

TSP Express

*A quarterly report for certified Technical Service Providers
Winter 2004*



Message from Chief Bruce I. Knight

Welcome to the first edition of TSP Express, an electronic report designed to keep certified technical service providers (TSP) informed about a broad array of conservation activities. We also will keep you updated on changes to TechReg, our TSP web site and registry. We have 1,452 *certified* TSPs as of January 2004. That is quite an achievement since we started TechReg on March 1, 2003.

Our job is to provide the tools to help you do your jobs effectively. For instance, NRCS is working to improve the interactive features on TechReg to ensure greater communication between NRCS and TSPs. Please check the site regularly because there is much to be excited about with TSP this year. For example, we plan to revamp the not-to-exceed rates to bring them more in line with market rates.

NRCS relies on your feedback to make this partnership process a success. I encourage you to e-mail your comments and suggestions to tspg@nrcs.usda.gov.

Finally, thank you for your interest in the delivery of technical assistance. Your role as a TSP is invaluable in enhancing stewardship on our nation's private lands.

Bruce I. Knight

Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Information Available on TechReg

The TechReg web site has a wealth of information for new and prospective technical service providers. This web-based registry for TSPs contains information on the following:

- civil rights responsibilities
- Not-To-Exceed payment rates
- certifying and partner organizations
- list of NRCS state TSP coordinators

There is even a link for TSPs to sign up for timely information from NRCS via e-mail.

Please visit <http://techreg.usda.gov> for more information.

NRCS Policies and Procedures on the Internet

NRCS policies, procedures, handbooks and manuals as well as the draft are located on the NRCS directives website, <http://policy.nrcs.usda.gov>. Search for documents coded 450, Technology. Additional technical documents on nutrient management, ecological sciences, and other critical topics are accessible from NRCS' main home page at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>. Click on Technical Resources, located in one of the gray menu boxes at the top of the home page.

NRCS Funds Technical Service Provider Process

NRCS funded its new technical service provider initiative with more than \$23.9 million in Fiscal Year 2003, demonstrating a major commitment toward this process.

States took full advantage of the opportunities afforded to them through the TSP process in Fiscal Year 2003.

For example, NRCS in Minnesota awarded about \$600,000 to private businesses to provide technical assistance for conservation practices. Nebraska awarded \$400,000 to engineering firms for livestock waste system designs; \$300,000 for wetland restoration designs, and

another \$300,000 for watershed rehabilitation designs. Montana signed a \$400,000 agreement with several partners that will help local ranchers save money and conserve water while improving habitat for trout and other native fish species.

Training Opportunities

Maine

February 3, 2004
10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Continuing education training for the Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan-Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage Element

For more information and to register, contact Dan Baumert, State Conservation Engineer, USDA-NRCS, at 207-990-9100, Ext. 3 or Dan.Baumert@me.usda.gov

For More Information

For more information on technical service providers, visit the TechReg site at <http://techreg.usda.gov>; write to Technical Service Provider Team, Conservation Engineering Division, USDA-NRCS, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, D.C. 20013; or send an e-mail to tspg@nrcs.usda.gov.

National Technical Service Provider Contacts

Ron Marlow, 202-720-2520
Melissa Hammond, 202-720-6775

State Technical Service Provider Contacts

<http://techreg.usda.gov/RptStateContact4Admin.aspx>

Your Feedback is Needed

This is the first issue of TSP Express, a report for certified TSPs. We are seeking topics for future issues. We also need input on how frequently we should publish. Our present plans call for quarterly issues. Please send comments to tspg@nrcs.usda.gov.

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