

Functional Statements¹

404.10 Office of the Chief.

(a) The Chief, with the assistance of the Associate Chief, administers, plans, directs, and coordinates all program, technical, and administrative activities of NRCS. This office assumes departmental leadership for programs and other activities assigned by the Secretary of Agriculture, through the direction of the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment. All national NRCS policy directives are issued by National Headquarters (NHQ). A functional statement is included as Exhibit 404.71. Overall NHQ functions include:

- (1) The planning, formulation, and direction of NRCS programs and activities;
- (2) Development of program policy, procedures, guidelines and standards;
- (3) Leadership and coordination with other agencies, constituent groups, and organizations; and
- (4) Strategic planning and development of strategic initiatives.

(b) Deputy Chiefs report directly to and participate with the Chief in the overall planning, formulation, and direction of all NRCS programs and activities. They represent the Chief at meetings and act as management representatives for the Chief. The functional areas of the Deputy Chiefs are Management; Soil Survey and Resource Assessment; Science and Technology; Strategic Planning and Accountability; and Programs.

(c) Regional Assistant Chiefs serve as management representatives of the Chief for designated geographic areas of the United States. They are responsible for:

- (1) Providing overall management direction of NRCS programs and activities consistent with the Chief's guidance; and
- (2) Acting as representatives of the Chief at meetings. They supervise State Conservationists and the Directors of the Pacific Basin and Caribbean Areas. A functional statement and description of areas served by Regional Assistant Chiefs are contained in Exhibit 404.76.

(d) The Legislative Affairs Staff provides coordination and staff assistance to the Chief and staff members concerning legislative affairs. This staff monitors activities in Congress, prepares and coordinates reports on bills, and coordinates the preparation of draft legislation. A functional statement is included as Exhibit 404.73.

(e) Strategic Natural Resource Issues Staff provides assistance to the Chief and Associate Chief on emerging issues. This staff provides assistance on cross-cutting natural resource issues, performs special analyses and studies, and represents NRCS and coordinates

¹ Functional Statements are provided for only the divisions affected by the reorganization. A complete set can be found at http://policy.nrcs.usda.gov/scripts/lpsiis.dll/GM/GM_360_404.htm

natural resource issues with other agencies and departments. A functional statement is included as Exhibit 404.72.

(f) The Civil Rights Division provides assistance to the Chief and Associate Chief on civil rights program compliance and equal opportunity employment program activities. This staff implements a national civil rights program compliance program, and provides national leadership for civil rights employment programs, including affirmative action, Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Plan (FEORP), and special emphasis programs. A functional statement is included as Exhibit 404.75.

(g) The Conservation Communications Staff provides public affairs support for agency issues and activities. This staff is responsible for conducting an effective information program and marketing program including audiovisual, web presence, publications, and news media activities. A functional statement is included as Exhibit 404.74.

404.11 Deputy Chief for Management.

The Deputy Chief for Management is responsible for the development, establishment, and promulgation of policies, guidelines, and standards for:

- (a) Financial Management;
- (b) Human Resources Management;
- (c) Information Technology;
- (d) Management Services;
- (e) Outreach; and
- (f) Special Projects.

The Deputy Chief for Management collaborates with other deputy chiefs in the planning, coordinating, and carrying out of administrative activities for other NRCS activities and programs. A functional statement is contained in Exhibit 404.77.

404.12 Deputy Chief for Soil Survey and Resource Assessment

The Deputy Chief for Soil Survey and Resource Assessment is responsible for the development, establishment, and promulgation of policies, guidelines, and standards for NRCS technical activities. Leadership is provided for:

- (a) International Programs;
- (b) Resource Inventory and Assessment; and
- (c) Soil Survey.

The Deputy Chief for Soil Survey and Resource Assessment collaborates with other Deputy Chiefs in the planning, coordinating, and carrying out of administrative activities for other NRCS activities and programs. A functional statement is contained in Exhibit 404.84.

