

APPENDIX

Step-by-Step TSP Application Process

You may access your application as soon as you obtain your eAuthentication ID and password. Completing the TSP application is easier if you have completed your educational and licensing requirements for each category prior to beginning the application process.

Once you are ready to complete the application, print out the “TechReg Step-by-Step” guide found on the [TechReg](#) website. This document will guide you through the application process. Print out this page to follow these tips when completing your application:

Detailed Instructions for Completing TSP Profile Parts 1 and 2

Login to TechReg:

1. Click “Login” on the TechReg home page.
2. On the USDA eAuthentication Login screen, enter your eAuthentication User ID and password and click “login.”
3. An “Apply Online” page will be displayed.
4. Please enter your preferred contact method – “Email” or “Mail.”
5. Check the “yes” block if you can speak Spanish.
6. Indicate if you are registering as “myself (an individual)” or as an “Individual with a Public Agency (An Employee of a Public Agency).”
7. Review the terms and conditions of the Certification Agreement. You must agree to the terms and conditions of the agreement in order to be certified. Click “agree” to move into Profile Part 1 of your Technical Service Provider profile. The date associated with this agreement is the computed date for certification expiration.

Complete Profile Part 1 - Background

Please fill out all relevant sections of the profile in order to become a certified TSP. *Inadequate information will delay approval of your application to become a TSP.*

If you have entered the system in order to create a **business or public agency**, and do not plan to become a certified TSP yourself, then **only fill out Section B**, Associated Companies/Agencies. The rest of the profile is not necessary.

Use the “update...” and “add...” buttons to add records. Use the “edit” button to edit previously entered records.

Steps to Complete Profile Part 1:

- 1. Complete Section Contact Information. Section Contact information:** This information is automatically generated from the information that you supplied when you obtained your eAuthentication. You may modify some of this information directly on the profile, such as a change in phone number or email address. Click the “Add/Update Contact Info” button to add new or edit existing contact information. *If your email or address changes after certification, you must update this information. Failure to update this information may mean delays in recertification and/or being dropped from the eligible TSP listing.*

- 2. Complete Section B, Associated Companies/Agencies, only if the application for certification is for a business or public agency and only if you are the official representative of that business or public agency and have the authority to sign the Certification Agreement on behalf of that business or public agency.** Official representatives are not required to be certified TSPs. Creation of a business or public agency will require that at least one individual associated with the business or public agency be certified as a TSP. To proceed:
- a. Click the “Business/Agency Profile” button to access a Business/Agency screen.
 - b. Click the “Add Business/Agency” button to add a business or agency. Enter the Business name and contact information. Click Save. Enter phone numbers without parentheses or dashes. The new business information will be displayed.
 - c. Click the Add/Update Contact Info button associated with the business to add new information to or edit existing for the business.
 - d. Click on “update employees” to associate certified TSPs with the business or agency.
 - e. Click “Sign Agreement” to electronically sign a certification agreement and complete the business or agency application for certification. NOTE: Do not sign the agreement at this time if you are also applying as an individual and will be the only “certified TSP” associated with the business. Wait until you have become certified as an individual and have updated the business’s certified employees (“e” above) before signing.

Do not close out of this screen after you print the agreement. Use the back arrow on the browser to return to the Business/Agency profile screen to continue.

THE REMAINDER OF THE CERTIFICATION APPLICATION PERTAINS TO CERTIFICATION OF AN INDIVIDUAL.

3. Complete Section C, Relevant Accreditations/Licenses

Enter the licenses or certifications that are required to satisfy the criteria for certification in the categories of technical service you wish to provide. Include any state required licenses, license numbers, and expiration dates. This information is critical in order to remain on active status once certified. As information changes, you must return to this page to update your certification. If the accreditation or license is expired, NRCS will defer your application and you may be delayed 60 or more days in obtaining your TSP Certification.

Add a Certification

- a. Click on the “Add Certification/License” button.
- b. Select a certifying organization.
- c. Indicate the organization type by clicking on the appropriate button.
- d. If this is a state certification or license, select the state from the dropdown list.
- e. Enter the license number, if applicable.
- f. Enter the license expiration date directly or use the popup calendar.
- g. Click “Save.”

Edit or Delete a Certification

- a. Click “Edit” in the row you wish to update.
- b. Change the information as needed.
- c. Click “Save” or “Delete.”

To add another certification, license, or registration, Click on “Add Certification/Licenses/Registration” located at the top of the section. These credentials will be added to a drop-down list in Part 2 of the Profile and may be required before you can complete that section.

