



Technical Training and Certification Program

May 18, 2020

To: Minnesota NRCS staff, Minnesota SWCD staff

From: BWSR, MACDE, MASWCD, NRCS

Job Approval Authority (JAA) Expectations

The purpose of this memorandum is to reaffirm expectations for NRCS and SWCD managers and staff in obtaining and maintaining Job Approval Authority (JAA) and other relevant certifications. Job Approval Authority is overseen by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and coordinated in a partnership with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), the Minnesota Association of Conservation District Employees (MACDE) and the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD), referred to in this memo as “the Partnership”.

Establishing conservation practices on private lands in Minnesota is critical to achieving local, state and federal goals for clean and sustainable water resources, healthy and sustainable soil resources, and abundant fish and wildlife.

Conservation Technical Assistance requires statewide, base technical assistance capabilities, as well as capabilities tailored to local resource concerns and conservation practices in the diverse landscapes of Minnesota.

In Minnesota, local field offices work directly with private landowners to deliver the technical components of conservation planning and implementation services. The Conservation Partnership of NRCS, SWCDs, and BWSR use the NRCS Job Approval Authority (JAA) credentialing system for planning, design and installation of standard conservation practices. This system ensures that local staff who provide technical services in Minnesota are qualified to plan, design, and implement conservation practices.

This memorandum reaffirms the expectations the Partnership has for NRCS and SWCD managers and staff in obtaining and maintaining JAA and other relevant certifications.

It is the Partnership’s expectation that **NRCS and SWCD Managers will:**

- Identify local priority resource concerns and determine appropriate conservation practices to address them
- Analyze staff’s abilities to plan, design, and implement those practices, and prioritize training needs accordingly
- Facilitate and Assist staff in getting on-the-job training (OJT)
- Encourage staff to attend technical training that will result in JAA or other certification
- Allow staff to work outside of their normal work area to obtain OJT
- Assist staff in developing practice designs and submitting required materials to NRCS for JAA consideration and approval

It is the Partnership's expectation that **NRCS and SWCD Technical Staff** will:

- Prioritize training needs based on priority resource concerns and practices
- Submit training needs and individual development plans through the Partnership's IDP tool
- Attend training relevant to identified and prioritized needs
- Seek out opportunities for OJT and mentoring by connecting with others in the work area
- Develop practice designs and have them reviewed by someone with JAA
- Submit required materials to the NRCS Area Resource Conservationist and/or Area Engineer for JAA consideration and approval
- Once JAA is acquired for a practice, offer to train others

It is the Partnership's expectation that **NRCS, BWSR and MASWCD at the state level** will:

- Use the IDP and training needs assessment to prioritize training needs and delivery on a statewide and regional basis.
- Assess timeframe and/or backlog related to JAA credentialing and training

Training resources and tools are available to assist in meeting these expectations. For more information and assistance please visit the TTCP [website](#).



Chessa Frahm, President, MACDE

5-18-2020

Date



Roland Cleveland, President, MASWCD

5-18-2020

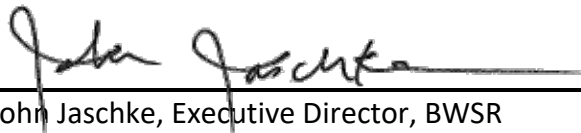
Date



Troy Daniell, Minnesota State Conservationist, NRCS

5/18/2020

Date



John Jaschke, Executive Director, BWSR

5-18-2020

Date