

Work Plan NRCS 2007-2008

NASCA-NRCS Contribution Agreement #68-3A75-7-33

To be completed on or before May 31, 2008

The contribution agreement is written broadly enough to address several specific membership needs while delivering the intended products to NRCS. This work plan further defines the focus of each project and expected outcomes.

1. Partnership Building

Focus: Carry out deliverable with focus on seven pilot states partnerships, one from each region. Seven states to be chosen by NASCA region directors in cooperation with consultant. General criteria for choosing pilot state:

- Relatively “weak” or dysfunctional partnership relations
- Lack of participation in NASCA activities/state agency does not financially support NASCA
- Significant opportunity for improvement in partnership function

Provide facilitation for each state’s partners to (1) identify shared needs, (2) compare goals and strategies currently employed to address those needs, and (3) define each partner’s appropriate role in addressing the need(s). Focus on areas where partners agree there is room for improved cooperation and collaboration.

Examples: method to better coordinate field work or specialized services; regular joint planning sessions to better address one or two key shared priorities or programs; coordinated data collection or documentation needed to substantiate conservation needs; definition of roles and responsibilities to avoid duplication; shared staff to address common needs; coordination of training events and meetings to improve attendance and quality of information/delivery.

Outcome: Each state’s partners will develop mutually beneficial strategies to more efficiently further their in-state shared goals and objectives. Provide facilitated follow-up to assist implementation of strategies.

Final report to include any new initiatives discussed and/or implemented. Final report to describe improvements in partnership operations or impediments to implementation.

Strategic Areas: Capacity Building, Networking, and Communications

Serves Strategic Goal III: Enhance NASCA’s ability to support information exchange among member agencies, partnering organizations, and agencies.

2. IT Issue Assistance

Focus: Identify solutions to further address partners' varied IT needs.

- (1) Identify IT issues identified and addressed to date, and document improvements.
- (2) Establish a broad based working committee to examine remaining and emerging problems of data security in response to concerns expressed by federal audits and in response to homeland security policies.
- (3) Facilitate team to inventory and examine the current issues, and recommend solutions.
- (4) Distribute solutions to NASCA members and facilitate region level discussions.
- (5) Deliver report of activities and results to NRCS.

Strategic Areas: Communication and Networking, Policy Development and National Influence

Serves Strategic Goal II: NASCA will be a nationally recognized organization. (Successful policy development and effective working relationships with national partners on policy priorities and recommendations.)

State-Level Watershed Activity Pilot Project

Recommendation:

- A. Carry out deliverable 3 "(watershed boundaries)" with focus on research to strengthen future state and national policy development and recommendations to state conservation agencies.
 - a. Document research results and findings with a focus on shaping future policy discussions on watershed-level conservation service delivery.
 - b. Deliver findings to NRCS.

Potential Strategic Area: Policy Development and National Influence. This project will provide information to help NASCA shape future policy discussions on watershed-level conservation service delivery.

Potentially serves Strategic Goal II: NASCA will be a nationally recognized organization. (Successful policy development and effective working relationships with national partners on policy priorities and recommendations.)

Administrative

- (1) Conduct agreement management including monthly NRCS invoicing and match reports.
- (2) Submit monthly progress and budget reports, and monthly invoices to NASCA executive director.
- (3) Prepare any necessary sub-contracts.
- (4) Identify and track match funds, and include in monthly NRCS invoices.
- (5) Prepare and submit all required reports, to be approved by NASCA Executive Director prior to submittal to NRCS.