4. Complete Section C2- Organic Qualification

Indicate organic qualification by selecting **YES** or **NO** from the options.

By clicking YES, you are certifying that you are Organic Qualified through one of the following:

- a. Passed Organic Inspector Training
- b. Certified Organic
- c. University Degree in Organic
- d. Letter of Reference from Organic Organization

Indicate Organic Qualification

- a. Click Yes in the options if organically qualified.
- b. Click No in the options if **NOT** organically qualified.
- c. Click Save to save this information to your profile.

5. Complete Section D, Education and Training

Enter Bachelors or Graduate degrees, NRCS training, or other training required to satisfy the criteria for certification. NOTE: NRCS training would be listed under the heading of “Institution” name. Type the course name under “Area of Study”. For NRCS training, do not list anything in the area labeled “Degree.”

Add Education and Training

- a. Click the “Add Education” button.
- b. Enter degree received, i.e. Bachelors, Masters, Doctorate, etc. Do not use quotation marks.
- c. Enter the name of the institution.
- d. Select the area of study.
- e. Enter the completion date directly or use the popup calendar, if completed in 1986 or later.
- f. Click “Save.”

Edit or Delete Education and Training

- a. Click “Edit” in the row you wish to update.
- b. Change the information as needed.
- c. Click “Save,” “Delete,” or “Close.”

6. Complete Section E, Relevant Work Experience

List verifiable information regarding your work experience as it relates to your technical

skills and abilities as it relates to providing technical services. You can copy text from a word document and insert into this section.

Add Relevant Work Experience

- a. Click the “Add Work Experience” button.
- b. Enter the completion date directly or use the popup calendar, if completed in 1986 or later.
- c. Enter the description and location of the work performed in the comments box.
- d. Enter start and end dates if applicable.
- e. Click “Save.”

Edit or Delete Relevant Work Experience

- a. Click “Edit” in the row you wish to update.
- b. Change the information as needed.
- c. Click “Save,” “Delete,” or “Close.”

7. Complete Section E1, Professional References

Provide at least two non-USDA references that can verify your experience and qualifications (this is not a recommendation for certification). The purpose of this section is to provide references as to who can verify your work. Always fill this section out.

Your references should include at least one professional who can verify your experience and proficiency for conservation planning and/or design, layout, installation, and checkout of the conservation practices for which you will be providing technical service. Your second reference should be a customer to whom technical service has been provided. USDA staff cannot be used as reference for this purpose. Please provide the names of the references, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses as available. The references will only be used by USDA personnel and will not be published in the résumé available from the TSP Locator in TechReg.

Certification criteria for some conservation activities or practices require references specific to the practice you want certification in (indicated by a checked box in Section G). In such cases your application will not be processed if Section E1 is not completed. Additionally, NRCS staff will be looking at this section carefully for all categories.

8. Complete Section F, Familiarity with NRCS Guidelines, Criteria, Standards, and Specifications

Enter a brief description of your familiarity with these items. Your knowledge of the criteria, standards, specifications and guidelines in NRCS conservation planning and practice work is important in order to comply with national rules and requirements for work performed under the Technical Service Provider Program. Point out any experience you have had in developing conservation plans that conform to NRCS guidelines, as well as planning or designing conservation practices to NRCS specifications. Describe how you obtained your expertise in this area.

NOTE: When you sign your Certification Agreement, you are certifying that you are already familiar with NRCS standards and specifications – not that you intend to get the experience after you obtain TSP Certification.

Your description here will help determine if your knowledge also extends beyond a general familiarity of the written standards found in the Field Office Technical Guides. If any of this information changes, you can return to this page to update your certification.

Add Familiarity with NRCS Guidelines, Criteria, Standards, and Specifications

- a. Click the “Add NRCS Familiarity” button.
- b. Describe your familiarity with NRCS guidelines, criteria, standards, and specifications and click “Save.” Each entry is limited to 255 characters.

9. Complete Section F1, NRCS Conservation Planning Training Requirement.

- a. Click on “Add NRCS Training”.
- b. If you have had the Conservation Planning Sections 1 – 5 or equivalent, click the box in front of “I have received NRCS Training Sections or equivalent” and “Save.” If you have not had the training, register for the course through the AgLearn link provided. You should print out the certificate of completion from AgLearn and retain in your records. If you received training on conservation planning through an NRCS workshop or through an NRCS sponsored course, you should still obtain a copy of a course completion certificate from the instructor for your records.

