appraisal form has been formatted so that it can be used as the official appraisal review report. It provides space for comments, findings, recommendations and actions. Appendix forms are to be utilized for commendable and agreed-to items. Upon the completion of the review, using

this format, immediate review with the appropriate individuals can take place. ❖