404.13 Deputy Chief for Science and Technology.

The Deputy Chief for Science and Technology is responsible for the development, establishment, and promulgation of policies, guidelines, and standards for NRCS technical activities. Leadership is provided for:

- (a) Animal Husbandry and Clean Water;
- (b) Conservation Engineering;
- (c) Ecological Sciences;
- (d) National Technology Support Centers; and
- (e) Resource Economics and Social Sciences.

The Deputy Chief for Science and Technology provides overall leadership to the National Technology Support Centers, as well as collaborates with other Deputy Chiefs in the planning, coordinating, and carrying out of administrative activities for other NRCS activities and programs. A functional statement is contained in Exhibit 404.88.

404.14 Deputy Chief for Programs

The Deputy Chief for Programs is responsible for the development, establishment, and promulgation of policies, guidelines, and standards for:

- (a) Conservation Planning and Technical Assistance;
- (b) Easement Programs;
- (c) Financial Assistance Programs; and
- (d) Resource Conservation and Development and Rural Lands.

The Deputy Chief for Programs collaborates with other Deputy Chiefs in the planning, coordinating, and carrying out of these functions for other NRCS activities and programs. A functional statement is contained in Exhibit 404.94.

404.15 Deputy Chief for Strategic Planning and Accountability

The Deputy Chief for Strategic Planning and Accountability is responsible for the development, establishment, and promulgation of policies, guidelines, and standards for:

- (a) Budget Planning and Analysis;
- (b) Operations Management and Oversight; and
- (c) Strategic and Performance Planning.

The Deputy Chief for Strategic Planning and Accountability collaborates with other deputy chiefs in the planning, coordinating, and carrying out of these functions for other NRCS activities and programs. A functional statement is contained in Exhibit 404.99.

404.75 Civil Rights Division

A. Assignment of Functions:

1. Provides overall leadership, coordination, and direction for the Agency's programs of civil rights, including program delivery compliance, equal employment opportunity, and special emphasis.
2. Monitors and evaluates progress towards diversity within NRCS program delivery staffs, boards, and councils.
3. Develops policies and procedures to evaluate programs related to civil rights, equal employment opportunity, and special emphasis.
4. Develops civil rights policy for the Agency. Prepares civil rights impact analysis on employment and program issues.
5. Develops strategic plans for implementing civil rights and environmental justice laws and policies in the Agency.
6. Monitors internal agency training and provides leadership to ensure that appropriate training is delivered to Agency personnel in the area of civil rights.
7. Conducts or directs investigations, including investigations of claims of compensatory damages resulting from Title VII complaints.
8. Administers Agency's civil rights compliance and enforcement programs for NRCS Federally-assisted and federally-conducted programs in accordance with 7 CFR 15, General Manual 230, Parts 401-405.
9. Provides leadership, direction and technical assistance to the States in carrying out their civil rights responsibilities.
10. Performs staff work for the Chief NRCS and the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights on equal employment opportunity and civil rights matters, including coordination of the Agency's special emphasis activities, affirmative employment program, equal employment opportunity evaluations, and development of EEO/civil rights policies and procedures.
11. Prepares reports necessary to accomplish the civil rights mission of the agency.
12. Provides training, advice, and support for the Agency's Civil Rights Advisory Committee.
13. Maintains liaison with the Office of Personnel Management, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and with the Department of Justice to keep abreast of precedent setting cases.
14. Oversees agency complaints process, maintains tracking system on Title VI and VII complaints.
15. Monitors, facilitates and initiates actions to increase the hiring, promotion, training and retention of women, minorities and persons with disabilities as well as addressing other workforce diversity issues, particularly in areas where these groups are underrepresented or underutilized.
16. Conducts studies, organizational reviews, and analyses to assess NRCS employment and program delivery activities.

