

§ 656.2

§ 656.2 Archeological and historical laws and Executive orders applicable to NRCS-assisted programs.

(a) *The Act of June 27, 1960*, relating to the preservation of historical and archeological data, Pub. L. 86-523, 74 Stat. 220, as amended May 24, 1974; Pub. L. 93-291, 88 Stat. 174 (16 U.S.C. 469 et seq.), provides for the preservation of historical and archeological materials or data, including relics and specimens, that might otherwise be lost or destroyed as a result of any Federal or federally-assisted or licensed project, activity, or program.

(b) *The National Historic Preservation Act*, Pub. L. 89-665, 80 Stat. 915, as amended, (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to maintain and expand a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), including historic districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, and culture. This law also establishes the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), to be appointed by the President. Section 106 of this Act (16 U.S.C. 470f), requires that prior to the approval of any Federal or federally-assisted or licensed undertaking, the Federal agency shall afford the ACHP a reasonable opportunity to comment, if properties listed in or eligible for listing in NRHP are affected.

(c) *Executive Order 11593 (36 FR 8921, 3 CFR 1971 Comp. P. 154)*, Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment, provides that the Federal government shall furnish leadership in preserving, restoring, and maintaining the historical and cultural environment of the nation, and that Federal agencies shall administer the cultural properties under their control in a spirit of stewardship and trusteeship for future generations; initiate measures necessary to direct their policies, plans, and programs in such a way that federally owned sites, structures, and objects of historical, architectural, or archeological significance are preserved, restored, and maintained. Section 1(3) directs that agencies institute procedures to assure that Federal plans and programs contribute to the preservation and enhancement of non-federally owned sites, structures, and objects of historical, architectural, or ar-

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cheological significance in consultation with the ACHP.

§ 656.3 Policy.

(a) NRCS recognizes that significant historical, archeological, and architectural resources are an important part of our national heritage, the protection of which requires careful consideration in this agency's project planning and implementation process.

(b) NRCS will take reasonable precautions to avoid damaging any significant historic, cultural, or natural aspects of our national heritage and will work with the National Park Service (NPS) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) in identifying and seeking to avoid or mitigate adverse effects of NRCS-assisted projects on the Nation's significant cultural resources. The procedures contained in this part have been developed to comply with sections 1(3) and 2(c) of Executive Order 11593.

§§ 656.4-656.9 [Reserved]

PART 657—PRIME AND UNIQUE FARMLANDS

Subpart A—Important Farmlands Inventory

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AUTHORITY: 7 U.S.C. 1010a; 16 U.S.C. 590a-590f; 42 U.S.C. 3271-3274.

SOURCE: 43 FR 4031, Jan. 31, 1978, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Important Farmlands Inventory

§ 657.1 Purpose.

NRCS is concerned about any action that tends to impair the productive capacity of American agriculture. The Nation needs to know the extent and location of the best land for producing food, feed, fiber forage, and oilseed crops. In addition to prime and unique farmlands, farmlands that are of statewide and local importance for producing these crops also need to be identified.