

State Specific Training Module for Massachusetts

Purpose of this Module

This module will provide general information that TSPs need to conduct conservation planning in Massachusetts. This information is general in nature so the TSP may need to follow up with additional reading or training to make sure they have the knowledge, skill, licenses and certifications to conduct conservation planning in this state.

Major Land Uses

- Massachusetts covers approximately 5 Million acres;
- The Commonwealth is roughly 45% forested and 5% cropland/pasture; $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cropland acres are managed as hay/pasture.
- There are 7,700 farms; average farm size (cropland + woodlands) is 67 acres.
- Top 5 crops are: 1) Greenhouse/nursery; 2) Cranberries (2nd in the nation); 3) Dairy; 4) Apples; and 5) Aquaculture.
- \$48 Million in direct sales to consumers in 2012 (4th in nation).

Review of State Laws

- All NRCS engineering conservation practice designs must be stamped by a licensed Massachusetts Professional Engineer.

Review of State Laws

Nutrient Management

Massachusetts currently has no state requirement for the development of nutrient management plans; however, regulations may be implemented in the near future.

Manure applications require a minimum 35-foot vegetated setback from all surface waters.

Review of State Laws

- Forestry—MGL Chapter 132—MA Forest Cutting Practices Act
- MA Forest Cutting Practices Act requires a cutting plan be filed for harvests of 25,000 board feet or 50 cords of wood.
- All Cutting Plans must be signed by a state licensed Forester or a licensed Timber Harvester.
- Ch. 132 harvests are exempt from Ch. 131 MA Wetlands Protection Act.
- More information can be found on the Massachusetts Department Of Conservation and Recreation web site.

Review of State FOTG Requirements

Vegetative Practices

- Planting guidelines should be followed for all seedings (Cover Crop, Forage & Biomass Planting, Conservation Cover, Field Border, Riparian Herbaceous/Forested Buffers, or Critical Area Plantings).
- Mowing of vegetation should consider the needs of ground nesting birds. Birds in Massachusetts nest from April 15 to August 1.

Important Wildlife Resource Concern Issues

Two current species of concern for Massachusetts NRCS are the Bog Turtle and the New England Cottontail. Contact the NRCS State Resource Conservationist or the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Natural Heritage Program for additional information on planning considerations for these species.

Expected TSP Workflow

- The State Resource Conservationist (SRC) will be responsible for reviewing TSP conservation planning for the National Planner Certification.
- Subsequent conservation plans will be reviewed by the District Conservationist (DC) at the local USDA Service Center.
- The SRC will conduct plan reviews for TSP planner certification renewals. The SRC will also Spot Check a percentage of the plans every year.
- TSPs will work with the local District Conservationist to make sure the proper environmental evaluations (NRCS.CPA.52) are completed.

Additional References or Training

- Massachusetts Field Office Technical Guide at www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov
- University of Massachusetts Soil Testing Laboratory <http://www.umass.edu/soiltest>
- UMass Extension Agriculture Teams
- <http://ag.umass.edu/quick-guide-to-extension-agriculture-and-commercial-horticulture-resources>

Certificate of Completion

After viewing the State Specific Training module, please print and sign the completion certificate on the following slide.

The certificate is your acknowledgement that based on the information provided in this module, you have the proper knowledge, skills and ability to conduct planning in this state.

Send the signed certificate to the State TSP Coordinator. Copy the below link to your browser for a list of State TSP Coordinators.

<https://techreg.sc.egov.usda.gov/RptStateContact4Admin.aspx>

STATE SPECIFIC TRAINING MODULE COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

I, _____, hereby verify I have viewed and understand the
TSP Name
content of the Massachusetts State Specific Training Module and affirm I have the
knowledge, skills and ability to conduct conservation planning services in that state.

TSP signature

Date

Non-Discrimination Statement

Non-Discrimination Policy

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

To File an Employment Complaint

If you wish to file an employment complaint, you must contact your agency's EEO Counselor within 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory act, event, or in the case of a personnel action. Additional information can be found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_file.html

To File a Program Complaint

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9419, by fax at (202) 690-7442, or email at program.intake@usda.gov

Persons with Disabilities

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and you wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

Persons with disabilities, who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.), please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

For any other information dealing with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) issues, persons should either contact the USDA SNAP Hotline Number at (800) 221-5689, which is also in Spanish, or call the State Information/Hotline Numbers.

All Other Inquiries

For any other information not pertaining to civil rights, please refer to the listing of the USDA Agencies and Offices.