17. Monitors and evaluates policies, procedures and programs related to program delivery and equal employment opportunity, as well as aspects of programs and activities.

18. Maintains liaison with the Department, other Federal departments, agencies, divisions and commissions both external and internal to NRCS to exchange information and assure coordinated actions on civil rights matters.

404.76 Regional Assistant Chiefs

General

1. The NRCS organization in each of the regions is headed by a Regional Assistant Chief.
2. Regional Assistant Chiefs are management representatives of the Chief and are responsible for:
 - (a) Providing overall direction of NRCS programs and activities consistent with the Chief's guidance.
 - (b) Acting as representatives of the Chief at meetings; and
 - (c) Supervising the State Conservationists and the Directors of the Pacific Basin and Caribbean Areas.

A. Assignment of Functions.

1. Serve as a management representative of the Chief for designated geographic areas. Provide overall direction of NRCS programs for their assigned areas consistent with the Chief's guidance.
2. Provide overall leadership and supervision to State Conservationists and Directors of the Pacific Basin and Caribbean Areas.
3. Represent the Chief at meetings, conferences, and other functions.
4. Participate in appraisals, reviews, and inspections as assigned.
5. Ensure consistent application of agency policies and procedures and keep the Chief and the Associate Chief informed.
6. Regional Assistant Chiefs provide overall management direction for the following areas:

East: Alabama, Caribbean Area, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.

Central: Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wisconsin.

West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Pacific Basin, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

404.84 Deputy Chief for Soil Survey and Resource Assessment

A. Assignment of Functions.

1. Participates in the overall formulation and direction of all NRCS programs and activities.

2. Develops national policies; establishes and promulgates procedures, guidelines and standards; provides agency leadership for assigned technical activities; and provides leadership for technical training in assigned technical area.
3. Collaborates with other deputy chiefs in the planning, coordinating, and carrying out of technical activities with other programs of the agency.
4. Provides leadership and guidance for the (a) Soil Survey Division; (b) Resource Inventory and Assessment Division; and (c) International Programs Division.
5. Develops and provides resource information, analysis, and assessment of the highest available quality to meet the needs of field operations, NRCS clients, and policy makers at the local, State, regional, and national levels.
6. Acquires, develops, evaluates, and disseminates new technologies and information for implementation and integration of activities relating to the agency's geospatial data collection, assessment and analysis, soil survey, and national cartography and remote sensing activities.
7. Ensures agency adherence to policy, standards, and procedures in assigned technical activities, including technical assistance to field operations.
8. Makes recommendations regarding budget formulation and funding allocations to the Chief and Associate Chief that ensures funds are expended to accomplish program objectives and to achieve the maximum utilization of funds.
9. Conducts and coordinates accurate and timely policy analysis to support legislated activities, field operations, program administration, and effective interagency coordination.
10. Maintains relationships with USDA, Federal, Tribal, State, private and other agencies and groups, and serves on departmental and other committees and boards as they relate to technical and scientific aspects of assigned activities.
11. Manages Soil Survey and Resource Inventory and Assessment programs and provides leadership for setting technical and research priorities for assigned technical activities.
12. Provides national leadership for Homeland Security including leadership and coordination across deputy and division lines in developing mitigation strategies for agency areas that are vulnerable.
13. Provides leadership for global climate change and carbon sequestration activities.

404.85 International Programs Division

A. Assignment of Functions.

1. Develops policies and procedures for NRCS involvement in providing assistance to foreign governments, international organizations, and related agencies.
2. Develops and coordinates plans for implementing technical assistance to foreign governments, which includes identifying qualified personnel and arranging for staffing assignments.
3. Plans and schedules on-the-job training for foreign nationals.
4. Serves as the contact for foreign visitors seeking assistance with NRCS.

5. Maintains relationships with USDA, Federal, State, and private agencies and groups as they relate to foreign activities.
6. Develops and maintains partnerships with the major international organizations such as the World Bank, Agency for International Development, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
7. Advises on international travel requirements and policy. Assists NRCS employees with travel clearances, passports, VISAS and security clearances.
8. Supports NRCS staff participating in scientific and technical exchanges.

