

For: State and County Offices

**Managing Soils Information and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
Tool Use Preparations for Signup 29**

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

A general signup is planned for FY 2004. Soils data in NRCS’s Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) may have changed since the last general signup and additional SSURGO II and Common Land Unit (CLU) shape file deployments may have occurred in some areas since the last general signup. For these reasons, additional file updating and GIS training may be needed for some locations.

B Purpose

This notice provides instructions to State Offices to prepare files and arrange for training as needed to support this next general signup.

2 Maintaining CRP Soils Database Records

A Review and Adjustment for FOTG Consistency

For CRP purposes, the soils data maintained through the intranet by FSA and NRCS State Offices at the following website shall be used for all soils-based determinations:

<http://fsatpws2.fsa.usda.gov/SoilDbMgnt/applicationAgent/SoilMainServlet>

Disposal Date	Distribution
June 1, 2004	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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2 Maintaining CRP Soils Database Records (Continued)

A Review and Adjustment for FOTG Consistency (Continued)

Official soils data may have been added or modified in FOTG by NRCS since signup 26. The records maintained at this FSA website must reflect NRCS soils data as recorded in the current FOTG. FSA State Offices, with NRCS assistance, shall maintain soils records through this secured site for all cropped soils according to the *User Guide* available for downloading from this website.

Reminder: State Offices with counties in the National Conservation Priority Area for Long Leaf Pine shall also consult with State foresters when maintaining the Long Leaf Pine Suitability Flag.

To support the use of the CRP GIS Tool, all Soil Survey Area ID Numbers and Soil Map Unit Symbols (MUSYM's) recorded at this site for cropped soils must be maintained consistently with those NRCS uses in SSURGO II or SSURGO I soils shape files. This consistency requirement includes the use of the correct upper/lower case letters with MUSYM's.

B Soil Rental Rate (SRR) Review and Record Maintenance

SRR's must be established and maintained according to 2-CRP requirements for all cropped soil types recorded in the CRP soils database. For CRP soils database maintenance, STC's shall do the following:

- ensure that the correct and most current SRR's reflecting dryland cash rents are always applied to the correct soil types
- with NRCS State Office concurrence, STC's have authority to develop SRR's for new soil types, to delete existing SRR's, and to reduce existing SRR's
- with approval by the National CRP Program Manager, and NRCS State concurrence, STC's have authority to increase existing SRR's.

Important: A nationwide SRR review is **not** being conducted before the next general signup. Current SRR's shall be used for this signup for all counties, except that those minimal increases, determined essential to ensure SRR's reflect current cash market rents and consistency across county borders, may be approved. Large-scale and/or Statewide increases will **not** be approved.

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2 Maintaining CRP Soils Database Records (Continued)

B SRR Review and Record Maintenance (Continued)

To be effective for the next general signup, STC's must forward all rate increase requests, with thorough supporting documentation, to the National CRP Program Manager according to 2-CRP before **January 9, 2004**.

If needed, COC's are reminded to work with local FSA/NRCS rental rate review teams to develop SRR change recommendations for STC according to 2-CRP. States Offices may issue for some counties proposed SRR's to COC's for review, instead of waiting for COC recommendations to be forwarded to State Offices.

Dual SRR's have been discontinued. Refer to 2-CRP for policy and SRR corrections to be made.

3 CRP GIS Tool Use Preparation

A Identifying New/Modified SSURGO II and CLU Layer Deployment

To support CRP GIS Tool use to the maximum extent, FSA State Offices shall review and assess deployment of new or modified NRCS SSURGO II soils shape files and FSA CLU layers to Service Centers since the beginning of general signup 26 in May to determine those locations for which new files are available.

Note: Uncertified CLU layers can be used with the CRP GIS Tool; however, the use of uncertified CLU requires Service Center staff to take extra precaution when working with producers to develop CRP scenarios to ensure that field/tract boundaries and related land uses are current.

State Offices shall notify county CRP staff of new or modified SSURGO II and/or CLU layers and provide assistance to Service Centers in locating these files on local servers and using these layers in the CRP GIS Tool.

B GIS and PC Training

The CRP GIS Tool functions as a "stand-alone" PC desktop application that is programmed as an extension for ArcView 3.2 or 3.3. Although the tool has been developed to be user-friendly, the use of this tool by Service Center staff requires CRP GIS Tool training. In addition, tool users must also have substantial Microsoft Windows/Explorer skills, or also obtain this general PC training.

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3 CRP GIS Tool Use Preparation (Continued)

B GIS and PC Training (Continued)

To support the next general signup, the National Office does not plan to offer GIS and PC training to Service Centers through a national training initiative. State Offices shall identify those county locations for which training is needed and arrange for training using State training resources.

Note: The use of cross-training by skilled/trained FSA employees and the use of training materials/software developed for signup 26 is acceptable. The CRP GIS Tool to be deployed for signup 29 will be an enhanced version of the signup 26 tool.

4 Action

A State Office Action

FSA State Offices shall complete the following by **no later than COB February 13, 2004:**

- assess and complete the CRP soils data review and adjustment as needed, including any SRR changes, according to paragraph 2, for all cropped soils

Note: See subparagraph 2 B for SRR deadline.

- assess and support SSURGO II and CLU deployment, and arrange for needed GIS/PC training of County Office CRP staff.