Subpart B - Policy and Responsibilities

402.10 Policy

A. It is NRCS policy to use RUSLE2 and WEPS where sheet, rill, and/or wind erosion are resource concerns to provide conservation planning and implementation assistance to land users and other decision makers. As other models become available for special landscape situations the national agronomist, with the approval of the Deputy Chief for Science and Technology, will make those models available with the supporting databases and training.

B. WEPS and RUSLE2 will be used to make all erosion estimates listed in (a) above. Until further notice, however, factors from the USLE and WEQ, and soil loss tolerance values contained in the field office technical guide as of January 1, 1990, are used for determination of HEL in meeting the requirements of the Conservation Compliance Provisions of the 1996 Farm Bill (see Federal Register, Vol. 61, No. 108, June 3, 1996, pp. 27998-28000). Current RUSLE2 and WEPS models will be used to evaluate erosion for conservation systems planned and applied to HEL.

402.11 Responsibilities

A. Deputy Chief, Science and Technology

The Deputy Chief for Science and Technology, under the general direction of the Chief, is responsible for final approval and issuance of new erosion prediction policy or changes to existing policy and for the uniform implementation of this policy.

B. Director, Ecological Sciences Division

The Director of the Ecological Sciences Division, within the Science and Technology Deputy area, is responsible for overseeing the national policy development and implementation for wind and water erosion prediction technology.

C. National Agronomist

The National Agronomist, Ecological Sciences Division, in coordination with other discipline leaders (forestry, range, pasture), is responsible for policy development and implementation for wind and water erosion prediction technology, as:

(i) New technology becomes available and appropriate agency-wide testing has been completed; or
(ii) Changes to existing policy are required.

D. National Erosion Specialists

National Erosion Specialists for water and wind erosion prediction are to:

(i) Provide technical guidance to the National Technical Support Center (NTSC) erosion specialists, States and the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas, upon request, in implementing this policy.
(ii) Assist NTSC, States and the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas in complex problems in the use and application of the models.
(iii) Consult with the National Agronomist and other discipline leaders regarding proposed changes to technical aspects of this policy and the erosion prediction science.
(iv) Cooperate and coordinate with the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), universities, and others to maintain the current technology used.
(v) Maintain all needed data to operate the models.

E. NTSC Agronomist/Range Specialists/Pasture Specialists/Foresters

NTSC Specialists designated to assist in water and wind erosion prediction are to:

(i) Provide technical guidance and training to States and the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas as needed.
(ii) Ensure coordination of erosion prediction activities across State boundaries.
(iii) Submit proposed changes to the appropriate manuals regarding technical aspects of the use and application of the erosion prediction models to the NRCS national erosion specialist (s), ARS, and university partners.
(iv) Assist State staff to train field staff in the use of the erosion prediction technology.

F. State Conservationists and the Directors of the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas

State Conservationists and the Directors of the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas are responsible for:

(i) Implementing this policy in their respective States and areas.
(ii) Assigning leadership for the technical phases of application to an appropriate State/Area staff member.
(iii) Implementing and maintaining, through an interdisciplinary approach:
Actively support the development and refinement of data used in making erosion predictions with RUSLE2, WEPS, and other approved models.

Ensure that procedures for the use of these models are incorporated or referenced as applicable in each field office technical guide.

Provide for training of personnel in the use and limitations of the models and follow-up to see that the training has been effective.

Bring unique soil erosion prediction situations to the attention of the NTCS erosion specialist.

Ensure that the field office staffs are using the latest and most current data for the models.

G. Area and Field Office Staff

Area and field office staffs are responsible for:

(i) Bringing unique soil erosion prediction situations to the attention of the State Conservationist or through their staff.

(ii) Using the appropriate erosion prediction technology when inventorying natural resource concerns, and providing technical assistance to land users and other decision makers.