404.86 Resource Inventory and Assessment Division

A. Assignment of Functions.

1. Provides policies, standards, procedures, and training for natural resource inventory methods and ensures information quality standards are achieved in agency assessment and analyses publications.
2. Provides leadership for resource analysis and assessment and maintains an up to date website for public release of data products.
3. Coordinates across deputy lines to ensure consistency in “product line” information generated by inventory, assessment and analysis results.
4. Serves as the program manager for the National Resources Inventory (NRI) and develops all schedules and budgets. Plans, coordinates, formulates and recommends the allocation of funds for assigned program activities and prepares analyses and justification statements for budget requests.
5. Develops and provides certification training for data collectors for the NRI, approves NRI confidentiality agreements, and implements quality assurance plans and a Quality Framework to ensure quality standards and processes are integrated into the survey design and the data collection effort.
6. Has direct responsibility for the management and maintenance of the NRI data and related attribute data bases and provides leadership and guidance for natural resource inventories.
7. Develops policy, standards, procedures and training for geospatial sciences; including cartography, geographic information systems, remote sensing, and global positioning systems. Has direct responsibility for acquisition, management and maintenance of hydrologic units, NRI imagery, the National Aerial Photography and Digital Orthophotography Programs and related geospatial and attribute databases.
8. Provides national leadership for completing assessments and policy analysis mandated under the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act, and other related resource appraisal and planning authorities by conducting and coordinating environmental and economic analyses of natural resource status, conditions and trends, and develops special, annual, and multi-year reports and publications for internal use and external release.
9. Provides leadership and direction in developing analytical approaches, models, tools and processes to predict and evaluate the effectiveness of NRCS programs and conservation systems on natural resource conditions.
10. Maintains technical exchange with equivalent entities and other Federal agencies, and coordinates partnerships with other agencies, organizations and research institutions

to maintain state-of-the-art analytical capabilities to ensure the dissemination and use of research findings.

11. Coordinates the integration and/or release of inventory data and analyses with Forest Service, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), and others as appropriate.

12. Provides overall leadership and direction for the National Cartography and Geospatial Center, and works closely with the Soil Survey Division regarding guidance for those functions that support soil survey activities.

13. Provides overall leadership and direction for Remote Sensing Laboratories to interpret, collect, maintain and disseminate natural resource information and related data.

14. Provides national leadership, guidance, and direction for economic, environmental, and policy analysis. Identifies emerging issues for analysis relevant to the NRCS mission, program areas, and field operations..

404.88 Deputy Chief for Science and Technology

A. Assignment of Functions.

1. Participates in the overall planning, formulation, and direction of all NRCS programs and activities and ensures that these activities comply with all applicable national environmental statutes and regulations.

2. Develops national policies, establishes and promulgates procedures, guidelines, and standards; and provides agency leadership for assigned technical activities; and provides leadership for technical training in assigned technical areas.

3. Collaborates with other deputy chiefs in planning, coordinating, and carrying out technical activities with other programs of the agency.

4. Provides leadership and guidance for the: (a) Conservation Engineering Division; (b) Resource Economics and Social Sciences Division; (c) Animal Husbandry and Clean Water Division; (d) Ecological Sciences Division; and (e) National Technology Support Centers.

5. Provides leadership and develops national policies, guidelines, standards, manuals, training and procedures for delivery of technical services through Technical Service Providers.

6. Ensures agency adherence to policy, standards, and procedures on assigned technical activities, including technical assistance to field operations.

7. Makes recommendations regarding budget formulation and funding allocations to the Associate Chief and Chief to ensure that funds are expended to accomplish program objectives and to achieve the most efficient utilization of funds.

