



## **AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Finding of  
No Significant Impact  
November 2002



## Finding of No Significant Impact

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. I have determined, based upon the reasons provided below, that there will be no significant individual or cumulative impacts on the quality of the human environment as a result of implementing the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Program, particularly when focusing on the significant adverse impacts which NEPA is intended to help decision makers avoid and mitigate against. Therefore, an EIS is not required.

As discussed in the Environmental Assessment (EA), attached hereto and made a part hereof, Congress has authorized the AMA to be implemented in only the 15 states identified in the legislation (EA, p.1). Funding for conservation practices is authorized at \$20 million per year in fiscal years 2003 through 2007 and at \$10 million per year in other years (EA, p. 2). At \$20 million per year, approximately 280,000 acres will be treated each year (EA, p. 6). Particularly on a National level, this level of treatment does not provide an opportunity to have more than a minimal impact on the quality of the human environment. This is the case when considering impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

NRCS has in the past and will continue to document the results of an environmental evaluation on a site-specific level and, as stated in the EA, will consult with the appropriate organizations to avoid, mitigate or reduce adverse impacts on protected resources (EA, p. 8). NRCS will comply with requirements protecting unique geographic features and other resources, as well as NRCS policies protecting natural and cultural resources (EA, p. 8). Thus, there is no threat of a violation of any Federal, State or local law or other requirements for the protection of the environment as a result of implementing the AMA. There is no impact on public health or safety identified in this EA or otherwise expected. Furthermore, there is no effect identified that might be considered highly controversial or uncertain or that might involve unique or unknown risks. Neither the proposed action nor any of the alternatives is likely to establish a precedent for future actions other than the future implementation of the types of conservation practices that must be used to accomplish the purposes of this program.

Implementation of the AMA is not sufficiently related to other actions that either individually or cumulatively is likely to result in significant impacts. To the extent other NRCS actions authorized by the AMA may result in significant effects to the quality of the human environment, a State or area-wide EA or EIS may be prepared separately from this National EA.

Based on the information presented in the attached AMA EA, I find that the proposed action is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an EIS will not be prepared.

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BRUCE I. KNIGHT  
Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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