

Session Notes

“Getting Conservation Work Done in Our District/Field Office”
Whitman Conservation District / NRCS Field & Area
August 24, 2006 – Noon to 4:30 pm

Greatest accomplishment we will have in our field office this coming year:

- § Conservation on satisfied customer's land
- § Providing professional service
- § Complete the buffer workload
- § Getting ahead of workload – getting current
- § Better communication to meet the mutual goals of getting conservation on ground
- § Good customer service – get back to customer service orientation – instead of just programs
- § Clear communication between one another and out of office
- § Better image in the public
- § No duplication in carrying out a comprehensive conservation program
- § Be caught up in work
- § Having employees trained – consistent message, etc
- § Smooth EQIP signup with no changes

Use this as a statement, for annual planning, objectives, goal setting, as a checklist for periodic review and improvement

Ground Rules:

- § Give & receive respect
- § Address issues
- § Look for solutions
- § Don't be afraid to speak up
- § Pull your own weight

Use: not only today but in the future, accountability check

Characteristics of Productive NRCS / Conservation District Field Office Operations:

- § Customer service oriented – calling people back, follow through with things you are going to do – greet with a smile, always having someone up front to meet the customer, saying please and thank you
- § Knowledgeable staff that knows programs and solutions
- § Can locate resources within the office – eg soils information, customer files,
- § Coordinated operation goals
- § Team players – willingness to help others
- § Consideration of others in open office setting – courteous, respect, tolerance, forgiveness
- § Respect workload of others and agencies
- § Equality between agencies – not one better than the other
- § Consistency in office operations – everybody following common rules, procedures, logistics
- § Good communication – internal and external customers - working together – understanding what is being said, active listening, continuing process of communication

Washington State Conservation Commission

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Characteristics of Productive NRCS / Conservation District Field Office Operations:
(continued)

- § Not hearing when not appropriate
- § People in the office with a variety of experience – more effective
- § Clear chain of command in each organization
- § Most effective when there is a shared office - NRCS / District
- § NRCS listens to districts on resource priorities
- § Clear expectations of what we do – workload, logistics, programs
- § Higher ups are aware of the goals and what is going on in the field office
- § Personal responsibility followed as a professional for conduct, dress, appearance, office cleanliness, break room cleanliness, vehicle maintenance and cleanliness
- § Results on the land

Use this information above for office goals, compare to where we are now to where we want to be, get money and people

Action Register - Colfax Field Office

August 24, 2006

Action	Target Dates	Responsible
<p>Telephone</p> <p>§ Get the voicemail system installed</p>	Follow up with ITS by September 30	Rich Riehle & Rich Edlund
<p>Messages</p> <p>§ All use the same form for message pad – include date, time, person (spelled correctly) that called or came to see you, call back number, and initial</p> <p>§ Utilize the message delivery place memo.</p>	By August 25	Each person for using Ann Ensley on supply
<p>Interagency Support & Communication</p> <p>§ Colfax Field Office staff meet together to discuss what we need to get done and who is going to do what, schedules, priorities, workload, resolution of issues - once a month for no more than an hour</p>	Each month 1 st Monday of month-- September 11 th start	David Jones – September Dennis – October Emily - November Rotate each month – plan & facilitate
<p>Individual Responsibility</p> <p>§ Create an understanding what a professional and efficient field office working environment is; and the individual responsibility for how to get there - Utilize the listing of characteristics of a productive district / NRCS Field Office Operations as guidelines.</p>	Start immediately, review progress monthly	Each person
<p>Issues Resolution Procedure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go first to the individual in a professional way if something bothers you – try to work it out 2. If office general issue or an anonymous approach then bring to monthly meeting through the organizer /facilitator – use the written standard office policies / procedures 3. If issue not resolved, then move to official channels – through NRCS DC and/or District Manager 4. If issue not resolved - performance and disciplinary protocol – NRCS and/or District 	Start immediately	Each person
<p>Office Logistics:</p> <p>§ Have standard office policies & procedures that everyone understands and</p>	September 11	Ann Ensley

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implements.		
Office Logistics: § Develop a written set of basic office etiquette & customer services skills	On-going	Kimberly Morse
Office Logistics: § Identify a way to have & fund a full time front office person for customer contact (need for ½ time funding)	October 15	Rich Edlund
Office Logistics: § Research soft tone bell on front door	October 15	Dennis Roe
Office Logistics: § NRCS File system will be established	October 31 to identify the system	Rich Edlund
Office Logistics: § Consider office space organization	??	Rich E & Rich R
Management: § Define in writing the responsibilities for and designate a senior conservationist for the field office for informational, technical guidance.	October 31	Rich Edlund & Rich Riehle, and Georgie Leinweber
Management: § Have DC attend each of monthly meetings		

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