8. Acquires, develops, evaluates, and disseminates new technologies to solve natural resource problems and other technical issues in support of field delivery system for assigned technical areas.

9. Maintains relationships with USDA, Federal, Tribes, State, private and other agencies and groups, and serves on departmental and other committees and boards as they relate to technical and scientific aspects of NRCS programs and activities.

10. Provides leadership for setting technical and research priorities for assigned technical activities and provides overall leadership and guidance to the National Technology Support Centers.
11. Conducts and coordinates accurate and timely policy analysis to support field operations, program administration, and effective interagency coordination.
12. Provides leadership and manages Plant Materials and Snow Survey programs.
13. Serves as the National Headquarters point of contact for national and regional liaison positions supporting natural resource issues.
14. Provides support and assistance for issues, activities and cooperation with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
15. Provides leadership for establishing and supporting Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units for research, technical assistance and education.

404.89 Animal Husbandry and Clean Water Division

A. Assignment of Functions.

1. Leads the overall planning, formulation, coordination, and direction of NRCS activities and initiatives involving animal husbandry as they impact natural resource quality and health, including water quality, water quantity, and nutrient management problems and issues such as animal feeding operations.
2. Provides planning, formulation, coordination and direction of activities concerning air quality problems and issues such as greenhouse gases as they relate to animal husbandry.
3. Acquires, develops, evaluates and disseminates new technologies in animal husbandry and clean water to solve natural resource problems and technical issues in support of field delivery system.
4. Provides national leadership for initiatives, and activities assigned to NRCS by the department and mission area for animal agriculture, bio energy, nutrient management and clean water.
5. Provides national leadership for animal husbandry and clean water technology including identifying research needs and accomplishing technical and research priorities.
6. Collaborates with the Deputy Chief for Science and Technology, National Headquarter Divisions, and the National Technology Support Centers, in planning, coordinating and carrying out technical support activities with other programs and divisions of the Agency on all assigned activities and to ensure technical support activities and future program planning are in concert with current programs and the direction of the Chief.
7. Maintains relationships with USDA, Federal, Tribes, State, private and other agencies and groups and serves on committees and boards as they relate to the assigned functions.
8. Serves as the NHQ point of contact for national and regional liaison positions supporting air, water, and natural resources issues and/or affiliated with partnering agencies and organizations.
9. Reviews, evaluates, and provides recommendations to NRCS and mission area leadership on proposed, revised and new environmental regulations and rules for assigned areas.

10. Provides national leadership for the development of Departmental reports, proposals, and testimony related to assigned activities.
11. Serves as point of contact for issues, and activities and cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Water.
12. Provides support and assistance to the Department and mission area for coordination with EPA.
13. Develops national policies, establishes and promulgates procedures, guidelines and standards; provides agency leadership for assigned technical activities, and provides leadership for technical training in assigned technical areas.
14. Serves as national technical policy liaison with other agencies groups and organizations for assigned technical areas.
15. Develops national policies, guidelines, standards, manuals, training and procedures for delivery of technical services through Technical Service Providers.
16. Directs national policy formulation and provides leadership for NRCS water quality strategies, initiatives, and activities.
17. Provides support for conservation innovation grants technology including coordination of technology transfer and institutionalization of successful approaches.
18. Provides leadership and coordination for formulating environmental credit trading policies, strategies, and initiatives, including coordination within USDA and with other agencies and organizations.
19. Ensures agency adherence to policy, standards, and procedures for assigned technical areas.
20. Makes recommendations to the Deputy Chief regarding budget initiatives.
21. Prepares, reviews and coordinates the handling of special correspondence, Federal Register notices, and reports related to assigned responsibilities.

404.92 National Technology Support Centers

A. Assignment of Functions.

Direct Assistance

1. Provides consultative assistance to States, Pacific Basin and Caribbean Areas on technology issues; developing strategies to address natural resource issues; and addressing complex natural resource issues and/or identify additional sources of support.
2. Assists States, Pacific Basin and Caribbean Areas with lead pilot projects and demonstration projects or field trials.
3. Provides technical support to NHQ Divisions and others, as they evaluate impacts of legislation, policy, and initiatives on natural resources conservation.

