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NHCP-1AI

August 11, 2005

**NATIONAL HANDBOOK OF CONSERVATION PRACTICES  
450 – VI  
NOTICE 138**

**Purpose.** This notice transmits new or revised conservation practice standards for insertion into the National Handbook of Conservation Practices (NHCP). In addition, notes are included for clarification.

**Effective Date.** This notice is effective when received.

**Explanation.** New or revised National Conservation Practice Standards (NCPS):

**Early Successional Habitat Development/Management (Code 647)** – This practice standard has been revised to simplify the presentation. The substantive aspects of the standard remain essentially unchanged.

**Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till (Code 345)** – A purpose and supporting criteria have been added for reducing soil particulate emissions into the atmosphere. Minor changes have been made to the criteria relating to increase plant-available moisture.

**Residue and Tillage management, No Till/Strip Till/Direct Seed (Code 329)** – Major changes have been made to this standard. The practice name and definition was changed to reflect incorporation of direct seed technology; purposes and supporting criteria were added for reducing soil particulate emissions and for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> loss from the soil; the Soil Tillage Intensity Rating (STIR) value is used as criteria for some purposes.

**Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till (Code 346)** – Only minor changes were made to this standard, primarily to keep terminology consistent with the other two residue/tillage management practices.

General comment for all three residue/tillage management practices – The basic practice name has been changed to Residue and Tillage Management. This reflects the understanding that the purposes for these practices can be achieved only by managing both of these aspects of a cropping system.

**Restoration and Management of Rare or Declining Habitats (Code 643)** – This practice standard has been extensively edited for the purpose of improving understanding. The substantive aspects of the standard are essentially unchanged.

**Riparian Herbaceous Cover (Code 390)** – This practice standard has been substantially revised. The definition has been expanded. The purpose section has been edited and reformatted. The criteria section has been revised extensively and now contains a specific subsection on terrestrial wildlife.

**Shallow Water Development and Management (Code 646)** – This practice standard has been revised extensively to apply to the fullest array of wildlife species possible and on both agricultural and non-agricultural lands.

**Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (Code 645)** – This practice standard has been extensively edited for the purpose of improving understanding. The substantive aspects of the standard are essentially unchanged.

**Wetland Creation (Code 658)** – This practice standard has been revised to clarify that wetland creation is limited to cases where the site being addressed was historically non-wetland. The reference to modifying a purpose to meet specific project objectives has been deleted and is appropriately included in Wetland Enhancement (Code 659).

**Wetland Enhancement (Code 659)** – This practice standard has been extensively edited for the purpose of improving clarity. The criteria for Vegetation Enhancement now contain reference to including a minimum of six species where forested wetland is being established.

**Wetland Restoration (Code 657)** – This practice standard has been extensively edited, the definition has been modified to recognize both rehabilitation and reestablishment as restoration actions, and the criteria section has been revised to include microtopography reestablishment as a specific item.

**Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (Code 644)** – This practice standard has been revised to include more substantial criteria associated with habitat evaluation or appraisal needs to identify habitat-limiting factors.

**Instructions.** Replace the Contents pages i through vi dated April 2005 in the NHCP with the attached revised Contents pages.

Insert the new or revised standards in the NHCP in alphabetical order as designated on the revised Contents pages.

Remove and archive, as appropriate, the practice standards for: Residue Management, No Till/Strip Till (Code 329A) dated March 1999, Residue Management, Mulch Till (Code 329B) dated March 1999, Residue Management, Ridge Till (Code 329C) dated November 2002, Riparian Herbaceous Cover (Code 390) dated October 2003, Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats (Code 643) dated August 1998, Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (Code 645) dated August 1998, Shallow Water Management for Wildlife (Code 646) dated August 1998, Wetland Restoration (Code 657) dated August 1998, Wetland Creation (Code 658) dated August 1998, Wetland Enhancement (Code 659) dated August 1998, Early Successional Habitat

Development/Management (Code 647) dated August 1998, and Wet Wildlife Habitat Management (Code 644) dated August 1998.

Copies of this notice and the attachments are being sent to all State offices (or equivalent) and National Centers. Additional copies may be obtained by ordering NHCP-1AI from the GSA National Forms and Publications Center, 7CPN, Warehouse 4, Dock 1, 501 West Felix Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76115, using GSA Form 49.

This notice and each of the conservation practice standards included with this notice can be accessed electronically. Access can be through either the NRCS homepage on the World Wide Web at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/Standards/nhcp.html> or from the FTP server at <ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/NHQ/practice-standards/standards/>

**Federal Register Notices.**

The National Conservation Practice Standards Subcommittee (NCPSS) published notice of intent to revise or adopt these standards in the *Federal Register* on January 31, 2005. Comments from the public were accepted for 30 days.

Guidance to the States can be found in Title 450 – GM, Section 401.19 for complying with the provisions of the 1996 Farm Bill that require advertising for public comment prior to revising NRCS State technical guides.

/s/ Dave Thackeray for  
BARRY L. KINTZER  
Acting Director  
Conservation Engineering Division

/s/ Marc Safley for  
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Director  
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Attachments