need for additional structural practices due to failure of the original structures.

Coordination with other Federal, State, and local agencies and the landowning public to encourage understanding of the concepts underlying the EPA 404(b)(1) guidelines for wetlands protection in land use activities, and ensuring that the guidelines are followed as a planning practice, as well as for wetlands mitigation, would help mitigate the loss of both wetlands and floodplain resources.

Watershed Upland Resources

Reducing the dependence of EWP Program activities on structural practices would help mitigate damage to terrestrial resources by reducing the use of heavy equipment in surrounding upland areas. Use of more advanced techniques such as helicopter seeding for critical area treatments would reduce heavy equipment impacts on soils.

Socioeconomic and Other Human Resources

Impacts on local economies resulting from funding EWP activities can potentially be mitigated by keeping bid packages for EWP work small, so that local contractors with the skills required would have a fair chance to obtain the work, thus returning some portion of the funds to the locality. Where floodplain easements are used in place of structural practices, floodplain usage may be reduced, requiring relocation of people and activities currently in those areas. Attention paid to preserving and protecting neighborhood structure and residential networking can mitigate the effects of this relocation. In rural communities, certain institutional structures, such as churches, schools, and other ''special'' places, may require special consideration to mitigate adverse effects from such changes.

Where land under floodplain easement purchase is removed from economically productive activities, which were contributing to the local economy and tax base, compensation can be encouraged through seeking alternative replacement activities through such vehicles as HUD's urban development block grants and similar public-private measures. There would be some measure of local economic self-correction inherent in the process anyway, because the community would no longer need to provide the same level of services (power, sewer, road repair) to the easement locality and would no longer have to pay their share of the cost of disaster damage repairs in the future. Nevertheless, NRCS would encourage income-producing activities on floodplain easement lands that would be compatible with their basic purpose. On improved lands floodplain easements where the sponsor gains title to the land, entry fee to open space uses such as trails, walkways, fishing and boat access might be feasible. On agricultural floodplain easements, the landowner keeping title might charge a fee for hunting.

Cultural Resources

If NRCS determines that an adverse effect is going to occur during program implementation, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.6, the agency will continue consultation to resolve (avoid, mitigate, or minimize) this effect. NRCS shall notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) of this determination and continued consultation and invite the Council to participate. The NRCS shall also involve all previous consulting parties (including but not limited to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), and tribes) and provide them all, including the ACHP, with the full documentation and a recommendation regarding steps to be taken to resolve the adverse effect. NRCS will provide a draft of programmatic agreement that outlines the steps to resolve the adverse effects and advise the participants of the nature of the resources that are to be affected.

Currently, some NRCS field offices define the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for EWP projects as the immediate site location, which may inadvertently omit addressing potential adverse impacts to listed or eligible historic properties nearby or downstream. The Cultural Resource Coordinators in the example site states indicate that EWP activities need to be very near to historic resources for NRCS to consider the possibility of impacts. Therefore, at present, unless potential historic structures located in the floodplain, such as homes or mills, are directly affected by sudden impairments and NRCS is planning EWP work to protect them, such resources would not be considered to be in the APE. In addition, NRCS focus on historic structures may result in omitting cultural resources such as archaeological sites, viewsheds, historic landscapes, and cultural places. With narrowly defined APEs, cultural resources may also be affected by ancillary activities such as soil borrow and heavy equipment staging. NRCS' mandatory cultural resources training for field personnel, given to all new field personnel with cultural resources responsibilities, is customized in each state to cover the range and extent of historic, cultural and traditional cultural resources from region to region within the state. Treatments under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and implementing regulations must, necessarily, be tailored to address the specific values of these resources. This training, coupled with the EWP training and consultation with SHPOs, THPOs, and other consulting agencies, including federally recognized tribes, should ensure that mitigation is appropriate for cultural resources on a case-by-case basis.

Consultation with the SHPO, THPO, and other consulting parties, including federally recognized tribes is a part of the EWP planning and coordination function before a disaster occurs and contact with the SHPO/THPO is made before actions at EWP are taken. Because cultural resources are locality specific, mitigation to protect particular cultural resources would be developed if needed at the site level as part of the defensibility review of the EWP practice.