Technology Acquisition and Development

1. Develops and enhances NRCS relationships with academia, non-governmental organizations, and other Federal agencies to improve support of locally based natural resources activities.

2. Works closely with the States, other National Technology Support Centers, National Centers, National Headquarters, and others to identify and communicate technology development and research needs, and help develop strategies for addressing priority needs.
3. Acquires technology from other natural resource entities, to meet customer needs.
4. Provides assistance in the development and review of technical materials, such as practice standards, handbooks, and manuals.

Technology Transfer and Training

1. Provides leadership in technology transfer and training for natural resource technologies.
2. Works closely with States, other National Technology Support Centers, National Centers, National Headquarters, and others to identify and communicate technology transfer and training needs.
3. Collaborates with National Technology Support Centers and others to provide transfer and training for technologies.
4. Works to improve outreach and delivery of technology.
5. Provides leadership and assistance to help specialists in assigned States to develop the skills and tools needed to meet conservation objectives.

Development and Maintenance of National Technical Standards, References, and Related Materials

1. Provides technical leadership, guidance, support, and expertise for development and maintenance of technical practice standards.
2. Ensure consistency of technical practice standards nationwide.

Special Technology Development Areas

1. Carries out assigned functions for emerging technology development in the following areas: air quality/atmospheric change, animal waste utilization, bio-energy, grazing lands, social sciences, soil quality, water quality/quantity, wetlands, and wildlife.

404.94 Deputy Chief for Programs

- A. Assignment of Functions.
 1. Participates in the overall planning, formulation, and direction of all NRCS programs and activities.
 2. Develops national policies, establishes and promulgates procedures, rules and regulations, and guidelines and standards.
 3. Provides leadership for the operation of assigned programs and activities associated with: (a) Conservation Planning and Technical Assistance Division; (b) Resource Conservation and Rural Lands Division; (c) Easement Programs Division; and (d) Financial Assistance Programs Division.
 4. Collaborates with other Deputy Chiefs to ensure that administrative and technical support activities, and future program planning and redirection are in concert with current program operations.

5. Develops and provides policy and guidelines for the implementation and integration of activities relating to assigned financial and technical assistance programs.
6. Maintains relationships with USDA, Federal, Tribes, State, and private and other agencies and groups, and serves on departmental and other committees and boards as they relate to technical, scientific, policy, and legislative aspects of assigned activities.
7. Serves on departmental and other committees and boards as they relate to assigned agency responsibilities.
8. Serves as the Deputy Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).
9. Makes recommendations regarding budget formulation and funding allocations to the Chief and Associate Chief to ensure that funds are expended to accomplish program objectives and to achieve the maximum utilization of funds.
10. Develops and maintains national policy, guidance and procedures; reports; and other materials related to assigned programs.
11. Serves as point of contact for USDA, Tribal organizations, conservation districts, State Conservation agencies, and other groups and organizations for assigned programs.
12. Develops and maintains national policy and procedures for the Conservation Innovation and Partnership and Cooperation Grants Program.

