

January 9, 2004

Skagit Conservation District SCD Cost Share Policy

1. DEFINITIONS: The following definitions are applicable to the Program agreement.

- 1.1. Conservation Plan means a record of the participant's decisions, and supporting information for the treatment of a unit of land and the preservation of water quality, and includes the schedule of operations that are needed to solve identified water quality concerns. The conservation plan must be approved by the District Board of Supervisors in order for the landowner to be eligible for cost share funds.
- 1.2. Conservation Practice means a specified treatment, such as a structural or vegetative practice or land management practice, which is planned and applied according to NRCS standards and specifications.

2. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PROGRAM

- 2.1. The participant must have a District approved conservation plan and a cost estimate of practice/s to be eligible for cost share.
- 2.2. By signing the cost share agreement, the participant certifies that such participant controls the land subject to the agreement for the agreement period and shall provide evidence to the SCD demonstrating this upon request.
- 2.3. The practice that is planned to be implemented must protect and provide benefits to water quality.
- 2.4. The landowner must have approval from the District prior to commencing construction on cost shared practices.
- 2.5. A participant shall not be eligible to receive **retroactive** payments for structures; facilities and BMP's installed under long term agreements with the Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

3. ELIGIBLE COST SHARE PRACTICES

- 3.1. All practices must have a signed &/or approved design that meets or exceeds USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service specifications before cost share funds are allocated.
- 3.2. If the participant does not install the designed practice within 90 days of receiving the design, then the District Board of Supervisors shall decide whether a time extension is necessary.

3.3. Eligible cost share practices must have specific standards and specifications as outlined in the current FOTG, and ensure zero discharge to both surface and ground waters of the state. Components may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Catch Basins	Concrete
Solid Waste Storage Roof	Underground Outlets
Ecology Blocks	Gravel
Gutters & Downspouts	Manholes
Low Pressure Pipelines	Sump Pumps
Waste Storage Ponds	Culverts
Fencing	Nose pump
Stock Tanks	Composting Facilities
Filter Strips	Cover Crops
Heavy Use Area Protection	Stream Bank Protection

4. RESTRICTIONS ON PAYMENTS

- 4.1. The cost-share payment received by a participant under this Program cannot exceed 75% of the cost of the conservation practices that are elements of the Conservation Plan when all sources of assistance are considered.
- 4.2. The maintenance or operation of existing BMP's is not eligible for funding under this Program.
- 4.3. Project cost overruns or additional projects are not eligible to receive cost share funds unless approved by the SCD. If cost overruns or additional projects occur, the participant must submit a letter requesting additional funds to the SCD. The SCD board will review the letter and the SCD board will determine if additional funds are granted.

5. AGREEMENT

The participant agrees:

- 5.1. The Small Farm Cost-Sharing Application and Implementation Agreement shall be considered a request to enter into the Program on the terms specified here and supercedes and replaces all previous applications or requests of participant;
- 5.2. Not to start any financially assisted practice before the participant files a Small Farm Cost Share Application and Implementation Agreement form;
- 5.3. To comply with the terms and conditions of the Conservation Plan and all Federal, State, and local laws that apply to the plan's content;

- 5.4. To establish, maintain, and replace, as specified in the agreement, the practices agreed to in the conservation plan.
- 5.5. Not to undertake any action on land under the participant's control which tends to defeat the purposes of the Small Farm Cost-Sharing Application and Implementation Agreement as determined by the SCD;
- 5.6. To discontinue work in the general area of the site and notify the SCD immediately if, during the construction of any practice, the participant encounters a previously unidentified archeological or historical site;

6. CONSERVATION PLAN

- 6.1. All standard practices must meet the standards, specifications and methods described in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide and the NRCS Agricultural Waste Management Field Handbook, and if alternative practices are utilized, then such practices must be approved by the Washington Conservation Commission;
- 6.2. By signing the Small Farm Cost-Sharing Application and Implementation Agreement, the participant agrees to implement the practices specified in their conservation plan on the land enrolled in the Program.

7. PAYMENTS

- 7.1. Subject to the availability of funds, cost-share and incentive payments, as approved by SCD, shall be made available upon a determination by SCD that an eligible practice, or an identifiable unit thereof, has been established in compliance with the conservation plan and with appropriate standards and specifications.
- 7.2. The SCD will accept the value of in-kind labor from cooperators based on the established rate of \$18.00 per hour. The SCD will not accept the value of land taken out of production in the course of installation of cost-shared BMP's, or loss of production value.
- 7.3. SCD will make cost-share and incentive payments, as approved by SCD; available to the participant at the rate specified under the total column of Section 4 of the Small Farm Cost-Sharing Application and Implementation Agreement.
- 7.4. Except as otherwise provided for in this paragraph, cost-share and incentive payments, as approved by SCD, may be made available under the Program only for the establishment or application of an eligible practice. In order to receive cost-share payments, as approved by SCD, the participant, upon certification of the completed practice, must file a Practice Approval and Payment Application with SCD.