



Conservation Plan Amendments

RIM Handbook

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A. CONSERVATION PLAN AMENDMENT OVERVIEW

A.1 General

This subsection of the handbook provides instructions for changing conservation plans after recording of the conservation easement. Changes to conservation plans prior to easement recording are covered in the Conservation Easement Agreement - Section H, [Revision Process of the Easement Agreement](#), of this handbook.

The need to change a conservation plan after conveyance of the conservation easement can happen for a variety of reasons. Changes in wildlife habitat management goals and in vegetative cover types through natural succession are the most common reasons. Changes in wildlife habitat management goals are very common with many easements and usually occur along with a change of ownership. This could mean adding trees to the easement area or perhaps switching a cool season grass planting to a native grass planting. In addition, as an easement's landscape changes naturally over time, it will be important that its conservation plan stay current with these changes. Therefore, periodic amendments to conservation plans may be required to address these natural changes. An example of this may be a riparian grass planting that has been overcome by trees through natural succession.

B. AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

B.1 General

There are basically two types of plan amendment requests that are made. Those that physically affect the conservation plan area and those that do not. The procedures for these two types of amendments are different and should be followed accordingly.

All conservation plan amendments should be submitted on the most current program forms using current procedures as they relate to the conservation plan process. Contact the BWSR easement program staff if assistance is needed in converting the conservation plan from older forms.

B.2 Amendment Requests that Physically Alter the Conservation Plan

The BWSR Easement Programs Manager or designee must approve all plan amendments resulting in a physical alteration of the conservation plan area. This includes any amendment request that either requires additional program funds or alters existing previously committed program funding. It also includes any amendment request that will be funded by other sources. The purpose of the amendment request should be to improve wildlife cover and habitat diversity elements on the easement area. Justification for this must be clearly explained as part of the amendment request.

To initiate the plan amendment request, the SWCD must complete and submit the following forms to the BWSR Easement Programs staff:

[Revision Request](#) or [Practice Implementation/Amendment Request Form](#) (if applicable*)

A Revision Request is needed if the conservation plan change is made prior to submittal of the first cost-share voucher.

A Practice Implementation/Amendment Request Form is needed if the conservation plan change is made after submittal of the first cost-share voucher. Use one form for each practice area to be changed.

**If BWSR easement staff request modifications to ensure conservation plan documents meet numbering or format requirements, neither of these request forms are necessary.*

Amended [Conservation Practice Plan](#)

Amended [Conservation Easement Practice Payment Worksheet \(CEPPW\)](#)

Amended [Conservation Plan Map](#)

The amendment request will be acted upon by the BWSR. If the request is approved, the [Revision Request Form](#) or [Practice Implementation/Amendment Request Form](#) will be signed and a copy returned to the SWCD. For those cases where modifications were requested by BWSR easement staff to meet numbering or format requirements, easement staff will confirm the modifications were approved. The SWCD should work with the landowner to implement any changes.

If the amendment request is not approved, the *Revision Request or Practice Implementation/Amendment Request Form* will be returned to the SWCD with explanation as to why.

B.3 Amendment Requests Due to Natural Changes on the Easement Area

Conservation plan amendments may periodically be needed to address any natural changes that have occurred to the landscape over time. This is important from both enforcement as well as a management perspective. The need to amend a plan under these circumstances will usually be identified as part of performing a required site inspection.

These types of amendments do not require prior BWSR approval to process. To perform the plan amendment, the SWCD must revise the conservation plan package as necessary for the landowner. A letter from the SWCD to the landowner should accompany the new conservation plan briefly explaining what transpired on the landscape and why the new conservation plan was developed. Copies of both the letter and amended conservation plan should be sent to the BWSR.