404.95 Conservation Planning and Technical Assistance Division

A. Assignment of Functions.

1. Provides national leadership for the conservation planning, application, and maintenance assistance, including the Soil Conservation and Domestic Act of 1935, Title XII and the non Title XII appeals for the Food Security Act of 1985; the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990; the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996; the Conservation Trade Act of 1990; and the highly erodible land and wetland compliance provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended.
2. Provides national leadership for area-wide and watershed planning, including the watershed planning provisions of the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954.
3. Develops and maintains national policies, guidelines, standards, procedures, manuals and handbooks; established and promulgates rules and regulations; formulates budgets, funding allocation priorities, and initiatives; develops training; and addresses correspondence and informational needs for all assigned conservation programs.
4. Provides national leadership and direction for the Conservation Technical Assistance, Watershed Surveys and Planning, and Great Lakes Conservation Programs.
5. Makes recommendations to the Deputy Chief for Programs regarding budget formulation and funding allocations for assigned program to ensure funds are expended to accomplish program objectives and to achieve maximum utilization of funds. Prepares analysis and justification statements.
6. Provides national leadership for the development of departmental, mission area, and legislative reports, proposals, and testimony related to the Conservation Technical Assistance Program, Watershed Surveys and Planning Program, and Great Lakes Conservation Program, and coordinates these actions with the Legislative Affairs and Conservation Communication Staffs, as applicable.

7. Reviews and coordinates the handling of special correspondence, Federal Register reviews, and the review/coordination of the preparation of rules and regulations related to the assigned programs.
8. Serves as the national program manager for the Conservation Technical Assistance, Watershed Surveys and Planning, Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, and Great Lakes Conservation Programs. Prepares analysis and justification statements for budget requests for assigned programs.
9. Maintains relationships with USDA, Federal, Tribes, State, private organizations, watershed planning sponsors, and other entities and serves on departmental and other committees, boards, and task forces as they related to assigned conservation programs and conservation and watershed planning activities.
10. Analyzes proposed, introduced and existing Federal legislation including hearings and reports; recommends departmental positions to ensure legislation and policies are effectively integrated into assigned program activities.
11. Monitors and analyzes performance and expenditures for assigned programs.
12. Serves as national point of conservation partnership contact and coordinates with conservation districts, State conservation agencies, State departments of agriculture, and their national organizations.
13. Serves as the national point of contact for Coastal America, the Coastal Zone Management Program, the Great Lakes Commission, and related entities and organizations.
14. Provides national leadership for information technology business requirements related to conservation, area-wide, and watershed planning.
15. Provides national leadership for the Conservation Toolkit Planning Business Tool.

404.96 Easement Programs Division

A. Assignment of Functions.

1. Provides national leadership for easement programs in accordance with The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002; Section 382 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, the Emergency Watershed Protection Program, as amended by Public Law 104-127; the Agriculture Conservation and Trade Act of 1990; and the Food Security Act of 1985.
2. Develops and maintains national policies, guidelines, standards, procedures, manuals, and handbooks; establishes and promulgates rules and regulations; develops training; and addresses correspondence and informational needs to carry out the easement provisions of the Wetland Reserve Program, the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, the floodplain easement portion of the Emergency Watershed Protection Program, the Conservation Reserve Program, and the Grassland Reserve Program, Water Bank Program, and Debt for Nature Program.
3. Advises and assists States in program activities, training, and assembles and disseminates pertinent information on assigned program activities.
4. Provides national leadership and guidance to states on processes, procedures, and requirements related to working with local units of government, Tribes, and sponsors to obtain land rights, easements, and rights-of-way.

5. Coordinates agreements, cost-share payments, and enrollment and compensation for assigned programs.
6. Provides national leadership, direction, and guidance in the management of assigned easement activities, including appraisals, land easement enforcement, and land management.
7. Provides national leadership, direction, and guidance on application procedures, landowner eligibility, land eligibility, ranking consideration, establishment of rates, and appraisals.
8. Reviews and coordinates the handling of special correspondence, Federal Register reviews, and the review/coordination of the preparation of rules and regulations related to the assigned programs that require easements.
9. Maintains relationships with USDA, Federal, Tribes, State, private and other agencies and groups, and serves on departmental and other committees and boards as they relate to assigned activities.
10. Provides national leadership for tracking and managing easements and coordination with other land management agencies.
11. Analyzes proposed, introduced, and existing Federal legislation, including hearings and reports; recommends departmental positions to ensure legislation and policies are effectively integrated into assigned program activities.
12. Monitors and analyzes performance and expenditures for assigned programs.
13. Provides national leadership for program related activities associated with agency Commodity Credit Corporation responsibilities.