To minimize impacts to cultural resources, the definition of the APE will be changed to include the entire area of potential effect, including ancillary activities resulting form EWP restoration, such as soil borrow or heavy equipment use. Additionally, recovering information about cultural resources present in the APE will help the agency to design the undertaking to avoid adverse effects to historic properties or help NRCS determine what additional mitigation measures may be necessary to address the potential adverse effect of the projects or actions on NRHP-listed or eligible historic properties.

Signed in Washington, DC, on March 21, 2005.

Bruce I. Knight,

Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

[FR Doc. 05–6097 Filed 4–1–05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–16–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

TE–48 Raccoon Island Shore Protection/Marsh Creation Project Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice of finding of no significant impact.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy

Act of 1969; the Council on Environmental Quality Guidelines (40 CFR part 1500); and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Guidelines (7 CFR part 650); the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, gives notice that an environmental impact statement is not being prepared for the Raccoon Island Shore Protection/Marsh Creation Project (TE–48), Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: Donald W. Gohmert, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 3737 Government Street, Alexandria, Louisiana 71302; telephone (318) 473–7751.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The environmental assessment of the federally assisted action indicates that the project will not cause significant local, regional, or national impacts on the environment. As a result of these findings, Donald W. Gohmert, State Conservationist, has determined that preparation and review of an environmental impact statement is not needed for this project.

The project will protect the Raccoon Island rookery and seabird colonies threatened by a retreating shoreline by reducing the rate of erosion along the western end of the island and creating more land and avian habitat along the northern shoreline. The proposed project consists of installing eight segmented rock breakwaters immediately west of the existing Raccoon Island Breakwater Demonstration Project (TE–29); installing an eastern terminal groin structure extending to existing breakwater 0; and creating approximately 60 acres of new habitat for bird species on the northeast portion of the island by backfilling open water areas with suitable dredged material.

The Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been forwarded to the Environmental Protection Agency and to various federal, state, and local agencies and interested parties. A limited number of copies of the FONSI are available to fill single copy requests at the above address. Basic data collected during the environmental assessment are on file and may be reviewed by contacting Donald W. Gohmert.

No administrative action on implementation of the proposal will be taken until 30 days after the date of this publication in the **Federal Register**.

Donald W. Gohmert,

State Conservationist.

[FR Doc. 05–6645 Filed 4–1–05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Notice of Proposed Changes to Section IV of the Tennessee Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG)

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Tennessee, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice of availability of proposed changes in the Tennessee NRCS Field Office Technical Guide, Section IV, for review and comment.

SUMMARY: It has been determined by the NRCS State Conservationist for Tennessee that changes must be made in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide, specifically in practice standard Critical Area Planting (342) to account for improved technology. This practice standard can be used in conservation systems designed to treat highly erodible cropland.

DATES: Comments will be received for a 30-day period commencing with the date of this publication.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Inquire in writing to James W. Ford, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), 675 U.S. Courthouse, 801 Broadway, Nashville, Tennessee, 37203, telephone number (615) 277–2531. Copies of the practice standard will be made available upon written request.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 343 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 states that revisions made after enactment of the law to NRCS state technical guides used to perform highly erodible land and wetland provisions of the law shall be made available for public review and comment. For the next 30 days, the NRCS in Tennessee will receive comments relative to the proposed changes. Following that period, a determination will be made by the NRCS in Tennessee regarding disposition of those comments and a final determination of change will be made to the subject practice standard.

Dated: March 21, 2005.

James W. Ford,

State Conservationist.

[FR Doc. 05–6635 Filed 4–1–05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–16–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

White Tank Mountains Watershed, AZ

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service.

ACTION: Notice of deauthorization of Federal funding.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, Pub. L. 83–566, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Guidelines (7 CFR 622), the Natural Resources Conservation Service gives notice of the deauthorization of Federal funding for the White Tank Mountains Watershed, Maricopa County, Arizona effective on March 9, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David L. McKay, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 230 North First Avenue, Suite 509, Phoenix, Arizona 85003–1706, telephone: 602–280–8810.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program No. 10.904, Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention. Office of Management and Budget Circular A–95 regarding State and local clearinghouse review of Federal and federally assisted programs and projects is applicable.)

Dated: March 24, 2005.

David L. McKay,

State Conservationist.

[FR Doc. 05–6646 Filed 4–1–05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Great River Energy; Notice of Intent

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to hold scoping meetings and prepare an environmental assessment.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), an agency delivering the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Utilities Programs, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500–1508), and