10. Complete Section F2, NRCS TSP Orientation.

- a. Click on the Add NRCS Orientation.
- b. If you have taken the Orientation course, click the box in front of “I have received the NRCS Sections and Exam” and “Save.” If you have not had the training, register for the course through the AgLearn link provided.

CLICK “CONTINUE TO PROFILE PART 2.”

Complete Profile Part 2 (Technical Services)

Please fill out all relevant sections of the profile in order to become certified TSP. *Inadequate information will delay approval of your application to become a TSP.*

Steps to complete Profile Part 2:

1. **Complete Section G, Certification Categories**, by selecting a state/category (or categories) combination and then click the “Confirm Qualifications” button to complete the certification criteria portion. The Update Criteria table must be filled out in this section before you can submit the application for review and certification.

After signing the agreement in Section J, Section G should show a “submitted” status (as in submitted for review). If you miss something your application will show “incomplete” and you won’t be allowed to sign your certification agreement. The only status you ultimately want to see is “submitted.” This indicates your application has been submitted for review.

Many mistakes are made in this section. Some candidates fail to select or toggle an “option.” Others fail to check one or more “how criteria were met” boxes making the application “incomplete.” Others fail to provide references when references are mandatory.

To select a State and categories

- a. Click "Add Category" to select a state and the technical service categories you desire to provide.
- b. Select a state from the drop-down box.
- c. The Category Available section will be populated with the choices available for the selected state.
- d. Click on the "Click to go to Category Detail Page" to open another page with a comprehensive report of the categories and associated technical services. Close this page to return to the Add Category page.
- e. e. Select a category for which you desire certification and then click the >>> box to move the category to the Category Selected list. (You can select more than one category at a time by holding down the control key on your keyboard and clicking on each category that you desire to move to the Category Selected list. Then click >>> to move all of the items at once.)
- f. To remove items from the Category Selected list, click the items in the Category Selected box, then click the <<< box.
- g. Save your selection.
- h. Since the certification process is specific to individual states, you must repeat this process for each state in which you desire to provide technical services.

NOTE: After selecting the categories, you must match your qualifications entered in Profile Part 1 to the categories selected.

To enter qualifications for categories

- a. Click the "Confirm Qualifications" button in the category row for which you need to enter qualifications.
- b. Select ONE certification option from the certification option or options listed. You must meet ALL of the certification criteria in the selected certification option. Selecting the wrong option will cause your application to be deferred and you will need to correct deficiencies before approval.
- c. If the selected certification option requires a license or certification, select a license or certification from the drop-down choice list. You will need to return to Section C, Profile, and Part 1 if you neglected to add a required license or certification
- d. For each criteria item within your selected certification option, place a check mark in each box, Education, Work Experience, or NRCS familiarity that satisfies the criteria. For example, if the criteria require a degree in a particular field, and you listed your degree under Profile Part 1, Section D, Education and Training, you should check the box for that row under Education. Failure to check appropriate boxes based on experience and training will delay approval of your application to become a TSP.
- e. When you have confirmed your qualifications, click "Save." After saving, you will be returned to the Profile Part 2 screen.
- f. Once all the criteria for certification have been met, the status of the category will be set to "Ready to Sign." ("Ready to Sign" means ready to be submitted for review once you have signed your certification agreement at the end of Profile Part 2.) Incomplete items will not be submitted for review.
- g. Complete the certification qualifications for all the services you have selected before you electronically sign the certification agreement by clicking "sign Agreement" at the bottom of page two of your TSP profile.

2. Complete Section H, Services to be Provided.

Each category entered in Section G defaults to All Services (all technical services) within the category in Section H. You may not wish to provide all of the technical services in the category or may not be able to because of State requirements or need for a specific license. If that is the case, you can limit the list of services by using the “edit” button to select only those services you wish to provide. Click “Save” when you have selected all the practices you wish to have listed. You may need to use eFOTG to research NRCS practice standards and specifications to determine eligibility to provide the service.

NOTE: If you are certifying in multiple states, check with the TSP Coordinator for requirements unique to that state. You must meet the requirements for all the states where you apply or your entire application will be deferred.

To select services for a category

- a. Click “Edit” on the row in Section H, “Services to be Provided.”
- b. Make selections in the “Service Available” list, then click the >>> box to move items to “Services Selected” list.
- c. To remove items from the “Services Selected” list, click the selections in the “Services Selected” box, then click the <<< box.
- d. Save your selection.

3. Complete Section I, Servicing Areas.

The states listed are those you entered in Section G. You may not wish to provide technical services in all of the counties in the state. If that is the case, you can limit the list of counties by using the edit button and then selecting only those counties in which you desire to provide technical services.

