

provide protection of soil, water, and related resources acceptable to NRCS. Eligible practices may be included in the conservation plan to enhance fish and wildlife and recreation resources, promote the economic use of land, and reduce or control agriculture-related pollution.

(c) Technical assistance will be provided by NRCS, as needed by the land user. NRCS may utilize the services of private, local, state, and other Federal agencies in discharging its responsibilities for technical assistance.

(d) Participants are responsible for accomplishing the conservation plan and may use all available sources of assistance, including other USDA programs that are consistent with the conservation plan.

(e) All conservation practices scheduled in the conservation plan are to be carried out in accordance with the applicable NRCS technical guide.

Subpart B—Contracts

§ 631.10 Contracts.

(a) To participate in the program, an applicant must enter into a contract agreeing to implement a conservation plan. All persons who control or share control of the operating unit for the proposed contract period must sign the contract or one person with power-of-attorney may sign the contract for all persons. The applicant must provide the contracting officer with satisfactory evidence of control of the operating unit for the life of the proposed contract.

(b) Contracts may be entered into not later than September 30, 1991. The contract shall be for a period needed to establish the conservation treatment scheduled in the conservation plan and must extend at least 3 years but not more than 10 years.

(c) Contracts may be transferred or modified by mutual consent. The transferee assumes full responsibility for the contract including operation and maintenance of all land treatment installed under the contract. Also included are payments made under the contract to the participant or preceding participants before and after the transfer.

(d) Contracts may be terminated by mutual consent or by NRCS for cause.

§ 631.11 Conservation practice maintenance.

(a) Each participant is obligated to maintain the resource management systems or conservation practices applied under the contract for the duration of the contract. Practices installed before execution of the contract are to be maintained as specified in the contract.

(b) If the life span of the practices or resource management systems extends beyond the period of the contract, state conservationists may make the operation and maintenance of those practices or systems a condition of the contract. The length of such operation and maintenance shall extend for the expected life span.

§ 631.12 Cost-share payments.

(a) Federal cost sharing shall be adjusted so that the combined cost share by Federal and state government or subdivision of a state shall not exceed 100 percent of the cost.

(b) Cost-share payments for completing resource management systems or a practice or an identifiable unit according to specifications will be made by NRCS as specified in the contract or as adjusted according to § 631.12(a).

§ 631.13 Disputes and appeals for matters other than contract violations.

Applicants or participants may appeal decisions regarding matters other than contract disputes under this part in accordance with part 614 of this title.

[60 FR 67316, Dec. 29, 1995]

§ 631.14 Contract violations.

Contract violations, determinations and appeals will be handled in accordance with the terms of the contract and attachments thereto. Violations involving fraud are to be handled in accordance with current USDA regulations.