

For: State and County Offices

**ECP Environmental Evaluations**

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



**1 Overview**

**A Background**

A review of environmental evaluations performed on ECP applications indicates that some producers are installing ECP practices **before** FSA-850 is fully completed. All producers applying for ECP risk losing all cost-share assistance if ECP practices are installed **before** the appropriate environmental evaluation is complete.

Completing FSA-850, item 17 requires consultation with the:

- State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

These consultations **must** result in a letter or some other documented concurrence **before** FSA-850 can be fully completed and AD-245 with proposed ECP practices may be approved for cost-share.

**B Purpose**

This notice:

- reinforces current policy in 1-ECP, subparagraphs 171 B and 175 B requiring that State and County Offices ensure that FSA-850 is fully completed and documented in the applicant's file **before** approving ECP requests for cost-share assistance
- provides guidance on reviewing ECP requests so that producers are not at risk of becoming ineligible for cost-share assistance **before** the environmental review process is fully completed.

<b>Disposal Date</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
May 1, 2008	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

## Notice ECP-49

### 1 Overview (Continued)

#### C Contact

State Offices may direct questions about:

- conducting environmental evaluations for ECP to Matthew Ponish by:
  - e-mail at **matthew.ponish@wdc.usda.gov**
  - telephone at 202-720-6853
- ECP policy to James Michaels by:
  - e-mail at **james.michaels@wdc.usda.gov**
  - telephone at 202-690-0794.

### 2 Action

#### A County Office Action

County Offices shall ensure that all producers who request ECP assistance are:

- informed of the risk of installing an ECP practice **before** the environmental evaluation is fully complete and documented in the applicant's file, which may result in the producer becoming ineligible for ECP cost-share assistance
- reminded of the requirement of having an environmental evaluation completed for all ECP requests using FSA-850 **before** installing the proposed ECP practice.

**Note:** See 1-EQ for instructions on completing FSA-850.

#### B State Office Action

State Offices shall:

- **ensure that all County Offices are immediately** notified of the provisions of this notice
- remind County Offices that all ECP requests **must** have FSA-850 fully completed **before** approval
- ensure that County Offices follow the current guidelines in 1-EQ for all environmental requirements.