Click the “Edit” button to display a data entry form for completing information about the Servicing Area for which you wish to be certified. By default, you are requesting certification for every county within a state. If you wish to serve only selected counties, you must specify those counties. If any information changes, you can return to this page to update your certification.

To select servicing counties, if other than the entire state

- a. Click the “Edit” button for a particular state.
- b. Click the appropriate counties in the “Counties Available” list, then click the >>> box to move the counties to the “Counties Selected” list.
- c. To remove counties from the “Counties Selected” list, click the selections in the “Services Selected” box, then click the <<< box.
- d. Save your selection.

4. Review Section J, Certification Agreement History.

This section will show the date that you were certified originally, as well as any subsequent certification requests. Your renewal date is based on the FIRST certification date. Review the Certification Agreement containing the terms and conditions of your certification. When you click “Sign Agreement” you are signing the agreement electronically. It is recommended that you print out a copy for your records.

Click on the “Submit” button to forward your application to NRCS. This will generate an email to the NRCS State Conservationist and the TSP Coordinator. NRCS will then review your application for certification. If you are qualified to provide the service you selected, you will be certified as a TSP for those services.

The business certification agreement will contain the name of the individual(s) certified, the date certified, and the categories and states where the individuals are certified. After certification, the individual TSP will appear on the approved list of Technical Service Providers accessible through the TSP Locator on the TechReg home page. If you have applied for a business TSP certification and you have indicated in your business profile that you want your employees listed on the TSP registry, individual TSPs associated with your certified business will be listed on the registry. If you indicate on the business profile that you do not want the business certified TSP employees listed, only the business will be listed on the TSP business registry.

Each time you change your certification categories, and confirm your qualifications to provide TSP services, you will be asked to submit another application for certification by clicking the Sign Agreement button. Each certification agreement is saved and can be displayed by using the view button.

The Certification Agreement History tracks your original certification and all updates to your Technical Service Provider Certification.

Contact the TechReg Help desk if you have any questions regarding these instructions at: tsp@wdc.usda.gov

Technical Service Provider Certification of Services Provided

Please submit the completed worksheet to your customer who will provide it to the local NRCS field office. Your input declares that installed practices meet NRCS Standards and Specifications and improves the accuracy of the NRCS reporting system. Any supporting data needs to be attached i.e. as built, photos, etc.

CLIENT INFORMATION

Name: _____ Farm Bill Program: _____
 Contract Number: _____ Contract Item Number(s): _____

TECHNICAL SERVICE PROVIDER INFORMATION

Name: _____ TSP Number: _____
 Address: _____ TSP Expiration Date: _____
 City, State, Zip Code: _____ County of Service: _____
 Phone: _____

PRACTICES INSTALLED / COMPLETED

Practice Information			TSP Costs		
Practice Name	Units	Amount	Design	Installation	Checkout

I hereby certify that the technical services I provided as a Technical Service Provider:

1. Comply with all applicable Federal, State, Tribal, and Local laws and requirements,
2. Meet applicable USDA-NRCS conservation practice standards, specifications, and program requirements,
3. Are consistent with and meet the particular conservation program goals and objectives,
4. Incorporate, where appropriate, low-cost alternatives that address the resource issues.

Technical Service Provider Signature _____
Date

To Be Completed By Landowner

I confirm that the practice(s) above have been installed for the identified contract and farm bill program with the assistance of this Technical Service Provider.

Landowner Signature _____
Date

Technical Tools and References:

- [National Biology Handbook](#) (Title 190 Part 600)
- [National Handbook of Conservation Practices](#)
- [National Cultural Resources Procedures Handbook](#) (Title 190 Part 601) The NRCS National Cultural Resources Procedures Handbook link is provided as a reference tool for TSPs. However, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's web page, [Working with Section 106](#), may be more appropriate reference material for most TSPs needing guidance on cultural resources.
- [National Engineering Handbook](#) (Title 210 Part 500)
- [National Environmental Compliance Handbook](#) (Title 190 Part 610)
- [National Forestry Handbook](#): The National Forestry Handbook (NFH) provides informational material to assist NRCS personnel in the planning and application of forestry and agroforestry practices on nonfederal forestland throughout the United States.
- [National Range and Pasture Handbook](#) (Title 190-vi Part 600)
- [Soils Data Mart](#): This website is used to download soil tabular and spatial data and can also be used to generate a variety of soil reports.
- [National Water Quality Handbook](#) (Title 450 Part 600)