404.97 Financial Assistance Programs Division

A. Assignment of Functions.

1. Provides national leadership for the financial assistance programs in accordance with the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002; the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996; the Agriculture Conservation and Trade Act of 1990; Food Security Act of 1985, and the Flood Control Act of 1944.
2. Develops and maintains national policies, guidelines, standards, procedures, manuals and handbooks; establishes and promulgates rules and regulations; develops training; and addresses correspondence and informational needs for all assigned conservation programs.
3. Provides national leadership for the following financial assistance programs: Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Partnerships and Cooperation; Forestry Incentives Program, Great Plains Conservation Program, Rural Abandoned Mine Program, Colorado River Basin Salinity Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, Conservation Security Program, Emergency Watershed Protection Program (excluding flood plain easements), Ground and Surface Water Program, Klamath Basin Program, Agricultural Management Assistance Program, Watershed Operations Program, and Conservation Innovation and Partnership and Cooperation Grants Program.
4. Formulates budgets, develops and recommends funding priorities, and recommends allocations to the Deputy Chief for Programs for assigned financial assistance programs.
5. Monitors and analyzes performance and expenditures for assigned programs.

6. Provides national leadership for the development of departmental and legislative reports, proposals, and testimony related to financial assistance programs and coordinates these actions with the Legislative Affairs Staff and Conservation Communication Division, as applicable.
7. Reviews and coordinates the handling of special correspondence, Federal Register reviews, and the review/coordination of the preparation of rules and regulations to the assigned programs.
8. Prepares analyses and justification statements for budget requests for assigned area of responsibility.
9. Maintains relationships with USDA, Federal, Tribes, State, private and other agencies and groups, and serves on departmental and other committees and boards as they relate to assigned programs.
10. Analyzes proposed, introduced, and existing Federal legislation, including hearings and reports; recommends departmental positions to ensure legislation and policies are effectively integrated into assigned program activities.

404.98 Resource Conservation and Development and Rural Lands Division

A. Assignment of Functions.

1. Assigned program responsibilities include the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Program and the activities and initiatives related to community and rural development and assistance; American Indian Tribes; Alaska Natives; small, limited resource and socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; and small farms advisory committee liaison.
2. Develops and maintains national policy, guidance, standards, procedures, manuals, and handbooks; establishes and promulgates rules and regulations; formulates budgets, funding allocation priorities, and initiatives; develops training; and addresses correspondence and informational needs for all assigned programs.
3. Provides leadership for the USDA RC&D Working Group, and support to the USDA RC&D Policy Advisory Board and other organizations in the formulation of Department-wide goals, objectives, policies, and procedures for the RC&D Program.
4. Maintains relationships with USDA, Federal, Tribes, State, private and other agencies and groups, and serves on departmental and other committees and boards as they relate to assigned activities. Serves as principal point of contact to the National Association of RC&D Councils and Tribal organizations.
5. Provides agency coordination for community and rural development activities carried out by State Rural Development Councils, outside organizations, and other cooperating groups, and represents NRCS on the National Rural Development Council and the USDA Sustainable Development Council.
6. Establishes national program information requirements and monitors information to assist NRCS and USDA officials in responding to congressional inquiries, and satisfy other program information and management oversight needs in respect to assigned program responsibilities.
7. Serves as the national program manager for assigned programs.
8. Monitors and analyzes performance and expenditures for assigned programs.

9. Responsible for the Farmland Protection Policy Act including all activities and initiatives related to natural resource conservation in urban and developing areas; community planning assistance; and the development of land evaluation and site assessment systems.
10. Analyzes proposed, introduced, and existing Federal legislation, including hearings and reports; recommends departmental positions to ensure legislation and policies are effectively integrated into assigned program activities.