

TSP process for CCA, CPAg and CPSS certifications – pilot test

The process would only be for CCAs, CPAgs and CPSS in the pilot test. These three certifications currently have MOUs with NRCS in nutrient management and pest management.

How the process would work:

1. A certified person would review the NRCS Proficiency Area (PA) document. There is one document each for nutrient management, pest management and irrigation management. They must review and check the box next to each PA indicating that they can perform that PA to the NRCS standard. They must sign and provide their certification number if and only if they are capable of performing the PAs as described. Once signed, they must return a completed plan to the NRCS office for review. The individual is certified in the NRCS TSP system if the plan meets the NRCS standard.
2. For the certified person that does not sign the document but wants to become a TSP, they will be required to complete the NRCS training modules, 1 – 7. These training modules would be made available to the certified person via CD or online. Once completed, they would then review and sign the document and follow the procedure as outlined in #1.
3. The certified person that signs the document but is deemed to not meet the standard as indicated by NRCS will be required to complete one of the following:
 - a. If the plan does not meet NRCS standards, the necessary corrections or edits will be identified in writing and the certified person will be requested to revise the plan and resubmit to NRCS. In addition they will also submit a second plan for a different farm that will be reviewed. If the second plan also meets the NRCS nutrient management plan standards then they will be certified.
 - b. If the second plan submitted in (3a) does not meet the NRCS nutrient management plan standard, the certification office in Madison, WI will be notified and the certified applicant will be advised to register for and successfully complete modules 1-7 of the Nutrient track of the NRCS course – Nutrient and Pest Management Considerations in Conservation Planning prior to reapplication.
4. Qualified CCA/CPAg/CPSS as TSPs will be required to earn continuing education credits in the appropriate areas to recertify. CCAs already have similar requirements to recertify their CCA. A CCA must earn a total of 40 hours every two years with at least 5 in each of the four categories of nutrient management, soil and water management, pest management and crop

management. Specific courses could be required and placed in the certification CEU system.

5. Appeal process for disputes between NRCS decisions and certified applicants will be handled by NRCS regional agronomists. If a dispute arises as to the NRCS decision related to the plan that was submitted, the certified person would contact Luther Smith at the certification office in Madison, WI and Luther would contact the NRCS National Agronomist. The National Agronomist would contact the appropriate NRCS regional agronomist to evaluate the plan that was submitted and render a decision as to its standard. The decision of the NRCS regional agronomist is final.